

‘BLACKNESS’ AND ITS ETHICAL AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS: DISCURSIVE  
IMPOSITIONS, COLONIAL ENTRAPMENTS, AND THE ATTENDANT  
PHENOMENOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

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## ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I investigate the moral and social problems associated with ‘blackness’ in its historical and contemporary usage. Since ‘blackness’ now identifies continental and diaspora Africans (CADA) without major moral concerns, it seems ‘blackness’ has been normalized in society. From the 1960s, ‘blackness’ has become beautiful, socially uplifting and politically effective as a resistive socio-political and socio-economic device. This positive outlook apparently suggests that ‘blackness’ has been delinked from its historical problematics as the signifier of ugliness, evil, immorality, barbarism, etc. My findings suggest this is not necessarily the case. Even today, ‘blackness’ continues to play an exclusionary and denigrating function. More than half a century after the end of *official* imperial colonialism and *formal* racial segregation in the Americas, CADA have accepted skin colour as opposed to cultures and geographies to be a global, unifying identity.

Using archival sources and a multidisciplinary scholarly literature, from the classical antiquity (Ancient Rome and Greece) to the present, I interrogated how ‘blackness’, which was used by the slave and the colonial regimes to commodify, segregate, debase, and socially patronize CADA, finds positive, decolonial social currency in its contemporary normalization. Four theories have been helpful: Phenomenology, genealogy, postcolonial theory and Gramscian hegemony. Through phenomenology I interrogate what ‘blackness’ means. Through Foucault’s genealogy, I interrogate how ‘blackness’ changed overtime and how discourse was used to impose it. I use postcolonial theory to interrogate the colonial era under which ‘blackness’ was operationalized by the colonial and the slave regimes. Finally, Gramsci’s hegemony through consent helped me make sense of how ‘blackness’ is still relevant today.

I wondered if there is a significant difference between ‘blackness’ as used by the colonial and the slave regimes and ‘blackness’ as used today. My findings show that ‘blackness’ still pays unintentional homages to colonial epistemes and epistemologies. I have called these homages colonial traps and *bad faith*. Colonial traps are hegemonies through consent. Bad faith is a *willing* and *knowing* abdication of personal responsibility. That ‘blackness’ is necessary for solidarity and resistive purposes against colour-based prejudices has been put to the test within this colonial entrapment context. CADA, who have convincingly shown over the last hundred years that they are capable of successfully challenging Eurocentric hegemonies, seem unable to wiggle out of colonial appellations.

## **DEDICATIONS**

To my children, Atet and Garang. This is for you.

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## **List of Acronyms**

ACS	American Colonization Society
AU	African Union
BCE	Before the Current Era
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
BLM	Black Lives Matter
BP	Black Power
BPM	Black Power Movement
CE	Current Era
CHRC	Canadian Human Rights Commission
CADA	Continental and Diaspora Africans
CADE	Continental and Diaspora Europeans
FDA	Foucauldian Discourse Analysis
IMF	International World Bank
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colour People
OAU	Organization of African Unity
SP	System Professional
UDC	United Daughters of Confederacy
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIA	Universal Negro Improvement Association
WB	World Bank

## **CHAPTER ONE: The Problem, Questions, Purpose, and the Scope**

### **Introduction**

This dissertation project relies on a multidisciplinary body of literature. It is my decolonial and social justice attempt to understand ‘blackness’ from the colonial discourses through which it was introduced and intellectually instrumentalized as an African identity, and the socio-intellectual power structures that uphold its contemporary currency. “A conception of social justice,” argues John Rawls (1999), “is to be regarded as providing in the first instance a standard whereby the distributive aspects of the basic structure of society are to be assessed” (p. 8). ‘Blackness’, as this dissertation will address, is one of these ‘standards’ used by the slave and the colonial regimes to determine what, in a moral context, Taylor (2001, p. 105) would call societal goods. ‘Blackness’ as a standard would also be, to use Peter Singer’s (2011) concept, the determinant of the inside-outside purchase of a moral circle. A moral circle (which I appropriate from Singer’s expanding moral circle) (Singer, 2011, pp. 135, 137 & 191) is a social boundary drawn by a given social group to decide who is worthy of respect and social inclusion or exclusion. The colour line, in apartheid South Africa and Jim Crow America, is an example of a moral circle (see Singer, 2011, pp. 191-192). As Stoddard (1914, p. 44) has argued in the case of San Domingo [Haiti], the “colour line” that preserved “the purity of the white blood” also acted as the “best moral restraint upon the slaves.”

I am not trying to understand ‘blackness’ for its own sake as a metaphysical and philosophical enterprise. As a social justice project, my aim is to understand its social and moral implications since the classical antiquity [ancient Greece and Rome]. ‘Blackness’ as one of the standards through which the “distributive aspects of the basic structure of society are to be

assessed” has had grave moral consequences. Today, ‘blackness’ continues to shape the attitude of westerners toward continental and diaspora Africans (CADA). However, from the 1960s, ‘blackness’ has undergone a positive moral valuation that raises moral questions about its historical and modern currency. Below, through examples, I address the social control role ‘blackness’ has played historically and continues to play today. Because ‘blackness’ was used in the past to denigrate and exclude CADA, these examples may help explain why its modern normalization in popular and scholarly usage raises ethical questions worth critical analysis. In addition to the examples below, I will present in Chapter 5 the ethically problematic role ‘blackness’ played during slavery, imperial colonialism, and colour-based segregation.

Introduced as a place-holder identity for people who appeared strange to Europeans and Arabs (Blyden, 1905), ‘blackness’ has morphed from the African skin to the political and social realms (Snail, 2008; Walcott, 1997; Walter, 2007). Because of the limited nature of human contacts and interactions before Portuguese first abducted two Africans—a noble ‘Moor’ and a common ‘Mooress’—on the coast of Guinea in 1441 (de Azurrara, 1899), simple identifiers and prominent features became standard frames of reference for people whose identities and cultures were either unknown or appeared strange to Europeans. The focus on African features would, during the colonial period, lead to “forms and formulations of the colonial order [whose aims] were somehow the means of trivializing the whole traditional mode of life and its spiritual framework” (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 17). This ‘trivialization’, as I will discuss in Chapter 7, is witnessed in social services today (Adjei & Minka, 2018).

Because appearance was the most striking and prominent feature of Africans (George, 1958; Mbembe, 2017), outsiders tended to use appearances to describe Africans: Sudan, Guinea, Ethiopia, Nigritae, negro, black, nigger, etc. Limited interaction and the context of the contact did

not create a social condition in which different people would respectfully inquire about others' identities, values, and cultures. Since an appearance is something one can name without the need to ask the observed, it became the main way in which Africans were identified. Of course, no one can ask, 'what do you look like?' while observing the person being asked. Depending on the power relations and the context of the contact, these appearance-based identities became formalized into societal identities of those observed.

From the classical antiquity, dark-skinned residents of the African continent did not have the chance to be the one naming others so the ways through which they became known by others were always the creation of outsiders. While being named by outsiders is not always morally problematic (Appiah, 1992), 'blackness' has a problematic history that Mbembe (2017, p. 38) has described as a "vandalism of meaning." Even after close encounters, documented sources do not show that outsiders went beyond place-holder identities based on appearance to understand dark-skinned Africans from their own appellations. Describing the African skin became the naming of Africans and therefore, the power to control African images (hooks, 2015), identities (Wise, 2011; Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967]), art (Mudimbe, 1988), and moral outlook (Helper, 1868; Carroll, 1900). African art, for instance, was "viewed as primitive, simple, childish, and nonsensical" (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 23).

While ancient Greeks and Romans used appearance-based identities to describe continental Africans, they did not associate appearances with intellectual superiority and social sophistication in the way modern Europeans would do from the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Snowden, 1993, 1984, 1970). However, the encounter of modern Europeans with dark-skinned Africans coincided with a period of European self-understanding so Africans became quintessential to European self-elevation. Africans could not be understood from their own words, from their own cultures as the

epistemological and ethical horizon (Taylor, 2001). This would prove disastrous for Africans. African cultures, values and internally generated identities were subordinated to discursive formations that bolstered a European path to self-realization and global dominance. In this triumphalist match to the singularization of the world in the interest of the European new 'Man' (Foucault, 2002), Africans became, primarily, an appearance against which Europeans valorized their own appearances. It was the structuring of the world into "non-Western otherness to Western sameness" (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 85).

Undoubtedly, Africans did not have strong political and socio-intellectual systems to counteract European caricaturing discourses during slave and colonial regimes, so some of the caricatures became normalized. David Livingstone (1857) would write of "their wool and our hair" (p. 362); and Du Bois (2018 [1915]) would write that the African "hair varies from curly to a *wool-like mass*" (p. 5, emphasis added). Hair to Europeans; wool to Africans. Even when colonial identities were the basis of African enslavement, colonization, and segregation, Africans would still use some of these identities for self-realization and decolonization. These identities would not only be used against colonialism, but they would also be defended. As Mudimbe (1988) has argued, "Even in the most explicitly 'Afrocentric' descriptions, models of analysis explicitly or implicitly, knowingly or unknowingly, refer to the same [western] order" (p. 8). Using and defending colonial identities, even within a new, post-colonial context, I will argue, is problematic.<sup>1</sup>

This dissertation will therefore look at how these identities emerged (Chapters 4 & 5), how they have been used to control Africans and the relationship Africans have with them today. There

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 6 about the pride in 'blackness' from the 1960s. In this chapter, I discuss how CADA reconceptualized and *reclaimed* 'blackness' as an object of pride and resistance against discrimination and marginality. I will then present the challenges to this pride in Chapter 7.

is, I argue, an ethical risk that the modern utility of ‘blackness’ in scholarship and popular culture may be a discourse-disguised colonial apologia. That CADA are ‘black’ had and still has moral and social consequences that this dissertation will highlight. One of these consequences is that CADA seem stuck with colonial identities even though they have the creative and intellectual resources to either create new identities or revert to what Henry Paget (2006) has called spiritual identities that existed before colonialism and slavery. CADA scholars understand the denigration and marginalizing role colonial identities played in the past (Mbembe, 2017) and what they continue to do today (Maynard, 2017; Woldemikael & Woldemikael, 2021). Their normalization of colonial identities therefore seems like an inadvertent endorsement or defense of neo-colonialism, or as I have called it, a colonial apologia.

In this chapter, I discuss the research background and my positionality. My past and present—in Sudan and in Canada—are all affected by the spectre of appearance appellations.<sup>2</sup> This will be followed by the research problem, questions, the purpose, and the scope.

### **Research Background and Personal Encounter with ‘Blackness’**

As a child I have always wondered why human beings used colours to categorize themselves and create identities. I naively assumed that colours were only appropriate for animals that have no cultures and animal-generated identities. When I first saw the people who were described as *kəc|kəi yer* (white people), I was a student in Itang Refugee Camp (Ethiopia) in the late 1980s. I did not understand why they were called *kəi yer* when their appearance did not resemble the whiteness of the papers on which we wrote. It was merely a childhood curiosity I

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<sup>2</sup> These appellations (and their historical spectre) continue to determine where people live, the jobs they get, whether or not they are stopped by the police, whether or not they are elected to a political office, etc. This is how colour-based identity are still relevant in social justice today.

could not anchor socially or intellectually so it became lost in the complexities of my other experiences during the Sudanese civil war (1983-2005). Like Richard Wright (1945, p. 21) in *Black Boy*, *kɔi yɛr* “were merely people like other people, yet somehow strangely different.” They were strange to me in appearance, but they were people, nonetheless.<sup>3</sup>

But in Sudan, appearance differentials between *Junubiyiin* (Southerners/Africans) and *Shumaliyin* (Northerners/Arabs) were a social and political reality. However, I did not associate them with ‘blackness’ nor did I think the lightness of skin appearance was a measure of inherent human values, intellect, and integrity. I heard in local Jieeng songs expressions such as *tiɔp|tiɔm col cɪr wo* (a land black like us). But I also heard expressions such as *raan col piöu* (a black hearted person), which means a *bad* person. I did not think much about these social contradictions. But these assumptions and curiosities were further confounded by my experience as a refugee in Kenya where Kenyans, most of whom had lighter skin appearances than South Sudanese, described us as *mweusi kama makaa* (as black as charcoal). Most of the time, however, our academic performances far exceeded theirs, so it would have been ludicrous for them to advance any moral argument about inferiority.

However, adulthood and intellectual growth made me aware that Kenyans described us in the local Swahili language as *mweusi kama makaa* [as black as a charcoal] from colonial discourses that originated from outside the African cultural mindscape (Taiwo, 2010). They were following power contours of the colonial current. In Foucault’s (1982) theory of power—power relations—Kenyans described South Sudanese to be *mweusi kama makaa* as a “modes of action upon possible action, the action of others” (p. 794). In this power relation, the imperial action, in its Foucauldian (1982, p. 791) “social nexus”, acted on Kenyans’ action, leading to their attitudinal action on South

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<sup>3</sup> Europeans did not think that way about Africans in the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries (see Jordan, 1974)



Sudanese. In Chapter 4, I will trace the origin of this imperial/colonial attitude to the classical antiquity where European intellectuals have been anchoring their ideas from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

And in Sudan, I learned that the word ‘Sudan’ from Arabic *bilad el Sudan*—the land of the ‘blacks’—was associated with ‘blackness’ and ‘blackness’ with slavery. I also learned that Northern Sudanese referred to themselves as ‘Arabs,’ not ‘Sudanese’, for fear of being associated with slavery until the 1920s (Sharkey, 2008) when ‘Sudanese’ became central to ‘Sudanese nationalism’ against the Anglo-Egyptian imperial rule of Sudan (Kuol, 2020). I also learned that Sudanese Arabs would rather describe their skin as ‘green’ or ‘brown’ to avoid using ‘black’ (Deng, n.d., p. 13). This colour complexity led to Southern Sudanese being excluded, marginalized, or tokenized in the Sudanese governance, socio-political and socioeconomic structures. This is where ‘blackness’, as an exclusionary tool, becomes morally problematic, something we see today in Canada (Maynard, 2017).

Therefore, when I arrived in Canada in 2002, the little I had understood until then about ‘blackness’ became exacerbated by the complicated (yet bewildering) nature of identity in North America and the western world generally. I had come to a place where identity based on appearance was, to use Eldridge Cleavers’ (1991[1968]) expression, the first line of defence. But I also realized that while appearance played a central role in people’s lives, it was officially taken for granted that people are ‘black’, ‘white’, ‘brown’ or ‘yellow.’ But informally, and even formally, people questioned why they were called ‘brown’ or ‘black’. Obama (2007) is a ‘black’ man with a ‘brown’ skin. That is a contradiction. Society’s dominant discourses make him see these contradictions, yet Obama operationalizes ‘blackness’ in the way it was conceptualized by

CADE as if these contradictions do not exist or are less important.<sup>4</sup> But I started to listen to people, to read and analyze these contradictions. I could not ignore them.

A former co-worker once told me how her son told her that he was not ‘black’ but ‘beige’. The son did not understand why he was told to self-describe as ‘black’ when he did not see any ‘blackness’ on his skin. My co-worker could not explain the complexities of ‘blackness’ to a child, so she just advised him to accept that “we are black.” When I gave a presentation in Melbourne, Australia, in October of 2013, a young South Sudanese man told me how he told a European-Australian girl who had called him ‘black’ that he was not ‘black’ but just ‘dark’. I later learned that assault on people’s perception of themselves—this image in the third person according to Fanon (2008 [1952])—is what some scholars describe as “epistemic violence” (Hall, 1996a, p. 445). This “oppressive language”, Toni Morrison argues (1997, p. 49), “does more than represent violence; it is violence.”

This background, coupled with the contradictory nature of scholarship on ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’ partly inspired this research undertaking to understand how discursive identities that have caused a lot of pain during slavery (Du Bois, 1999 [1903]) and imperial colonialism (Mbembe, 2017; Taiwo, 2010), and continue to cause a lot of pain today (Maynard, 2017), eclipsed meaningful identities based on *cultures* and *places* of origin. Embracing colonial identities is, to use Hall’s (1996a) apt expression, “the internalization of the self-as-other” (p. 445). Below is the presentation of how this background has generated deeper intellectual and scholarly problems that have necessitated the research questions answered in the dissertation.

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<sup>4</sup> I will use Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony through consent (see Chapter 3) to make sense of these contradictions. Through the hegemony of western *epistemes* and *epistemologies*, CADA tend to accept some concepts and use them even when they acknowledge their morally problematic implications today and in the past.

## The Research Problem

‘Blackness’ has been well studied (Allen, 1994; Jordan, 1974; Painter, 2010; Tsri, 2016b; Snowden, 1993, 1970, 1984). Its contemporary ontological and epistemological status, however, continues to raise moral problems. It continues to play a role in CADA’s exclusion, denigration, and aesthetic judgments. Historical moral problems of ‘blackness’ started in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when it was used by philosophers, scientists, and the slave regimes to initiate and maintain what has become the socioeconomic station of CADA today. What makes these historical problems ethically concerning is how ‘blackness’ determined the place of CADA on the *great chain of being* (Wynter, 2003). This mythical ladder was recreated by Europeans in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as they grappled with self-understanding and the new power inspired by Enlightenment ideals and capitalist expansion (Mbembe, 2017) following the decline of Islamic historical competitors (Russell-Wood, 1978; Sweet, 1997).

Reappropriated from Plato’s and Aristotle’s hierarchy of cosmological entities (Lovejoy, 2001), *the great chain of being* with God on top and the lowest plants at the bottom was repurposed for the hierarchy of humanity from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but mostly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the new ‘Man’ as he restructured the world while claiming to be merely studying it (Foucault, 2002). This chain of being became Europe’s powerful self-elevation tool in a world in which Europeans, not God, were on top. This is also the period in which the intellectual tradition that shaped the modern world started. This was the era of, to use Antonio Gramsci’s expression, “the formation of [modern western] intellectuals” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 134). More about ‘the formation of intellectuals’ in Chapter 3.

Initially, Europeans did not consider Africans to be humans. Placing CADA at the bottom of the new great chain was therefore an elevation: animals to humans (Williams, 1882; Mbembe,

2017). After this elevation to the human realm, it was still not apparent to Europeans at the time what to do with Africans or how to rationalize their existence. The Portuguese exploration to the coast of Guinea in 1440s and the discovery of the New World in 1492 (Braude 1997; Lugard, 1922) gave Europeans the answers they needed. Initially, European interest in exploring the coast of Africa was to find a path to India. Africa was not of much interest to Europeans. However, Lugard (1922)<sup>5</sup> argues that Africa became important after the discovery of the New World and the establishment of plantation economies of the Americas. In the new reality of European global supremacy, Africans would not be valued as beings with humanity but as useful entities with “thingness” (Mbembe, 2017, p. 3). African humanity and elevation therefore became complicated by the new realities: should they be Christianized against Islam or become economic tools in European economic supremacy?<sup>6</sup> In this new reality, the ‘thingness’ of Africans became more important than their humanity. Christianizing the world became less important than dominating it politically and economically from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Let me briefly explain the relevance and the relationship between Christianity and European economic domination of the world from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

European self-discovery and the discovery of the rest of the world emerged together. This means that, at first, Christianity was more important in European interaction with the ‘discovered’ natives of the world before capitalism overtook Christianity as the *raison d’être* of European global exploration and dominance.

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<sup>5</sup> I use Lugard here not for the historical truth in his work and thoughts about the African colonial reality, necessarily. I use him because he was instrumental in shaping local colonial administrations in British colonies. His words and thoughts reflect the attitude of the time and their contradictions.

<sup>6</sup> I discuss in Chapter 5 how the initial Portuguese exploration at the coast of Guinea in the 1440s was more *religious* than *economic*. It was not initially a search for slaves as commonly believed by historians. Christianity, since the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE until Enlightenment ideals *reduced* its political and intellectual dominance, defined European self-identity and earlier exploration exploits.

First, Africans' souls had to be saved in the interest of the martial European Christendom before their economic utility became apparent from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the period of plantation economies. Second, when Europeans in the New World realized the physical utility of Africans over Native Americans and European indentured servants to plantation regimes (Phillips, 1929) of the colonial America, the African soul became less important. Third, the utility of Africans to the plantation economies (Williams, 1944) was maintained through the othering of Africans through philosophical, scientific, religious, and social epistemologies. In these three cases, European intellectuals played a key role in shaping ideas toward Africans.

Regardless of how Africans were rationalized in the European consciousness, they would only be considered things, *beings-for-others* (Sartre, 1943, p. 49). As American King of soul music, James Brown, would put it more than four centuries later, "I worked on jobs with my feet and my hands/But all the work I did was for the other man." CADA have been socially and economically immobilized at the stage Portuguese defined for them from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The context and justification may have changed. However, CADA are still at the bottom.

Characterized as beings without culture and admirable values, Africans became virtual objects: 'black' *things*. To Europeans, there was nothing heuristic about African cultures, values, and self-identification. An African as an 'animal' or a 'thing' can neither think nor have values to consider. As William Shephard (1916) noted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, "Many times in Central Africa foreigners get into serious difficulties from which they cannot extricate themselves by disregarding the advice of native" (p. 39). This colonial attitude continues in some forms today. The examples below illustrate this attitude.

When South African scientists told the world in November 2021 about the new, highly infectious COVID-19 variant [Omicron] whose symptoms are mild, the CADE world did not take

them seriously. As professor Shabir Madhi has argued, “It seems like high-income countries are much more able to absorb bad news that comes from countries like South Africa” (Harding, 2022). This is the proverbial ‘Dark Continent’ view of Africa (Conrad, 2007). He added that “When we’re providing good news, all of a sudden there’s a whole lot of scepticism. I would call that racism.” Here the past meets the present. Even when lettered Europeans acknowledged that Africans had worthy cultures, values, capabilities, and identities worthy of note (Frobenius, 1913),<sup>7</sup> it was nearly impossible for Europeans to get used to African appearances. As German Anthropologists Hermann Burmeister (1853) has argued, “I have never seen anything uglier than a negro foot in a white stocking and shoe; it is quite insufferable” (p. 7).

The strangeness of African appearance eclipsed every other human reality about Africans in the European consciousness. With appearance as the most important characteristic of Africans in the consciousness of Europeans (Mbembe, 2017; George, 1958; Meisenhelder, 2013), demeaning descriptions became prevalent in scientific, philosophical, and social discourses. Burmeister added:

The disgusting-looking protruded belly of the ourang-outang can be observed in all the delineations of that ugly animal, and is a feature of the negro, which is an essential cause of his ugliness, and that peculiar corporal appearance which I cannot help terming beastlike. (1853, p. 10)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> My use of writers like Leo Frobenius and Leo Africanus (and Lugard as noted earlier) is to show their attitude toward Africans during the periods in which they interacted with continental Africans and how this attitude aligned, or did not align, with European thinking of the time.

<sup>8</sup> This attitude toward the ‘negro’ became standardized and normalized by intellectuals in Europe and the Americas. It is this intellectualized attitude toward Africans that gives Philosopher Immanuel Kant the epistemological and ethical authority to say this of an African man: “[this] fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear *proof* that what he said was *stupid*” (Kant, cited in Eze, 1997, p. 120, emphasis added).

There was no moral qualm when describing CADA. This ethical status would epitomize inferiority because of skin colour: ‘blackness’. For the Portuguese and the Spanish, the African was *negro*; for the French, *noire* or *negre*; for the English, *black*, for the Dutch, *zwart*, etc. In this colour-based conceptualization of Africans and their identities, it became less important that CADA was a Zulu, a Nuer, a Gikuyu, an Ibo, a Herero, an Oromo, a Wolof, a Mandingo, a Swahili, etc. CADA would become what CADE constructed without any room for them to say, ‘No, this is who we are!’ Through what Mbembe (2017, p. 38) has called a “vandalism of meaning”, CADA’s identity became a prerogative and the plaything of CADE’s intellectualism, science, and politics (Isaac, 2004; Mbembe, 2017; Mudimbe, 1988).

Leo Frobenius (1913, p. 32) relates how he was mocked when he sought funds to go to Africa and study pre-historic African civilizations and their cultural artifacts for German museums. But he insisted, found some research funds, and went to West Africa. ‘There was no laughing’ after his discoveries. In his travel in Nigeria and Cameroon, Frobenius found artefacts that, by European standards, qualified as inventions of an ancient civilization. Some of the artefacts he sent back to Germany while he was in the field made German financiers acknowledge the value of his West African mission.

It may not be clear today why CADA is still not respected. In the past, however, CADA was either useful to Europeans or expendable: be our slave or ‘go to Africa’ or die. After the abolition of slavery Hinton Helper (1867, p. 279) charged: “As thoroughly and as speedily as possible must the negro be fossilized.” For Helper, therefore, the natural, God-sanctioned fate of CADA was a complete extermination from the face of the earth: “fourteen millions of negroes on this side of the Atlantic [the Americas], and fifty-five millions on the other side [Africa], will soon be taught that the time allotted for their tenancy above ground is now fast expiring” (1867, p. 83).

It is difficult for identities created or conceptualized with this attitude (Burmeister's and Helper's) to be respectful of Africans. With this attitude, Africans were denigrated, dehumanized, and humiliated using appearance. As Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 189) has argued, the CADA "*appearance* undermines and invalidates all his actions" (original emphasis).

The presence of Africans among Europeans caused anxiety even when Africans wanted to help or were useful. Here are some Canadian examples. On March 27, 1847, London [Ontario] Auxiliary Bible Society wrote that "If any Colored Child enters a School, the white children are withdrawn" (cited in Walker, 1985, p. 4). On October 28, 1943, Globe and Mail published a statement by African-Canadian students about being shut out of opportunities as graduates even during the war (Walker, 1985, p. 5). My point in giving these examples, which are about a century apart, is to show that "appearances", regardless of CADA's moral values as human beings, were against them. Appearance invalidated their actions in 1840s Ontario, it continued to invalidate their actions in 1940s Ontario, and still invalidates their actions today (Maynard, 2017). According to Meisenhelder (2003), "The resulting European "imaginary" – the African other – is built upon a representation of the colour of the body which lies at the core of racist beliefs even today" (p. 110).

This is perhaps why former English footballer, Ian Wright, thinks the world does not respect the African Cup of Nations the way it respects other intra-continental tournaments: "There are players getting asked if they will be honouring the call-ups to their national teams. Imagine if that was an England player representing the Three Lions. Can you imagine the furore?" (BBC News, 2021a). Ian Wright protested: "There is no greater honour than representing your country. The coverage is completely tinged with racism." Wright's statement shows how little has changed



regarding Europeans' attitude toward Africans even when this attitude is not as explicitly expressed as it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup>

But here is, in my view, where 'blackness' becomes problematic: its normalization by scholars (CADA and CADE). Today, it is used to make sense of CADA's global identity, forge 'black' solidarity (Tsri, 2016b), buttress resistance projects (Walcott, 1997) and cement colour-based pride (Taylor, 2010; Williams, 1969; Ture & Hamilton, 2011[1967]). For some scholars, therefore, 'blackness' no longer carries the historical stigma it has signified for CADA for centuries as noted in Kant's, Helper's and Burmeister's quotes above.

Consequently, 'blackness' has morphed (or it has been reconfigured by CADA) into an ethically prideful order of consciousness (Taylor, 2010; Williams, 1969). The modern moral configuration of 'blackness' is an epistemic product of CADA's intellectualism and scholarship. It is no longer forced. Apparently, 'blackness' is no longer ugly but beautiful. As Chipkin (2002, p. 569) has argued, "blackness" has become a "*sublime object*... beautiful and pristine" (original emphasis). The transition of 'blackness' from the signifier of ugliness to the signifier of beauty presupposes that there is a morally acceptable 'blackness' of the present (Chipkin's) and a morally unacceptable 'blackness' of the past (Helper's 'blackness'). The civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, proclaimed this morally acceptable 'blackness' in the 1960s: "I want to get the language so right here that everybody will cry out, 'Yes, I'm black, I'm proud of it. I am black and beautiful'" (Music Man Speaks, 2014).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "Then let us at once do away with all our antipathy to snakes! Let us cease to hate fiends!" (Helper, 1867, p. 84).

<sup>10</sup> This is, apparently, the *reclaimed* 'blackness' of the 1960s I will discuss in detail in chapter 6. Eldridge Cleaver (1991[1968]), for instance, criticized James Baldwin's analysis of the Negro-African Writers conference of 1956 in Paris (see Baldwin (1993 [1954], pp. 13- 55)). Baldwin was critical of the conference, so Cleaver argued that the conference writers were "glorying in their blackness, seeking and showing their pride in Negritude and the African Personality" (p. 125).

What remains shrouded in colonial and postcolonial ambivalence are the kinds of ‘blackness’ implied in this discursive transition from an *ugly* ‘blackness’ to a *beautiful* ‘blackness’ because ‘blackness’ still subjects CADA people to denigration, colour-based exclusion, and colour-based hatred. For instance, Papish (2015, p. 5) admitted that African-Americans “are classified as black and are vulnerable to anti-black racism in contemporary United States.”

Today, ‘blackness’ still plays a role in assigning “basic rights and duties and to determine the division of social benefits” (Rawls, 1999, p. 10). Rawls, of course, does not use ‘blackness’; he uses ‘race’ as one of ‘social positions’ used to apply principles of justice for the basic structure of society. It therefore plays a role in the distribution of societal goods such as benevolence (Taylor, 2001).<sup>11</sup> For instance, On June 2, 2020, the Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Marie-Claude Landry, stated in a press statement that, “Many people of African descent in Canada feel threatened or unsafe every day because of the *colour of their skin*” (emphasis added) (CHRC, 2020). Twenty-seven years after the official end of apartheid in South Africa, the town of Orania in Northern Cape is still a “whites only” space where “Black people are restricted to using the petrol station on the edge of Orania” (Webster, 2019). For Orania’s residents, ‘blackness’ is enough a moral gauge to devalue nearly fifty million native Africans in South Africa as *all* morally objectionable, as *all* excludable.

The problems this section raises are therefore the following. ‘Blackness’ was used in the past to denigrate CADA and it continues to be used to marginalize and denigrate CADA. The argument that seems to suggest that ‘blackness’ has been successfully delinked from its oppressive past usage is not supported by evidence. That ‘blackness’ is now ‘sublime’ as Chipkin has argued or that it no longer carries historical stigmas becomes controversial when CADA are today judged

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<sup>11</sup> This is how ‘blackness’ features in social work practice today. More in Chapter 7.

and excluded by their ‘blackness’ in Orania and “feel threatened or unsafe every day because of the colour of their skin’ in Canada” (CHRC, 2020). This therefore leads to the guiding research questions.

## **Research Questions**

If modern ‘blackness’ is no longer the ‘blackness’ of Hinton Helper (1867), for instance, then its transition has been effected by some knowledge or political regimes. It is therefore important to know what these regimes are today. Historically, these knowledge and political regimes have been CADE’s (Mudimbe, 1988; Said, 1978). African marginality as typified by Ian Wright’s and the COVID-19 examples given earlier seem to have immobilized CADA in the past. Fanon (1982 [1963]) has referred to this immobilization as cultural mummification.

CADA’s lives are still affected by social, political, and economic use of ‘blackness’ as examples above show. It is therefore important to interrogate how ‘blackness’ has transitioned from ugly to beautiful (as some scholars now claim), and what discursive regimes of truth anchor this change. Burning ethical questions therefore remain whether modern discourses on ‘blackness’ in the context of social justice and moral regard of CADA people have been “detached from [their] historical referents (notions of oppression, alienation and exploitation)” (Papish, 2015, p. 569). I discuss this in detail in Chapters 6 and 7.

The analysis above and the findings (presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6) in this dissertation point at what Ture and Hamilton (2011 [1967]) suggested in *Black Power* 54 years ago: “The black man was little more than a political football, to be tossed and kicked around at the convenience of others whose position was more secure” (p. 70). This echoes what Fanon has argued in *Black Skin*,

*White Masks*: “The black man is a toy in the hand of the white man” (2008 [1952], p.119). The ‘black man’ is still a political football.<sup>12</sup>

This dissertation therefore addresses the following questions based on assumptions scholars make about ‘blackness’:

1) How has ‘blackness’ been successfully delinked from its denigrating and exclusionary historical role as the axis around which the oppression of CADA people revolved?

2) What discursive regimes govern the transition of ‘blackness’ from an ethic of denigration to an ethic of pride?

3) Are these governing regimes liberatory systems or are they colonial schemes whose hegemonic power has been accepted in a Gramscian sense?<sup>13</sup>

4) Do these discursive regimes consider CADA phenomenological skin appearance and literal blackness as one and the same or have they decoupled ‘blackness’ from CADA body?

These questions guided the research in this dissertation as a decolonial project. They have also steered my research within a social justice context. As such, the dissertation has aimed at thinking about ‘blackness’ outside, as I will argue, the colonial epistemological control and free of the scholarly ‘bad faith.’<sup>14</sup>

## **Research Purpose**

Considering the above historical and contemporary problems and the attendant questions, this dissertation has aimed at interrogating contemporary and historical moral problems produced by ‘blackness’ when used as an identity of CADA people globally. The dissertation discussion will therefore swing between the past and the present to challenge what scholars present as a new,

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<sup>12</sup> See Carmody’s (2017) *The New Scramble for Africa* by China, Russia, and the West.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 3 on Antonio Gramsci’s Theory of Hegemony through consent.

<sup>14</sup> See the following section about ‘bad faith’.

evolved understanding of ‘blackness’ that seems to have been freed (delinked) from its dark history. While these scholars acknowledge this dark history, I remain unconvinced that ‘blackness’ as used today is functionally different from ‘blackness’ of the slave and colonial regimes. Given the complexity of the subject as understood in the colonial and post-colonial contexts, the dissertation critically addresses the following ethical problematics.

### ***Bad faith***

There is a considerable consensus among CADA scholars, something that is clear in postcolonial and decolonial projects that argue that CADA should define themselves in their own terms using ideas outside Eurocentric epistemologies and historicity (Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967]; Hountondji, 1996). However, there still exists a scholarly tendency, as this dissertation will show, by CADA scholars to circle back to colonial identities (Negritude and ‘Black’ Power’ being examples). They document social and moral problems associated with ‘blackness’ but still embrace ‘blackness’. This is ‘bad faith’.

‘Bad faith’ is the process of allowing others to think for oneself (Flynn, 2006). It is also ‘bad faith’ when one acknowledges a given reality to be true but then act contrary to the acknowledged *truth*. For instance, CADA scholars document and acknowledge the historical atrocities committed in the name of ‘blackness.’ They, however, sanitize it by giving it morally positive meanings (Walter, 2007; Foster, 2002). This is the normalization, or the reclamation, of ‘blackness.’ In this normalization (or reclamation), social justice inclined CADA and CADE scholars have challenged how colonial regimes used ‘blackness’ to project CADA as animals or inferior beings who deserved the vile treatments they suffered on the slave plantations and as objects of imperial colonialism. Instead of discarding colonial, appearance-based identities, they repurpose them against intellectual and economic colonialism and neo-colonialism.

### *Naturalization of 'Blackness'*

One of the issues scholars who study race agree on is that 'blackness' has no ontological basis in biology (Baldwin, 1993 [1962]; Foster, 2002; Gilroy, 1991; Hall, 1996a; hooks, 2015; Kelly, 1998; West, 2017 [1995]; Prah, 1998; Tsri, 2016a). This means that 'blackness' is a social product of CADE social control and self-elevation discourse not a phenomenon experientially derived from CADA bodies. However, there are analyses of 'blackness' that risk naturalizing 'blackness' onto CADA skins. For example, Foster (2002) discusses various types of 'blackness', most of which he understands to be products of colour-based exclusion and denigration discourse in Canada. In addition to ideal, cultural and status 'blackness', he includes a category of 'blackness' he calls "somatic blackness" (Foster, 2002, p. 6). Somatic blackness is the 'blackness' of the skin. These four categories of 'blackness, according to Foster, are products of European-Canadian power discourse regarding the structuring of the Canadian society. However, somatic blackness is the only category that raises moral questions regarding the risk of naturalizing 'blackness.'

Somatic blackness, I argue, presupposes the blackness of the body or the skin as it is "based racially and genetically on the colour of the epidermal skin layer" (Foster, 2002, p. 6). Status 'blackness' is based on the proletarianization of CADA and their struggle for social justice and equality. Cultural 'blackness' means CADA status of mind, system of beliefs and spiritual outlook. Most of these cultural characteristics are rationalized as rooted in passion, desires, evil and death. Ideal 'blackness', Foster argues, is the evaluative category that positions CADA as the opposite of the positive moral virtues 'whiteness' represents for CADE.

Like Foster, Shelby (2002) discusses four types of 'blackness': racist, ethnic, cultural and kinship. Racist 'blackness' is based on "special genotype in the biological make-up of all (fully)

black people that does not exist among nonblacks” (p. 240). Ethnic ‘blackness’ is “a matter of shared ancestry and common cultural heritage” (p. 240). Cultural ‘blackness’ is premised on shared system of beliefs, values and practices. Kinship ‘blackness’ is premised on a filial relationship.

While only one of Foster’s categories (somatic) raises moral questions here, three of Shelby’s categories [racialist, ethnic and kinship] do. I must add that both Foster and Shelby do not themselves naturalize ‘blackness’; their discussions, however, run the risk. This will be discussed in detail in chapter 6 and 7 between ‘blackness’ as an intellectual product of European colonial discourse and will-to-power, and CADA body as it naturally *is* before discursive and theoretical conceptualization of the body. This is the difference between what Bhabha (1994) has called the signified (body/skin) and the signifier (‘blackness’).

### ***Linear transition from ‘Coloured’ to ‘Negro’ to ‘Black’***

From the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Africans lost control over their cultural identities. Not only did European imperialists and American slave institutions change their cultural identities, but they also replaced cultural identities with appearance-based identities. ‘Negro’, ‘coloured’, ‘people of colour’, ‘blacks’, ‘mulatto’, among other appellations, have been used over time to describe Africans or people of mixed European and African ancestry. What has entered scholarship and popular culture is that these names were used and abandoned in a linear manner (Smith, 1992). Apparently, there is a neat linearity ascribed to the emergence and the use of these colour-coded identities.

Henry Louis Gates for example wrote in his college application essay that “My grandfather was colored, my father is Negro, and I am Black” (Gates & West, 1995, p. 17). The dissertation will show that this linearity is discursive not historical. A Foucauldian genealogy from the classical antiquity to the present will help shed some light on this assumed linearity (see chapters 4 & 5).

During Gates' grandfather's time, 'coloured', 'negro' and 'black' were used interchangeably or concurrently. For example, Burmeister (1853) used 'African Negro' and 'Black Man' in the same title. In *The Afro-American*, published in 1894, W.E.B. Du Bois (2010) exemplified this non-linearity when he used 'coloured man', 'black man', 'blacks', 'negro' and 'Afro-American' as identity anchors in the same article.

### ***Normalization of 'Blackness' as a Morally Acceptable Appellation***

Scholars are very clear about the morally problematic role of 'blackness' in the historical and contemporary oppression of CADA. Mbembe (2017) has argued that CADE used 'blackness' to "imprison [CADA] in the dungeon of appearance." Many scholars agree with Mbembe as I will discuss in this dissertation. The 'Negritude Movement' of the 1920s and 1930s by the then Paris-based Francophone writers, the emergence of the 'Black Consciousness Movement' in the United States and South Africa discursively changed 'blackness' from a signifier of shame to an object of pride. Petrine Archer-Straw (2000) has also shown how CADA intellectuals and artists produced works that fascinated Europeans leading to what she described as 'Negrophilia' in France. While the ontology and meaning of 'blackness' remained in the discursive realm, in social grammar, it was no longer (confusedly) a colour. It became a social condition, a way of life, a prominent signifier of CADA being-in-the-world. In Haiti, wrote Césaire (2014, p. 29), "negritude rose to its feet for the first time." And this negritude ('blackness') was measured by suffering, not "cephalic index, or plasma, or soma" (p.70).

While this reappropriation (reclaiming) of this supposedly 'decolonial' meaning of 'blackness' for resistive purposes (Dei, 2018) had had a discursively positive impact against Jim Crow and imperial colonialism in Africa, it ignores or downplays an epistemological angle that



risks compromising what is in praxis an anti-colonial agency.<sup>15</sup> A truly decolonial agency in my view would be a recourse to what Henry Paget (2006) has called spiritual identities. This dissertation critically evaluates this oversight through Gramscian hegemony to show how this complicity has social justice and epistemological implications. While it was CADE scholars and intelligentsia who “imprisoned [CADA] in the dungeon of appearance” (Mbembe, 2017, p. 2), the modern perpetuator of this ‘imprisonment’ is no longer CADE but CADA themselves. As Tsri (2016b) has argued, continental Africans call themselves ‘black’ as an unconscious acceptance of colonial conditions in a post-colonial Africa. This is why Joyce tells Obama (2007) with utter resignation that

I’m not black...I’m multiracial...It’s not white people who are making me choose. Maybe it used to be that way, but now they’re willing to treat me like a person. No-it’s black people who always have to make everything racial. They’re the ones making me choose. They’re the ones who are telling me that I can’t be who I am. (p. 99)<sup>16</sup>

Joyce’s response is accurate, but it is a cultural and intellectual abomination in America. In social and scholarly normalization of ‘blackness’ of Negritude, CADA come from a colour, not a place; they are coloured not cultured. I will defend Joyce’s position against Obama’s and Gate’s this-is-America-you-cannot-choose defeatist paradigm (also see Gates, 1997, p. xvii). But I must

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<sup>15</sup> Dei’s (2018) paper, for example, is premised on a decolonial epistemology but he makes what I consider a detour to colonial appellations. He argues that there are African cultures in which blackness has a positive meaning. This is literal blackness. It is not the ‘blackness’ of the African skin. Since Africans have ‘spiritual’ identities, I’m not sure why Dei finds it necessary to associate blackness as a literal colour, and the ‘blackness’ of Africans that is a social construct. This is what I see as the risk of naturalizing ‘blackness.’

<sup>16</sup> Joyce is a mixed-raced woman. In the past, European-Americans dictated this construct and proscribed her identity choices; but according to her argument against Obama, she believes her choice of identity is no longer controlled by European-Americans but by African-Americans.

also add that Joyce may be overplaying the social and epistemological power of ‘black people’ to force ‘blackness’ on her. *Consent through hegemony* (see Chapter 3) may be operational here.

### ***Solidarity Without ‘Blackness’***

One of the most successful social and political utilities of ‘blackness’ is its usefulness in forging a solidaristic front against colour prejudice, social exclusion, and economic marginality (Tsri, 2016a; Dei, 2018). This is not only worth acknowledging, but also defending. But through a postcolonial lens that tries to rethink how colonialism oversimplified identities of the colonized, the use of ‘blackness’ as a solidaristic, resistive and political tool raises ethical questions about agency that Dei (2018) referenced. The question it raises is whether it was not possible to forge this resistance and solidarity without ‘blackness’. The dissertation will, however, show that it is possible to avoid ‘blackness’, maintain group solidarity, when necessary, as in anti-discriminatory initiatives, and still be proud of oneself. While ‘blackness’ has offered effective resistive and solidaristic tools, it has also maintained the colonial alienation of CADA from themselves.

For instance, ‘Black is Beautiful’ is, I have argued, an alienation from oneself. A discursive self, ‘black’ becomes what CADA is *proud* of. ‘I am beautiful’ or ‘my skin is beautiful’ becomes inadequate as an expression of CADA’s self-praise because the self is alienated from any positive self-expression unless ‘black’—which is not part of the skin—is discursively attached to it. Césaire (2014, p. 29) reveals this alienation from the self when he argued that in Haiti, “negritude rose to its feet for the first time.” This alienation is also shown by Cleaver (1991 [1968]): The Negro-African writers in 1956 Conference in Paris were “glorying in their blackness” (p. 125). One of the major epistemic influences of colonial ideas is that they dictated what CADA should valorize. Césaire uses ‘negritude’ [‘blackness’] to represent the Haitian people and Cleaver uses ‘blackness’ to represent CADA writers. Phenomenology, one of the theories discussed in Chapter

3, will be used to attempt the return of CADA to themselves beyond their discursive ['black'] selves.<sup>17</sup>

To address the above four issues, and given the complexity of 'blackness', I had to grapple with ways to make the topic manageable through a reasonable scope as presented below.

## **Research Scope**

In this section, I discuss the research scope and its rationale. This involves my initial plans regarding the scope, how the scope became complex and how I was able to, in my view, manage to resolve the problem. The first section deals with people who identify as 'black' but are excluded from the scope. The second section looks at how my scope changed and why. The last section looks at how the problem with geographical vastness, which threatened to complicate the dissertation's scope, resolved itself.

### ***Exclusion Criteria: The Excluded 'Black People'***

Admittedly, 'blackness' as a signifier and a description of skin appearance was (and still is) not confined to CADA. Essentially, for the ease of social control from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, CADE scholars, scientists and politicians also used 'blackness' to describe and categorize some non-Africans in Asia and Australasia (Gordon, 2014a; Taylor, 2010). This dissertation will therefore limit the analysis of 'blackness' and its moral implications to CADA through their historical Transatlantic Slave Trade connection and their contemporary cultural connections as illustriously shown by Paul Gilroy (1991, 1993). While the former connection was historically conditioned by

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<sup>17</sup> I will not, necessarily, be prescribing the identity or the colour to be adopted by CADA so I must make a note here about this. To avoid the risk of dictating the colour by which CADA should self-identify, CADA body in all its physical splendour, is presented to CADA to tell the world what they see. Will they return to 'blackness' as their phenomenological self and forge solidarity without 'blackness'? CADE's knowledge regimes have historically dictated what CADA *should see*.

slavery and colonization, the latter connection has been a condition of socioeconomic marginality and collective suffering stemming from colour prejudice (Cleaver, 1991[1968]; Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967]; Narayan, 2019; Austin, 2007). As A. Sivanandan has argued in his interview with Kwesi Owusu, “[Black] had been the colour of our politics not the colour of our skin, the colour of the fight—because of the common experience of racism and colonialism that bound us – something unique to Britain” (2016, p. 12). What is ‘unique to Britain’ is not ‘political blackness’ but that ‘blackness’ unified Afro-Caribbean, Continental Africans, and Asians in Britain against collective marginality (Gilroy, 1991; Owusu, 2016; Narayan, 2019). This is the collectivizing capacity of ‘blackness’ that Mbembe has called the becoming ‘black’ of the world (Mbembe, 2017; Marriot, 2018).

In addition to the exclusion of the ‘blacks’ of the Australasia and Asia, the dissertation also excludes diaspora Africans, who were enslaved through the Sahara Desert and the Indian Ocean (Williams, 1974) unless a comparative reference to them is thematically and ethically necessary. These millions of Africans were also forcefully abducted and sold by Arab and Muslim slave merchants in North Africa, the Mediterranean Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East. For these diaspora Africans, the trade routes were through the Sahara between tropical Africa and the Mediterranean coast of Africa, and the Indian Ocean from the East African Coast.

One example of these notorious slave merchants of East Coast of Africa was Hamad bin Muhammad El-Murjebi of Zanzibar, commonly known as “Tippu Tip” by East and Central Africans of the time (Meredith, 2014; Page, 1974). Tippu Tip travelled nearly 2000 miles in search of African slaves, who were then sold to slave plantations in Zanzibar or sold to the Middle East. For instance, According to Du Bois (2007 [1930]) “On the east coast of Africa in 1862 nineteen thousand slaves were passed into Zanzibar and thence into Arabia and Persia.” The second slave

merchant was Muhammed Abu Sammat of Sudan, who went into the interior of what is now South Sudan to abduct and enslave African tribes (Schweinfurth, 1878).

While ‘blackness’ is now used by those I am excluding from the scope, I have also found that contemporary ‘blackness’ gained its prominence in the Americas (especially the USA) because of the transatlantic slave trade, the colonization/decolonization of Africa by European imperial powers, and the African-American involvement in African decolonization project (Mbembe, 2017). While these areas are being excluded, it is also important to note that African decolonization and the civil rights movement in the United States as the hegemonic centre of global culture, politics, and epistemology, have shaped the global utility of ‘blackness’.

For most, if not all these groups (those included and excluded), colonization and anti-discriminatory projects necessitated solidaristic appellations to address their social, political, and economic conditions on the margins (Ture & Hamilton, 2011[1967]; Cleaver, 1991[1968]). The ‘black’ groups I am excluding also embraced ‘blackness’ beyond its initial colonial imposition just like CADA included in the paper have. However, the above exclusion parameters do not properly narrow the scope of the dissertation. A further narrowing of the topic was necessary.

### ***Initial Scope and ‘Blackness’ in Different Geographical Spaces<sup>18</sup>***

My initial plan was to focus on ‘blackness’ among CADA youth in Canada to address some of the social issues I noticed in Calgary regarding how Africans and South Sudanese youth relate to ‘blackness’ and their Continental African identities. For instance, a 15-year-old Abeg Kon in 2020 committed suicide in Chestermere, Alberta, after being bullied because of her dark skin, or in the language of race scholarship, her ‘blackness’ (Rose, 2020). In Ngo et al.’s (2017)<sup>19</sup> study of

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<sup>18</sup> These spaces underwent what Charles Mills (1997) described as ‘norming of spaces.’ Mudimbe (1988, p. 15) has called this the “domination of physical space.”

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Hieu Van Ngo is a Social Work professor at the University of Calgary.

immigrant youth involvement in crime, one South Sudanese youth expressed how he hated his skin because of how light skin students—who are also ‘black’—in his opinion got preferential treatment in the school (more analysis of Ngo’s example in chapter seven). I hoped that this narrower focus would make the research manageable and focused.

However, a wider reading of some of the literature on race and colour identity published over the last four hundred years brought me to the conclusion that historical and contemporary utility of ‘blackness’ in the western consciousness has created ‘blackness’ synergies that would make it morally problematic to focus only on an analysis of ‘blackness’ in Canada that excludes the United States, Africa, Britain, South America, and the West Indies. A close reading of literature made me aware of how incomplete my discussion of ‘blackness’ would be.

While Iberians, the first modern Europeans to enslave Africans from the 15<sup>th</sup> century used Christianity as the initial justification for African servitude (Meisenhelder, 2013), their subsequent rationale for enslaving Africans transitioned into the centrality of skin appearance as Africans replaced domestic Europeans and Arab slaves in Spain and Portugal (Mbembe, 2017; Sweet, 1997). European imperial powers which followed Iberians into the slave trade in the 16<sup>th</sup> century would use skin appearance as the structuring social and economic logic of their slave societies. Intra-European slavery, which had existed in Europe for centuries as Korpela (2014) has illustriously discussed, would start to wind down as Africans gradually became the quintessential objects (bodies, hands) of European imperial slavery from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

Whether one looks at Britain, Canada, the United States or Africa, the moral sentiment created by the appearance of the African skin in the consciousness of CADE generated social and economic hurdles in the lives of CADA globally. In colonial Africa, these appearance hurdles were created by what was referred to as the ‘colour bar’ (Mphahlele, 1962; Prah, 1998; Perham, 1961).

In the United States the popular discriminatory divide was the ‘colour line’ (Du Bois, 1999 [1903]; Smith, 1905; Douglass, 1881). In Canada, both the ‘colour line’ and the ‘colour bar’ were used (Toronto Star Daily, 1954). While the ‘colour bar’ and the ‘colour line’ basically played the same role in preventing non-Europeans from gaining access to economic opportunities and means of social uplift comparable to those of European people, the colour bar meant something extra in the colonies. The colonized and the colonizer may have lived in compartmentalized colonial neighbourhoods based on the colour line (Fanon, 1982 [1963]), but the colonizer and the colonized worked in the same offices so the colour bar determined how *high* the colonized could move economically, socially, and professionally.

While there are African-Americans who worked in the same spaces with European-Americans and those who were employed as domestic hands by European-Americans during Jim Crow years, most African-Americans worked on their side of the colour line, so their upward mobility did not involve or concern European-Americans. Unless of course African-American success on their side of the colour line unnerved European-Americans as epitomized by how a mob of Europeans Americans burnt down the ‘Black Wall Street’ and the subsequent massacre of between 100 and 300 people in Greenwood district of Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1921 (History, 2021). The riot was caused by an alleged sexual assault of a European-American woman, Sarah Page, in an elevator by an African-American teenager, Dick Rowland. The colour-segregated nature of Tulsa affected how information spread and what information was relayed on the two sides of the colour line.

Unlike the United States that openly professed the existence of the colour line and its moral necessity, Brazilians, according to Guimarães (2003), claimed to have no ‘colour line’ because of the now discredited ‘racial democracy’ (Andrews, 1996; Schwartzman, 2021). However, Brazil

was and still is a colour-coded society because the appearance of skin has been used to stratify Brazil into a complex gradation of colours (Guimarães, 2013; Mitchell-Walthour & Darity, 2014) that have become consonant with social and economic status (Andrews, 1996; Walker, 2002; Telles et al., 2015). This gradation include *negro, preto, pardo, amarelo, moreno, branco*, etc. (Mitchell-Walthour & Darity, 2014). In most cases in Brazil and other Latin American countries (Telles et al., 2015), education and socioeconomic status decreases the darker the skin gets.

Formally, the United States has abandoned the Brazilian-type colour-coded gradation and adopted a black-white divide during the Jim Crow years of colour-based terror. Nevertheless, appearance gradations and their social importance were frequently invoked in the United States before and after the civil war. As Forest Wood (1970) has argued,

[a] Scottish traveler David Macrae observed that the slaves had adopted the white man's code of color, so to speak, whereby a "yellow" Negro was higher on the social scale than a darker one, and the greatest insult among Negroes was to be called a "charcoal nigger." (p. 12)

### ***‘Blackness’ and its Exclusionary Use in Different Geographic Spaces***

In the United States, the colour line was formally established, publicly visible, and legally enforced. Booker T. Washington (1999 [1901]) relates a story about the indignities of American Jim Crow’s colour line when he was put in charge of Native American boys who attended Hampton Institute. Washington was taking a sick Native boy to Washington to receive a receipt from the Secretary of Interior in order to go back to the reserve.

At dinner time on the steamboat, the young Washington went to get his food after the Native boy and other passengers were served. The European-American man in charge told Washington that the Native could be served but not the Negro. He therefore wondered: “I never could understand how he knew just where to draw the colour line, since the Indian and I were



about the same complexion” (Washington, 1999 [1901], p. 83). A different denial of service happened again when Washington and the Native boy went to a hotel to seek accommodation. He was denied service as the Native boy was admitted. Because Washington was legally classified as a ‘negro’/ ‘coloured’/ ‘black’, it did not matter that his skin complexion was about the same as (or even lighter) than that of the Native boy.

In Canada, the function of the colour bar as a social control parameter was the same even when the details of its operationalization were different. Admittedly, the colour bar was not as inflexible and legally enforced nationally as it was in the United States. Nevertheless, it still inconvenienced or even destroyed lives of African-Canadians because businesses were left to discriminate against them. Some Canadian businesses in major towns and most businesses in smaller towns denied services to African-Canadians regardless of their moral, social, and economic status (Katz, 1949).

As a high schooler, Ruth Lankin, said in 1954 in the town of Dresden, Ontario, about businesses with a rigid adherence to the ‘colour bar’, “I only go where I am wanted. Where I’m not wanted, I don’t go” (Biggs, 1954). Ruth’s attitude was emblematic of what the proponents of the colour bar wanted to instill in the consciousness of African-Canadians.

This was also the case in the United States. When he arrived at Harvard University in 1888, Du Bois (1960) adopted the same self-segregation attitude Ruth had adopted as survival imperative: “Following the attitudes which I had adopted in the South, I sought no friendships among my white fellow students, nor even acquaintanceship” (p. 355).

The moral function of the colour line that Ruth and Du Bois adopted for their safety (physical and mental) and the sense of self-worth that follows such a decision is captured by what a police officer told young James Baldwin (1993 [1962]) in New York City: ““Why don’t you

niggers stay uptown where you belong” (p.19). Ruth and Du Bois indeed stayed “where they belonged” by design, not by *choice*. Without colour prejudice, Ruth would have gone to any business in Dresden and Du Bois could have had European-American friends. As Du Bois has argued, “Of course I wanted friends, but I could not seek them.” But Du Bois said he was ‘happy’ at Harvard not because it dissolved the colour line but because of “his acceptance of racial segregation.” Du Bois’s and Ruth’s resignation is what John Steinbeck (1947, p.137) has described as “the terrible protective dignity of the Negro” in *Of Mice and Men* when the-usually-talkative Crooks [a ‘negro’] stopped talking when Curley’s wife [a ‘white’ woman] entered the room and started berating them [Lennie, Candy, and Crooks].

While the Canadian colour bar was not uniformly enforced or legally mandated in the way Jim Crow laws were, businesses in Canada were still given the moral discretion to discriminate (McTair, 2000). As late citizenship judge Stanley Grizzle who grew up in the 1930s and 40s related in *Journey to Justice* (McTair, 2000), the only job that was freely available to African-Canadian men was being a sleeping car potter (or a ‘George’) where they had to attend to and clean after everyone on trains with a telling acquiescence.<sup>20</sup> Grizzle also relates how his father, a taxi driver, was told by European-Canadian taxi drivers that they did not want a ‘nigger’ on the taxi stand in Toronto. The colour-based hatred would become so heightened that one night someone slashed Grizzle’s father’s face with a razor blade as he slept in his taxi.

The colour line was also ethically and socially constraining to Africa-descended people in Great Britain between 1900 and the 1970s (Gilroy, 1991). This was the period of African decolonization and racial segregation/desegregation. However, the example below goes back to

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<sup>20</sup> For African-Canadian women, as it was for African-American women, domestic work in ‘white’ homes was almost the traditional career.

the problematics of appearance in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain. Since slavery was illegal in Britain but legal in its colonies before 1833, it may help to show the attitude toward Africans and the people of African descent in Britain at the time.

After the North American colonies started objecting to British convicts, Britain started sending them to African colonies in Sierra Leone and Senegambia. This arrangement allowed Britain to also send free African population in Britain to Africa (Christopher, 2008). But when Britain started sending its British convicts and ‘black poor’ to its colonies in Sierra Leone and Senegambia in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, British officials and slave traders in West Africa raised objections (Christopher, 2008). In their view, sending British criminals [men and women] would compromise the superior status of ‘white people’ in the eyes of native Africans.

According to Emma Christopher (2008), slave traders and governors of the colonies were worried that British convicts—who were a ‘disgrace to their colour’—would compromise colour-based superiority and the slave trade if British men and women interacted freely with native Africans. They worried that free interaction may reveal social equality between Africans and Europeans and make African slave traders resent enslaving their own. As Joseph Chamberlain argued at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the context of colonialism, “as the dominant race, if we admitted equality with inferior races, we would lose the power which gave us our dominance” (Chamberlain, as cited in Lewis, 1987, p. 34).

The British convicts did not exemplify ideals of ‘whiteness’ (see Chapter 6). These ‘whites’ may be the category of ‘whiteness’ Nell Painter (2003) has termed ‘degraded’. British men and women convicts may be in the same socioeconomic class that anti-slavery American lawmaker,

Thaddeus Stevens, referred to as ‘low white trash’ in his Speech on September 7, 1865, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Du Bois, 1935, p. 197).<sup>21</sup>

Additionally, they also feared that British women convicts in Africa would devalue the status of the ‘white womanhood.’ Christopher has also argued that there were free former slaves in Britain who were sent back to Africa with their European wives. Officials and slave traders dreaded colour mixing so they initiated a propaganda campaign against the unsuitability of Africa for Europeans.<sup>22</sup> They wanted free Africans sent to Africa and European convicts redirected to Botany Bay (Australia).

In Britain, therefore, appearance *per se* justified the removal of free Africans from the British society in the 1780s back to Africa even before the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. Apparently, Africans were too dark to live as free human beings in Britain or too dark to live alongside British convicts in Africa. For the Americans the African would remain in America only if she/he remained a slave or be freed and still accepting of a subordinate social and economic status. Repatriation to Africa, South America, or Central America was the price they were asked to pay if they insisted on freedom and equality in the US.

In South Africa, the picture was not very different. According to Mphahlele (1962, p. 42), “The Afrikaner can, in very paternalistic fashion, treat his servant very well as long as the latter ‘keeps his place’.” Africans who did not accept to be kept in their places were asked to remain on what were then designated ‘native reserves’.

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<sup>21</sup> For a more comprehensive study of this type of ‘whites’, see Nancy Isenberg’s (2016) *White Trash*. In South Africa, the idea that ‘low trash whites’ did not exemplify the ideal ‘white’ was in the Native Land Act of 1913 (South African History Online, n.d.). The *Report on the Land Commission* argued in 1916 that there are Europeans who were ‘lacking in much that proves the superiority of the white over the black.’

<sup>22</sup> Between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, Africa (especially west Africa) was called ‘the white man’s grave’ by Europeans (Kingsley, 1897, p. 2).

While the descendants of Dutch and English in South Africa fought in what would be called the ‘Anglo-Boer War’ between 11 October 1899 and 31 May 1902, by 1910, they were united by ‘whiteness’ to build the Union of South Africa to the exclusion of Africans (South African History Online, n.d.).<sup>23</sup>

In addition to the examples given above, specific examples about individual CADA experiences that demonstrate the feasibility of the topic may help further illustrate the point. In his book, *Black Berry, Sweet Juice*, in which he interviewed mixed race people about their struggle at identity locations Homi Bhabha (1994) would call a ‘liminal space’ [the ‘in-betweenness’ of identity between ‘black’ and ‘white’; Africa and Europe], Lawrence Hill (2001) relates a story of Cindy Henwood, who emigrated from Swaziland in 1973 to Canada where her appearance-based identity changed from “coloured” to “black” (p. 29). The ‘colour bar’ in Southern Africa was legally fixed between *blacks, coloureds, Indians and whites* (Prah, 1998; Tabata, 1974). While Henwood’s parents did not want their daughter to identify as ‘black’, Henwood found adopting a ‘black identity’ convenient for her adaptation to Canada. Of course, she was not legally mandated to identify as ‘black’ yet the colour bar in Canada still determined that she had to choose an identity because Bhabhian ‘in-betweenness’ was not a workable identity to embrace for integration in Canada.

Like Henwood’s Canadian case, appearance-based identities determined the identity the Trinidadian lawyer and pan-Africanist, Henry Sylvester William, had to involuntarily adopt when he moved to South Africa from Britain in 1903 (Snail, 2008). In London, William was ‘black’ or ‘negro’, and to some extent ‘coloured’ as the term was still used at the time in Britain, USA, and

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<sup>23</sup> The colour bar had been in operation in South Africa long before apartheid became a state legal apparatus in 1948.

Canada as synonymous with ‘black’ and ‘negro’. But in South Africa in 1903, William could only be ‘coloured’ based on South Africa’s socio-legal identities. The rigidity of the ‘colour bar’ in South Africa could not allow William to self-identify as ‘black’ or ‘negro’.

But sometimes appearance-based identities become a matter of choice in political resistance, loosely understood, as the case of José Antônio Gomes below shows. The case of José Antônio Gomes, a 2020 city council candidate for Turmalina in Southern Brazil provides a different perspective (McCoy & Traiano, 2020). Yet Gomes’ case still epitomizes the social control appearance-based identity play in constraining Henwood in Canada and William in South Africa. For fifty-seven years of his life, as McCoy and Traiano writes for *The Washington Post* on November 15, 2020, Gomes self-identified as *pardo* or *moreno* [mixed race] until he watched the murder of George Floyd and the protests that followed Floyd’s murder. Consequently, when Gomes announced his candidacy for the city council, he decided to self-identify as ‘Preto’ or ‘black’. Gomes’s action is characteristic of the solidaristic consciousness of CADA people during the civil rights movement and the decolonization of Africa between 1900 and the 1970s. In other words, Gomes has *reclaimed* his ‘blackness.’

However, ‘blackness’ remained problematic in Brazil. Generally, in Brazil as Guimarães (2013) explains, a ‘black’ person can ‘whiten’ through wealth. This means that “The poor white person is black, and the rich black person is white” (Walker, 2002, p. 18).<sup>24</sup> This is what society dictates for the Brazilians of African descent like Gomes. But owing to the global fight against colour prejudice, Afro-Brazilians like Gomes have embraced ‘blackness’ even when they have advantageous social and economic status that could make them embrace Brazilian ‘whiteness’ (Mitchell-Walthour & Darity, 2014). Although this new ‘black consciousness’ among Afro-

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<sup>24</sup> This is the ‘blackness’ Foster (2002) has called ‘status blackness’.

Brazilians of varying appearance gradations has been rationalized by Mitchell-Walthour and Darity as a 'choice', I will show in Chapters 6 and 7 that this is not necessarily the case. This apparent 'choice' was historically conditioned by what Hall (1994, p. 225) has called "narratives of the past."<sup>25</sup> Henwood, Gomes and William could not choose identities outside what the CADE world had constructed and conditioned for them since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but mostly, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>25</sup> But as Foucault (2010) has argued, "historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge" (p. 5). This is why I believe studying 'blackness' from the classical antiquity to the present is crucial. 'The present state of knowledge' is still governed and standardized by CADE even if there has been attempts to 'Africanize' knowledge" (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 10) and 'Decolonize universities' (Mbembe, 2016; Bamba, Gebrial & Nişancioğlu, 2018).

## **CHAPTER TWO: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I layout the types of data I used, their sources, and the rationale for choosing the data. Studying ‘blackness’ in its contemporary and historical context is challenging, and it also risks becoming unwieldy. The data involves more justification than the traditional dissertation, such as one based on empirical interviews, would require. The previous chapter has outlined the multi-layered way in which I endeavoured to narrow the scope of the topic because the geographical scope of the research topic encompasses four continents.

Owing to the above geographical and temporal scope of the research, I have decided to use archival documents and historical books. This has made it possible to access a copious volume of online primary and secondary documents without the need to travel for data collection. Because of the restrictions on travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, online sources have been helpful.

While online archives have been helpful in accessing documents from a wide geographical area covering Europe, Africa, North America, Central America and the Caribbean, the dissertation could have also benefited from archives that have not been digitized. This is one of the limitations of the data I will be taking up in the future. However, the digitized archival sources I believe contributed well to the research questions raised in this dissertation. I have been able to easily access books and historical pamphlets that are out of print and ones that are not available in York University libraries. Below, I start with the definition of research methods, followed by the type of data and their sources, the rationale for using the archival sources and conclude with how the data was analyzed.



## Research Methods

Methods, according to L'Eplattenier (2009), are ways in which research is conducted and primary materials obtained. These involve the techniques used to gather the data aimed at addressing the research problem.<sup>26</sup> According to Kothari (2004), research methods are “all those methods which are used by the researcher during the course of studying his research problem” (p. 8). I started my research by first conducting a general google search using ‘blackness’, ‘negro’, ‘race’, ‘slavery’, ‘colonialism, etc. I chose these words at the beginning of my search to see how the sources I would obtain relate. I wanted to know, for instance, how and why the resulting papers or books I searched using ‘slavery’ and ‘colonization’ include ‘negro’. While this helped me find information, the search results were too many and exclusion by years was not a helpful option. A search of the same words on ProQuest, Google Scholar, JSTOR, York University ‘Omni’ was helpful but not enough as the information was still very unwieldy.

I therefore started to read the first ten articles on each of the sites regardless of the title. I noted that articles on race, racism, colonialism, slavery, capitalism, decolonization in most cases included ‘blackness’ even when ‘blackness’ was not the central topic. I therefore started reading prominent authors in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush, Mungo Park), the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Edward Blyden, Henry Stanley, Booker T.), the 20<sup>th</sup> century, (W. E. Du Bois, W. B. Smith, G. Woodson, Frantz Fanon), and the 21<sup>st</sup> century (V. Y. Mudimbe, Achille Mbembe, etc.). This initiative helped me find the most relevant information. I therefore realized that searching ‘blackness’ or ‘race’ was enough a search criterion for peer-reviewed papers through the reading

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<sup>26</sup> I am looking at ‘blackness’ and its social justice implications by tracing its historical emergence as Foucault (1995) does with ‘madness’, Mudimbe (1988) with the ‘invention of Africa’ and Said (1978) with the orientalizing of Muslims and Arabs by Western scholars of the orient. Historical analyses help trace continuities or discontinuities for historically problematic social issues such as ‘blackness’, which have been used as exclusionary tools by apartheid South Africa and Jim Crow America, for example.

of these authors. For historical books, I looked up other major scholars on race, European and American travel writers, ethnologists, abolitionists, and former slaves who have published their narratives.

The writers I consider ‘major’ or ‘prominent’ are regarded as authorities in their fields because of the impact of their works. They are highly cited and studied as trend-setters, for instance, in European exploration of Africa, exaltation of African cultural values against the colonial anthropology or the problematics of the colour line in the United States. Edward Blyden, Alexander Crummell, W. E. B. Du Bois, Martin Delany, and Carter Woodson are some of the names that are considered authorities in race scholarship and the history of African people (continental and diasporic). European writers and travellers such as Mungo Park, Morgan Stanley, Leo Frobenius, Richard Burton, Mary Kingsley, among others, are widely and critically studied by African historians and philosophers (see Mudimbe, 1988, Gilroy, 1993, Appiah, 1992; Hountondji, 1996). For these authors, archive.org was my main source of books on 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century authors of interest. Most books for 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were not available in print at York Libraries. Since the library was not open to in-person study, borrowing the books that are available at York Libraries would have been impractical. There was too much to read. Digitized books on Archives.org proved convenient.

A close reading of the above authors steered me toward a targeted search and the reading of books, newspapers, magazines, letters, etc. The above search and reading helped me categorize the data as discussed in the next section. The itemization of the data also includes their sources. Given the amount of archival data and historical books I was able to access, I have attempted to be as explicit as possible regarding the data types, sources, and their usefulness.

Making sure that data sources and types are as clearly presented as possible may help add to the reason why the sources are important and why it was important to use archives and historical books rather than empirical interviews to address the research problem. Instead of merely listing the data categories and their sources, I have decided to provide some examples (through quotations) to demonstrate how useful the data from these sources are rather than simply stating that the sources are important.<sup>27</sup>

### **Data Types and Sources**

To ensure that the search for the data is structured and organized, I divided the sources into six main types: slave narratives and analytical books; government documents or documents about government policies; newspapers and magazines; race and ‘blackness’ scholarship; media interviews, documentaries and speeches; cultural sources: lyrics, poems, and literary fiction. This ensured that archival and historical sources I encountered accidentally are also categorized and stored in appropriate categories. I used folders on my computer to categorize and store sources instead of online programs such as Mendeley or Zotero. I then named the folders by categories and saved the files using the authors’ names, the subject of the article or book. For instance: Williams (author), *Capitalism and Slavery* (book title); Du Bois, *Negro*; Blyden, *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* ...etc. I have noted in the abstract and at the beginning of Chapter 1 that the dissertation is multidisciplinary. It is therefore not interdisciplinary. However, I did not categorize my sources by discipline because there was sometimes an overlap of the topics. For example, the

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<sup>27</sup> While this chapter does not present findings *per se*, I must note that some of the quotations I provide here to illustrate the usefulness of my data sources are part of the findings. The findings will be scattered throughout the dissertation; but I will be presenting most of the findings in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

way Olaudah Equiano's (1837) describes his first encounter with European slave traders is similar to the way Stevens (1912) relates her encounter with the Jieeng of South Sudan.

### ***Slave Narratives and Analytical Historical Books***

This first data category includes slave narratives and analytical books by CADA and CADE scholars who have studied and written about slavery, colour prejudice, and colonization. Slave narratives provide first-hand experiences of what living under the indignities of slave regimes was like. They also provide first-hand experiences on power structure on plantations and how appearance gradation affected slaves' quality of life.

On the slave plantations, according to Father Josiah Henson (1858, p. 15), "The natural tendency of slavery is to convert the master into a tyrant, and the slave into the cringing, treacherous, false, and thieving victim of tyranny." In this tyranny of the slave regime, James Adams (Drew, 1856, p. 28) argues, "Men who have never seen or felt slavery cannot realize it for the thing it is." Slave narratives, as Father Hensons' and Adams' show, provide a phenomenological picture of what slavery did to the slaves and slave owners as related by those who lived under slave regimes. They also provide a sense of the social condition under which identities such as 'blackness' and 'negro' materialized through slave regimes.<sup>28</sup> The question slave narratives and the two quotes above raise is whether it is important today to use identities created and operationalized under such demeaning and dehumanizing socioeconomic conditions. I take this one up in Chapters 6 and 7.

The second sub-category are analytical historical books by CADE and CADA scholars. This category provided me with rich analytic sources on socioeconomic conditions of African

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<sup>28</sup> Identities that were constructed for social control under such tyrannical conditions are interrogated by postcolonial scholars and African philosophers (see Hountondji, 1996; Mudimbe, 1988).

slaves in the Americas, how CADE perceives CADA as slaves and free people, and how colour structured what CADE thought of CADA as human beings. Analytical books add a critical perspective to slave narratives. The identities that were created by slave and colonial regimes did not consider how those described by these identities perceived themselves or their cultures. They were instrumental appellations for the interests of the controlling powers. From the perspective of most CADE scholars, however, there was nothing wrong with these identities. The books in this category go beyond the histories recorded in the interest of CADE. They highlight inherent contradictions and justificatory interests that necessitate the questioning of these identities today. CADE scholars such as Lydia Child (1833) and Henri Jean-Baptiste ‘Abbe’ Grégoire (1810), who rejected the natural inferiority of Africans and criticized the horrors of slavery and the slave trade, provide unique perspectives. Their books, which would fall under critical and social justice scholarship today, highlight CADE’s social and moral contradictions that mainstream CADE scholars obfuscated because of in-group biases. Understanding the attitude of those who shaped identities such as ‘negro’ or ‘black’ and the social conditions under which they shaped these identities is important in understanding the trajectory of oppressive legacies of these identities today.

For instance, Du Bois (1904 [1896]), shows that President Abraham Lincoln did not abolish slavery out of humanitarian concern but out of the need to preserve the union. Understanding this helps in putting Lincoln’s statements about African-Americans into perspective. For instance, in whose interest was the slavery ended? What these books showed me is that even seemingly obvious historical events cannot be taken at face value. Chambers (1861) shows how American colonists blamed their British colonial masters during the pre-revolutionary era for introducing slavery in their colonies. It was in 1775 that Patrick Henry patriotically screamed, “give me

freedom or give me death!” But the “lovers” of freedom in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, would, by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century sneer in editorials [South-side Democrat]: “we have got to hating everything with the prefix *free*, from free negroes down and up through the whole catalogue—free farms, free labour, free society, free will, free thinking, free children, and free schools” (as cited in Chambers, 1861, p. 6, original emphasis). Freedom was good as long as it was not African-American freedom.

The ‘lovers of freedom’, who valued freedom because it was important to their interest are the same people who constructed and shaped ‘blackness’ as an important marker of the colour line. Freedom was all-or-nothing: Freedom to Africans in the Americas meant “Africanization” and harm to Europeans. The fear of “Africanization” was the case, for instance, in Haiti (Smith, 1905), Dominican Republic (Torres-Saillant, 2010) and the United States (Wood, 1970). The colour line, according to William Smith (1905), was important in maintaining the purity of European blood against what he described as mongrelization. Policing the colour line also meant controlling identities through laws and violence (Child, 1833). Policing the colour line may be implicit today, but it is still marginalizing and oppressive (see CHRC, 2022; Maynard, 2017).<sup>29</sup>

### ***Government Documents and Documents about Government Policies***

This category includes official government documents such as parliamentary debates, public commission reports, politicians’ letters, diaries, and bills. Here are a few examples. On April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1801, the British House of Commons debated the failed attempt to establish a colony in Sierra Leone in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and the condition of the Maroons in both Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone. Parliamentary minutes help show the complexity of the imperial reach and the then interconnectedness of the Caribbean (Jamaica), Nova Scotia (Canada), the UK and Africa

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<sup>29</sup> Also see *The Forde Report* (2020) about the colour line problematic in UK’s Labor Party.

(Hansard, 1811).<sup>30</sup> On August 23, 1734, the Virginia House of Burgesses received “A Proposition from the County of *Hanover*, complaining of the insolent Behaviour of Mulattos, proposing that a Law be made to distinguish who shall be said to be Mulattos” (House of Burgesses Journals, 1734).

These sources are not only about state control. They are also about identities and CADE’s attitude in the United States, colonial Canada, and the United Kingdom. A major attitude and thus state control was exemplified by the *Code Noir* of 1684, which not only helped other European colonies systemize their control of slaves (see Long, 1774), but it also shows the primacy of Catholicism over other Christian denominations in French colonies.

In addition to state documents, personal diaries provided a personal perspective on state issues. These personal perspectives show how people who were (or were not) politically active viewed government laws and their regulatory impact on slaves. For Instance, in her diary entry on November 9, 1862, Sarah Morgan Dawson (1913), a teenage Southern aristocrat in Louisiana trivialized the abolition of slavery as “old Abe [Abraham Lincoln]” wanting “to deprive us of all that fun!” To Dawson, the abolition of slavery would mean “[no] more songs in the cane-field, no more steaming kettles, no more *black faces and shining teeth* around the furnace fires!” (Dawson, 1913, p. 277, emphasis added). This dissonance between what CADE believed about slaves in the Americas from discursive narratives and from phenomenological realities made Charles Leclerc write to Napoleon Bonaparte on September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1801, that “We have in Europe a false idea of the country [San Dominique, now Haiti] in which we fight and the men whom we fight against” (as cited in James, 1963, p. 353). Because personal letters and diaries were not meant, necessarily, for public consumption, they reveal informative personal opinions on issues of the day. They are not

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<sup>30</sup> This geopolitical and colonial interconnectedness through the British colonial reach also adds to the rationale of the scope discussed in chapter 1.

compromised by professional or political decorum or what we would today call ‘political correctness’.

### *Newspapers and Magazines*

Newspapers and magazines provide news and reports on important events such as lynching in the US, colonial expeditions in Africa, or segregation cases in Canada. The ‘colour bar’ arrest and trial of Viola Desmond in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, in 1946 or the report of Dresden, Ontario being “an island of prejudice” (Katz, 1949) served as examples. These sources provide rich data on discourses and counter-discourses on appearance-based identities and their ethical consequences and positive (or negative) logics along the colour line. By ethical consequences I mean how colour-based identities affected lived experience, negatively or positively.

For instance, *The Crisis* (1911, pp. 153-154) published a response to Mr. Oswald Garrison of NAACP by Governor Lee Cruce of Oklahoma. Cruce rejected Garrison’s characterization of the lynching of an African-American woman and her son in Okemah, Oklahoma, as ‘uncivilized’. Governor Cruce argued that the residents of Oklahoma are as civilized as those living in New York and “in fact more highly civilized than the masses of your own people [African-Americans]” (Cruce in *The Crisis*, 1911, p. 153). Claiming that anti-African-American sentiment is not only an Oklahoma problem, he argued that the government of Canada had advised him to advise ‘Oklahoma Negroes’ against migrating to Canada. But the situation in Canada was not that different. As Sidney Katz (1949) writes for *Maclean’s* magazine, about Dresden, “The chances of even a trained young Negro getting a good nonmanual job are almost nil. I did not find a single Negro in Dresden working in an office or waiting on customers.” This was the Canadian colour bar.



Additionally, between 1800 and 1860s, African-Americans engaged in editorial and opinion discourses about the rationale of adopting ‘African’, ‘coloured’ or ‘negro’ for what they considered ‘self-definition’. In most cases, mixed race African-Americans preferred ‘coloured’ or ‘negro’ while those who had no European ancestry preferred African. Media discourses on racial names, which would resurface in the 1960s and 70s (Bennett, 1969), provide access into the African-American socio-intellectual mindset at the time. Editorials, opinion articles and letters to the editors show how identities were made sense of and how people justified rejection or acceptance of the identities on which they discoursed.

In addition to *The Crisis* and *Maclean’s*, other publications used are *The Crusader*, *Muhammad Speaks*, *Black Dialogues*, *The Canadian Negro*, *North Star* (1847-1851), *The Liberator* (1831-1865), etc. These publications show how subjugated groups such as African-Americans and African-Canadians fought back against the colour line and its associative intellectual and social degradation.

I have also used informative newspaper quotations, for instance, in W.E. B Du Bois’s *Black Reconstruction* and William Chambers’ *American Slavery and Colour*. Most of these quotations are from newspapers that have not been fully digitized. I used them because they cover important news and editorial items at a time when speaking up as an African-American was a matter of life and death. Some of these quotations have been used for explanatory purposes beyond or in addition to the purpose for which the authors used them in their books. For instance, in an opinion piece in 1853 in *Syracuse Standard*, William Allen (1853) rejected how the situation in which he was involved was portrayed in the local media including being referred to as a ‘Sambo’ and a ‘Negro’. While the opinion piece helps us understand the situation (which I will revisit in chapter 3) from

Allen's perspective, it also reveals Allen's attitude toward racial identities and his own attitude toward darker skin African-Americans ['negroes'].

### ***Race and 'Blackness' Scholarship***

Contemporary scholarship on race, 'blackness', colonization and slavery provide important sources on the existing discourses on 'blackness' and its continuous social control role. 'Blackness' has been well studied: from James Baldwin's *Fire Next Time*, *Nobody Knows My Name* and *Notes of the Native Son*, Fanonian phenomenology in *Black Skin, White Masks*, Mbembe's *Critique of Black Reason* and the insightful cultural studies scholarship of Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy. These scholars, alongside others not listed here, provide me with an opportunity to acknowledge what has already been studied, how it has been studied, and what problems their scholarship still left unresolved. The scholarly achievements of the above scholars and others like them have considerably benefited this dissertation. However, I will provide a critical analysis of some of the above works where I agree or disagree and where their scholarship remains in and epistemic and epistemological traps (see Chapters 6 & 7) or where it suffers from what Appiah (1992, p. xi) has referred to as "lexical imperialism."

While, for instance, these scholars acknowledge the discursive and constructivist nature of 'blackness', they still discuss 'blackness' like a somatic reality (Foster, 2002); that is, as a natural characteristic of the human skin. When Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 95) argues that "I am a slave not to the "idea" others have of me, but to my appearance," I am left with a phenomenological confusion. The problem, from my assessment, is not the "appearance" *per se* but the 'idea' that was constructed about the appearance and then synonymized with appearance. It is this "idea" that makes CADA "the symbol of evil and ugliness" (Fanon, 2008 [1952], p. 157). The ugliness and evil are not in the appearances; they are ideas created about the appearance. When Helper (1867,

p. 100) wrote about a “hideous Big Nigger [and] a very ugly Little Nigger”, he was not writing about appearance but of the ‘ideas’ he had developed toward CADA. These are ideas of the slave and colonial regimes that Mbembe has described as “nonsense” and “fantasies” of the west through which the west grounded the colonial and slavery discourse on African identity and socioeconomic condition (2017, p. 38).

Nevertheless, without the existing scholarship on ‘blackness’, this dissertation would not have adequately addressed the research questions that guide it. These sources have also helped shape the direction of the dissertation and the pitfalls that would have made it simplistic or unwieldy. Stuart Hall (1996d) helped me realize that one’s scholarship can be political and effective without being radical. There are occasions when one’s political intentions in politically inclined scholarships like social justice may overshadow its scholarly purpose. This may limit the audience one’s scholarship could reach and potentially influence. Paul Gilroy (1991, 1993) shows how culture divides yet unites CADA, how it shows their difference and similarities and how it still acts as a valuable tool against socio-political marginality and colour prejudice. Frantz Fanon (1982 [1963]) illustriously shows how CADE can be criticized without one being lost in CADE epistemological control as to make CADE the measure of universal morality in the creation of a new, socially just and inclusive world. Fanon (2008[1952]) also shows the importance of history yet cautions on how it should not imprison us in the process of self-liberation as a totalizing, closed, deterministic historicity: “I am not a slave to slavery that dehumanized my ancestors” (p. 205).

### ***Media Interviews, Documentaries and Speeches***

This data category are media interviews, documentaries and speeches with social activists, social justice scholars and writers, CADA politicians and political leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Malcom X, Asa Philip Randolph, Julius Nyerere, Marcus Garvey, among others. These sources

are both historical and contemporary, so they have been used to show areas of discontinuities and continuities (Foucault, 2010). Of interest in these sources are discourses on identity, exclusion, and ‘blackness’. Some of these speeches, dialogues and interviews address the political importance of ‘blackness’ or ‘negroness’ as the basis of CADA identity while others address moral problems associated with their operationalization.

For instance, James Baldwin argued on *The Dick Cavett Show* on 16 May 1969 that “the word ‘Negro’ in this country really is designed finally to disguise the fact that one is talking about a man, a man like you [European-American].” Another example that shows the importance of this category for this dissertation is given by Jody David Armor on *Fox Soul*: “But in America blackness is defined by that auction block... in the pre-civil war era, you were black if you were put on that auction block and sold as a chattel slave” (Fox Soul, 2020). Armor added that African-Americans used ‘blackness’ to unite across all shades of appearance confined to ‘blackness’ as a matter of social and political solidarity. Oprah Winfrey’s interview with Prince Harry and Meghan Markle on March 7, 2021, on CBS News, is another example of media interviews on how ‘blackness’ is still a morally problematic concept. Even though its used as a political and solidaristic identity serves an important moral purpose, its exclusionary and social control role are still operational.

These sources have been useful in understanding practical and ethical aspects of ‘blackness’ as embodied politically and socially. They have also been useful in covering how coloniality and epistemological traps hide in discourses of liberation. As Mudimbe (1988) has argued, “Even in the most explicitly “Afrocentric” descriptions, models of analysis explicitly or implicitly, knowingly or unknowingly, refer to the same order” (p. 10). By ‘the same order’,

Mudimbe means imperial anthropology, Christianity's destruction of African cultural and social systems, and distorted colonial histories.

While there is some historical truth to Armor's argument that traces the genealogy of 'blackness' to slave auction blocks, it is important that we do not restrict the genealogy of 'blackness' to the American realities. 'Blackness' predates American slave auctions and understanding 'blackness' within the limits of the United States borders risk skewing the global and ethical effects of 'blackness'. There is, however, an important American context that give justice to Armor's claims; and this context will be addressed through Foucauldian genealogy (as control hidden without being hidden in discourse) (Foucault, 1996) and Gramscian hegemony (through consent) (Gramsci, 1999, p. 145). While 'blackness' is used differently in the areas included in the scope of this dissertation, it is important to note the way 'blackness' was conceptualized and continues to be conceptualized in the United States as the epistemological and epistemic hegemon of the world (Solomon, 2021) has global implications (see José Antônio Gomes' example in Chapter 1). The United States has shaped, even if it does not directly determine, how 'blackness' is taken up globally.

### ***Cultural Sources: Lyrics, Poems, and Literary Fiction***

Traditionally as some CADA scholars now argue, western literature was rationalized as a universal discourse free from the cultural horizon of the author. However, CADA scholars have argued that fiction espoused the culture, political ideals of the society in which the author grew up (Angelou, 2008). This makes works of fiction valuable as sources of identity contestation and epistemological and capitalist control. Fiction as a data source for this dissertation reveals two issues: the content of western fiction and criticism of CADA fiction.

First, western literary fiction is considered objective while CADA literature is provincialized as ‘ethnic’ or ‘racial’. This is what Amuta (1989, p. 18) has called “cardinal axiom of colonial ideology.” The second aspect is what Edward Said (1993) has discussed in *Culture and Imperialism* as a political project of novels written during the colonial period as imperial narrations of the empire. Toni Morrison (2004 [1992]) has made a similar argument in the American context, arguing that literary historians assume that “canonical American literature is free of, uninformed, and unshaped by the four-hundred-year-old presence of, African and then African-Americans in the United States” (p. 1006). Amuta and Morrison are arguing against a culturally and socially unrealistic claim that canonizes and centres European ideals. But novels such as *Robinson Crusoe* or *Heart of Darkness*, Said has argued, were central to cultural identity contestation or elision. These literary works portrayed and painted non-western others in a negative light as western imperial nations narrated themselves into moralized hegemonies.<sup>31</sup>

Fiction helps reveal the importance of identity in the literary representation of pre-colonial and colonial Africa. How Joseph Conrad describes Africans in *The Heart of Darkness* and how Rene Maran describes Africans in *Batouala* show a diametrically opposed representation of native Africans. Conrad was descriptive and denigrating while Maran was simply descriptive even when they were describing the native condition. The conceptualization of identity in CADE’s fiction will help in understanding ‘blackness’ and its relation to African identities in cultural, political, social, and capitalist regimes in an ethical world in which CADE is the engender and the evaluator

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<sup>31</sup> Kipling’s (1899) poem, *The White Man’s Burden*, is an example of this moralization of CADE’s self-appointment into this paternalistic role for the “sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child”; Also see William Easterly’s (2006) *The White Man’s Burden* about CADE’s economic paternalism in Africa, and Jordan’s (1974) *White Man’s Burden* about Europeans ‘civilizing mission’ in Africa from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

of the universal truth: “the path to truth still seems...an external model accomplished in the West” (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 54).

The second cultural category are songs and poems. Songs and poetry provide an emotive dimension to issues of identity and control. While some CADE poetries have been used, most of the poems and songs are CADA poetry and songs as they relate to colonialism and marginalization. Gilroy (1993, 1991) has shown the importance of songs in social justice discourses against economic and social marginality and their consequent uniting ability among CADA. For instance, In *99 Problems*, Rapper Jay-Z (2011) used the following lines to connect appearance and the unfair treatment of African-Americans by the judicial system: “DA [District Attorney] try to give a nigga shaft again/Half a mil' for bail ‘cause I'm African.” Jay-Z uttered the phrase “‘cause I’m African” while pointing at his face to locate this appearance and how he is treated in being ‘African’. What Jay-Z is referring to in the song is ‘blackness’ because ‘African’ is not an appearance literally but discursively.

Here history connects with the past. It was in 2004 when Jay-Z pointed at his ‘African’ face to lament institutional marginality, which had historically kept the African-American at ‘lowest depths of degradation’ as an Ohioan judge argued in 1846.<sup>32</sup> And Jay-Z perhaps links lyrically and historically to Phillis Wheatley when she implored the CADE’s Christian morality: “Remember, Christians, negroes black as Cain/May be refin'd and join the Angelic trail.” The DA asks a million-dollar bail because Jay-Z is perhaps “Black as Cain”; the “refin’d and the Angelic trail” is however still a pipe dream. The Marginality of CADA features in Richard Wright’s *Black Boy* and in George Lamming’s *In the Castle of My Skin* where we see ‘white folks’ living in big,

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<sup>32</sup> This bottom-rung place of CADA was also the case in apartheid South Africa: “In South Africa, the English...are against the Afrikaner; both are against the Jews, all three are opposed to the Indians; while all four conspire against the native black” (Allport, 1954, p. 3)

well-maintained houses in the USA and Barbados, respectively. But in the Toronto of today, “the colour of money is [still] mainly white” (Contenta, 2018). While not explicit or legally sanctioned, the colour line continues to appear in some forms.

### **The Rationale for Using Archival Sources**

The geographical scope of the dissertation as I have discussed it in Chapter 1 made archives vital in addressing the research questions. The moral problems associated with ‘blackness’, in the context in which I have approached it in this dissertation, involve historical and contemporary issues that affect the lives of CADA people today. While addressing moral issues related to ‘blackness’ is possible through empirical interviews in its modern and historical context, I noticed possible obstacles based on how I conceptualized this project. Participating scholars (or non-scholars) would be responding to my qualitative questions; however, I also understood that they would be responding based on their understanding of ‘blackness’ within scholarly and popular contexts. How ‘blackness’ is understood and operationalized today and the ethical questions this understanding raises, are part of the research problem this dissertation addresses. Besides, moral contradictions in these scholarly works are also part of the research problems as I outlined in chapter one. These include bad faith, normalization of ‘blackness’, naturalization of ‘blackness’ and linear transition from ‘coloured’ to ‘negro’ to ‘black.’ There is therefore enough modern scholarship that sheds some light on how scholars understand ‘blackness’. I am more interested in what has already been said and written, and the historical-philosophical discursive and epistemic regimes that buttress them and influence them to this day.

I therefore believed that the moral problems I am addressing here could not be adequately addressed through empirical interviews or theoretical analysis without a form of discourse analysis of historical texts since the classical antiquity. Consequently, tracing the temporal transformation



of CADA identity and its relation to ‘blackness’ has revealed the controlling discursive regimes and the affecting discursive formations like ‘blackness’ or ‘negro’. Modern knowledge production is still not outside CADE epistemological control. Today, CADA scholars continue to recommend the decolonization of universities and curricula (Mbembe, 2014; Asante, 2020). ‘Blackness’ as a discursive formation is now espoused by CADA within CADE’s discursive and epistemological regimes (Cohen, Cohen & King, 2018; Said, 1978) that continue to prescribe and proscribe CADA association with appearance-based identities.

In the context of the above remarks, I did not see how I could have adequately addressed the research problem with qualitative interviews in the way I conceptualized the study that spans four centuries. I am conscious of the fact that it is possible for others to address the problem through empirical interviews. As I mentioned above, the research has also revealed that most CADA people are still under political, epistemological, and economic control (Solomon, 2021) so empirical interviews on ethics of ‘blackness’ would not have been helpful if existing scholarship is anything to go by. Most CADA scholars have embraced ‘blackness’ as their cultural identity, humanity and being within CADE epistemological and cultural horizon (see Dei, 2018).

Online archives have therefore helped trace temporal changes in CADA identity, cultural or appearance based, and interrogate the discursive regimes that control it. The rules of discourse, or the regularization of knowledge as Foucault (2010) would say, are still controlled by CADE. Additionally, addressing ‘blackness’ over a period of four centuries in Brazil, England, Canada, United States, and South Africa, for example, was easier for me with online archival sources in terms of data collection. I could easily access newspapers in 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain or 19<sup>th</sup> century Jamaica. As a genealogical project, therefore, the dissertation required “a vast accumulation of source material” (Foucault, 1984, p. 76).

Online archives—YouTube, The British Newspaper Archives or JSTOR—have therefore been helpful in addressing ‘blackness’ and its attendant moral problems (historical or contemporary). They helped interrogate it in all its complexities whether it was ancient Rome or the modern United States. Since genealogy is a historical analysis and history of the present (Garland, 2014), online archives helped me interrogate the difference between ‘blackness’ when CADA people had no power over their lives and identity, and ‘blackness’ now when CADA have relative agency and subjectivity. Archival sources provided me with data that have temporal, geographical and disciplinary breadth, so I did not find it necessary to do qualitative interviews with participants to address the research questions. Qualitative interviews may, however, be a future project by me or others. Online archives helped me relate CADA’s lives in Victorian England, Apartheid South Africa, the Brazil of Racial Democracy, Jim Crow America, contemporary Canada, Jay-Z and Wheatley, Ann Julia Cooper, and bell hooks, etc.

I should add here that genealogy in the Foucauldian sense is not a search for a concrete origin (Foucault, 1984; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). My analysis of ‘blackness’ is not therefore a search for the origin of ‘blackness’ (see Chapter 3). While a search for the origin of ‘blackness’ may be an important moral quest, it does not necessarily help in addressing how ‘blackness’ has been used and what discursive and epistemological authority control its contemporary utility.

Essentially, I have not been looking for a stable primordial identity of CADA. What I have been looking for are discursive and epistemological regimes, their rules of control and *how* these discursive rules continue to operate implicitly to impose ‘blackness.’ Archival research helps in “transforming or abandoning” some concepts while “diluting” others through what Laclau and Mouffe (2001, p. 5) have described as an “infinite intertextuality of emancipatory discourses in which the plurality of the social takes shape.” CADA scholars must work with narratives (texts)

written by western scholars to produce liberation discourses or discourses that challenge western ideas about CADA globally. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folks* or Edward Blyden's *Africa Before Europe* are texts I would consider 'emancipatory discourses' because they challenged how CADE had conceptualized CADA and their moral station in the world. In this project, I also use Blyden, Du Bois and other discourses and others may also use the discourse I produce. That may lead to an 'infinite intertextuality'.

Online archives have therefore helped me interrogate an important relationship between 'emancipatory discourses' and discourses of controlling regimes that produce what Foucault (1980, p. 81) has called "subjugated knowledges." What emerges in archival research is not history as concrete events but history as continuities, discontinuities, "unities, totalities, series, relations" (Foucault, 1984, p. 7). Archives and historical sources show that 'blackness' remains a totalizing identity that oversimplifies complex CADA identities that have been discursively delimited into a singularity. It is delimited as to who can claim 'blackness' (Walters, 2007). But it is also internally incoherent as the case of Williamson Pease shows.

Pease, a fugitive African-American who fled to Canada in the 1850s, was categorized by the Canadian and American colour line as a 'coloured' or 'negro'. However, Pease was described as "A white man with blue eyes" (1856, p. 123). Pease's 'blackness' is not, apparently, the 'blackness' of Marcus Garvey or Edward Blyden whose 'blackness' was considered the 'blackness' of true 'negroes'.<sup>33</sup> For Garvey and Blyden 'blackness' is what Foster (2002) would call somatic: "An individual is born white or Black based on the colour of the skin" (p. 99).

But as Booker T. Washington (1999 [1901]) has argued, it is not easy to know where 'blackness' ends and 'whiteness' begins. But as the research in the paper shows, the same

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<sup>33</sup> Paul Gilroy (1993, p. 21) has also described Martin Delany as of "African blood that was not only *pure* but royal too" (emphasis added).

discursive regimes that made Williamson Pease and William Wells Brown ‘negro’ or ‘black’ are the same regimes that now makes Duchess Meghan Markle and President Barack Obama ‘black’. The social conditions may have changed and Obama and Markle are no longer ‘negroes’. However, how they self-identify and why they are identified as such is still controlled by CADE’s cultural, social and epistemological regimes. Antonio Gramsci, as will be discussed later (Chapter 3), will help us make sense of these control regimes through his theory of hegemony through consent.

Markle, unlike Obama, has been trying to be self-determinant, to be autonomous by defying American race and colonial nomenclatures (Woldemikael & Woldemikael, 2021). However, Markle is criticized by African-Americans even when she attempts to self-decolonize. African-Americans expect her to conform to the very same colonial conditions and ethical horizons created by slave and colonial regimes.

What is important here is not what identities are per se but the reasons surrounding their creation, adoptions, and the ethical consequences (positive or negative) of ascribing to these identities. These ‘reasons’ help in understanding the extent to which CADA has decolonized or the extent to which they are still within CADE hegemony with consent.

## **Data Analysis**

Since the data for this dissertation is textual, the data was analyzed using thematic analysis to produce workable data for theoretical analysis. The sources were first analyzed through thematic analysis to provide coherent themes that were then subjected to theoretical analysis. To make the analysis easier, the data was organized around the following four themes: 1) ‘Blackness’ and historical denigration; 2) discursive regimes governing temporal changes in the meaning of ‘blackness’; 3) liberatory regimes and hegemonic regimes; and 4) skin appearance and ‘blackness’.

While these themes helped organize the sources, other themes emerged during thematic analysis. The importance of capitalism in the operationalization of ‘blackness’ from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Allen, 1994) to the middle of the 1960s (Mbembe, 2017) emerged as a significant theme in the understanding of ethical issues associated with ‘blackness’. What these emergent themes contributed is how CADE commodified CADA as an important capitalist product during slavery and the slave trade. This was when “men and women from Africa were transformed into human-objects, human-commodities, human-money” (Mbembe, 2017, p. 2). When CADE lost CADA as a quintessential component of capitalist production and the reproduction system following the official abolition of slavery, CADE decided to control them through colonization in Africa (Taiwo, 2010) and the Americas (Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967]). As Mudimbe has argued, some historians have “linked the scramble for Africa to capitalism and capitalist search for higher profits from colonial conquests” (1988, p. 15). When the official colonialism ended, CADE continued control through neo-colonialism by proxy using the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Stiglitz, 2003; Bhabha, 1994). As Bhabha (1994, p. 347) has argued, “There is for instance a *kinship* between the normative paradigms of colonial anthropology and the contemporary discourse of aid and development agencies” (emphasis added). The control regimes may change their methods, but CADE’s control remains. Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky (1988) have noted this influence, this disguised control of the Global South, by IMF and the World Bank in the interest of the Global North. It is the continuation of control in the post-imperial era.

In addition to thematic analysis, four theories helped make sense of the sources that were themed through in-depth thematic analysis. Themed sources were either highlighted within the text if the book was a PDF copy or listed under a table in a word document. The four theories,

which will be discussed in Chapter 3, are: phenomenology, postcolonial theory, genealogy (discourse analysis) and Gramscian hegemony. Before I proceed it will be important to define what thematic analysis is.

Thematic analysis refers to the identification and the interpretation of meanings and patterns in a data set or data sets (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Mackieson et al., 2019). As the methods sections have outlined, the data were obtained from various sources and this helped in the data triangulation (Carter et al., 2014) of the thematized data in the documentary analysis (Mackieson, Shlonsky & Connolly, 2019). This will, I hope, bolster the integrity of the study. Admittedly, there are different types of triangulations in qualitative research methods so method triangulation (see Carter et al., 2014) has been employed when gathering the data used in the dissertation. According to Carter et al. (2014), method triangulation involves the use of different data collection methods about the same phenomenon under investigation.<sup>34</sup>

Generally, method triangulation has been helpful. For instance, Jieeng's cultural songs have been important in understanding ethical issues associated with 'blackness' in the same way Henry M. Stanley's *Through the Heart of Darkness* or Martin Luther King's or Barack Obama's speeches have. Contemporary scholarship on race and popular discourse on appearance-based identities have also helped in this triangulation. For instance, James Browns' song, "Say it Loud: I'm Black and I am Proud" explores economic exploitation, helplessness, poor self-esteem, and appearance-based identity. These themes appear in Mbembe's (2017), Du Bois (1999 [1903]), Frederick Douglass (1881), Akon's interview (Aljazeera, 2015), Jay-Z 's *99 Problems*, etc.

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<sup>34</sup> There are no ethical issues involved in my use of online archives. Generally, however, method triangulation is also used to mitigate ethical issues (L'Eplattenier, 2009; Dale, 2005) related to archives because of the politics of who stores the documents, what documents are kept and why. For instance, European colonialists destroyed some documents as they left their African colonies in the 1960s and 1970s (see Meredith, 2014; Sato, 2017).

The controlling regime that made Douglass (1881, p. 567) argue that prejudice “paints a hateful picture according to its own diseased imagination, and distorts the features of the fancied original to suit the portrait” made James Brown sing in 1968 that “We have been 'buked and we have been scorned/We've been treated bad, talked about as sure as you're born.” It is the same control regime and discursive authority that makes a British royal official express a concern about how *dark* Duchess Meghan Markle’s and Prince Harry’s son, Archie, would be (Lang, 2021). Frederick Douglass would be surprised that 140 years later ‘the colour line’ is still a moral issue. And James Brown would still be forced to sing: “Say it Loud: I’m Black and I’m Proud” alongside young people screaming ‘Black Lives Matter!’ (Atkins, 2009).

And it would shock Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, that the day of prejudice is a very long day. After reading in the newspaper about Allen’s near-death experience in the hands of an angry European-American mob who objected to Allen marrying a European-American young woman (Mary King), Stowe wrote to William Allen on 21 February 1853 about colour prejudice that “Its day is short” (cited in Allen, 1853, p. 27). CADE seems to have made the colour prejudice day ‘eternal’. Stowe and Lydia Child (1833) would certainly wear ‘Black Lives Matter’ shirts or face contemporary police regimes the way they stood against pro-slavery regimes.

While I have read most sources in their entirety, I have read some books, magazines and newspapers in selected sections or chapters based on set coding categories above. These categorized documents were then analyzed iteratively for emerging themes at basic and deeper levels (Rasmussen, Muir-Cochrane & Henderson, 2012). For instance, I included Du Bois’ book, *Negro*, because it addresses CADA ethnic categories in Africa and in the Americas including the human condition. *Negro* was under ‘blackness and historical denigration’. While Du Bois

criticized the image of CADA housed in what Mudimbe has called the colonial library (1988), a deeper discursive analysis of Du Bois arguments in *Negro* (2018 [1915]), *The Primitive Black Man* (1924) and *Africa* (2007 [1930]) revealed how epistemologically influenced and proscribed Du Bois's perception of continental Africans was. As Mudimbe (1988) has argued, "Western interpreters as well as African analysts have been using categories and conceptual systems which depend on a Western epistemological order" (p. 10).

This 'epistemological order' influenced Du Bois. For instance, Du Bois (1915, p. 4) argued that "It is the silent refusal" to properly interrogate CADA history "which has led to so much false writing on Africa and of its inhabitants." But then Du Bois wrote this in the same paragraph: "When scientists have tried to find an *extreme* type of *black, ugly*, and woolly-haired Negro, they have been compelled more and more to limit his home even in Africa" (emphasis added). Du Bois gives the impression that he was trying to dissociate from this 'extreme type of black, ugly, and woolly-haired Negro' by questioning the 'home' of this kind of a 'negro'. Du Bois's objection is not about the ontological and the phenomenological status of this type of 'negro' but where this 'negro' is located. Not only in Africa. Du Bois seems to accept that there is a 'black, ugly' Negro just as he makes the distinction between 'us' [Western 'black man'] and 'primitive men' [African 'black man']. This latter analysis of Du Bois's text is a result of a deeper analysis of the sources beyond thematic analysis. This moral contradiction, to be further discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 as an epistemological trap, features also in CADA scholarship written in the past five years.

This dissertation is a historical analysis using colonial and contemporary texts to analyze how 'blackness' is understood historically and contemporaneously, and how its contemporary use affects or controls the lives of CADA people globally. The analysis of the historical and contemporary texts will follow the way in which discourse was utilized by Michel Foucault (1997)



in the analysis of *how* power and knowledge functions discursively in society. It will also follow Said's (1978) *Orientalism* and his poignant study of the dissonance between the historical *Orient* of the European mind now stored in western libraries, and the phenomenological Islamic world, the phenomenological (lived experience) world of the everyday Muslim. My use of discourse to analyze the colonial and the postcolonial conditions and their legacies today also follows V.Y Mudimbe in *Invention of Africa* (1988) and *The Idea of Africa* (1994). In these works, Mudimbe argues that Africa as understood in the world today is a product of European fables that were documented in 'colonial libraries' by missionaries and imperial anthropologists and then passed on as the basis of our contemporary epistemological and epistemic authority on Africa and Africans (continental and diasporic).<sup>35</sup> Contemporary ideas about CADA have epistemic roots in the enlightenment ideas of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries' anthropology that painted Africa as the 'dark continent'. Therefore, I will pendulum, descriptively and interpretively, between historical and contemporary textual evidence. I will say more about discourse in chapter 3.

### **A Methodological Note on Terms and Popular Scholarly Concepts**

The dissertation questions popular and scholarly 'blackness' when classifying people so I have avoided colour identities ('negro', 'black', 'white', 'brown', for example) in explanatory texts. Instead, I used continental and diaspora Africans (CADA) for 'blacks' and continental and diaspora Europeans (CADE) for 'whites' in global contexts. Locally, African-Canadians, European-Canadians, European-Americans have been used, etc. However, 'whites', 'blacks', 'black people', 'white people' appear in the dissertation without quotations in cited passages. This

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<sup>35</sup> Mudimbe (1988) has argued that European Christian missionaries and academic anthropologists were imperial and epistemic partners in the shaping of colonial Africa toward what he has called the "Colonizing structure" (p. 15).

also applies to terms such as ‘blackness’, ‘negro’, ‘black’, ‘coloured’, etc. They appear without quotation marks in citations, but they will appear in quotations throughout in explanatory texts. All are in lower cases. Literal blackness and whiteness will not be in quotations.

By *Euro-solipsism* I mean the way CADE ordered the world for themselves as if the world only exists for their benefit.

*Social grammar* is a simpler expression of the Foucauldian discourse as the linguistic structuring of society.

*Discourse* in the Foucauldian sense “are systems of thought, or knowledge claims, which assume an existence independent of a particular speaker” (Stoddart, 2017, p. 203). More about discourse in Chapter 3.

By *colonial* and *epistemic* and *epistemological traps*, I mean the acceptance and operationalization of systems of ‘truth’ and knowledge as justified and standardized by oppressive powers (historical or current). These traps may involve “the construction of subject positions [that] shapes our acceptance of relations of unequal social power” (Stoddart, 2007, p. 203). More about this trap in Chapters 6 and 7.

By *epistemic* I mean about or regarding knowledge. By *epistemological* I mean knowledge justificatory or production processes. Epistemic trap, for instance, is how CADA continues to use the knowledge/episteme used by colonialism to denigrate them (see Learning 2, p. 384)

There are common scholarly concepts that I will not use in this dissertation. This does not mean that I undervalue their scholarly usefulness. I only believe that they are not useful to this dissertation based on the way I conceptualized the research problem and questions. But concepts, I must reiterate, are important. Charles Mills (2001), for instance, has argued that it is challenging for scholars to bring clarity to issues without appropriate concepts. His ‘racial contract’ captures

CADE's exclusionary ethic since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in a way 'social contract' cannot. This shows how important concepts can be.

However, I have avoided important concepts such as 'racist', 'race' and 'racism' as they are equally complex concepts whose meanings are constantly changing (Gilroy, 1991; hooks, 2005). Since 'blackness' is also a complex concept, I have chosen to avoid adding another complexity I may not have the chance to address adequately. As John McWhorter (2019) has argued, "*Racist* has become a ... protean term." According to Omi and Winant (2011), "the meaning and salience of race is forever being reconstituted in the present" (p. 368). Paul Gilroy (1991) has also argued that

The concept supports the idea that racial meanings can change. And can be struggled over.

Rather than talking about racism in the singular, analysts should therefore be talking about racisms in the plural. These are not just different over time but may vary within the same social formation or historical conjunction. (p. 39)

For racism, I have therefore used 'colour prejudice' to avoid delving into historical and contemporary theoretical complexities of race and racism. Additionally, I am also applying the meaning of 'colour prejudice' in the way it was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>36</sup> Colour prejudice or 'prejudice against colour' (Allen, 1853; Chambers, 1864) as it was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, meant the same thing as racism today. It may be argued today that 'colour prejudice' is inter-personal while racism is more structural and systemic. However, prejudice, or colour prejudice, as it was used historically, was both interpersonal and structural.

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<sup>36</sup> "The habits, the feelings, all the prejudices of society — prejudices which neither *refinement*, nor *argument*, nor *education*, NOR RELIGION ITSELF, can subdue — mark the people of colour, whether bond or free, as the subjects of a degradation *inevitable* and *incurable*" (American Colonization Society, cited in Child, 1833, p. 141, original emphasis). Also see notes 11 and 37 about how 'colour prejudice' is also a modern systemic problem.

For instance, on March 4, 1837, the *Colored American Magazine* wrote that prejudice was worse than slavery: "...we are proscribed and pressed down by prejudice more wicked and fatal than even slavery itself." Emphasizing the repressive role played by pro-slavery and laws restricting free African-Americans, Chambers (1864) argued that

Far from assisting them on the road to honour and preferment, they have left no means untried to crush in them every noble aspiration, to forbid the rise of every sentiment of ambition, to keep the whole of every shade of darkness in a contemptuously mean position—exiles from all communion in joy, hope, sorrow. (p. 127).

Chambers added that

The force and prevalence of this *prejudice* can scarcely be imagined by any one out of America. That the colour of a man's skin, without the slightest reference to his *moral* qualities, or to his *wealth*, should determine his *social* or *political position*, savours of the ridiculous to Europeans. (p. 127, emphasis added)

Another reason for avoiding the use of race and racism is internal CADA-CADA discrimination based on the darkness or the lightness of the skin. Light skin and dark skin CADA used 'colour prejudice'<sup>37</sup> against one another in a similar (though not the same) way CADE use it against them. Because of the difference in appearance, 'colour prejudice' has existed for centuries in CADA-CADA social discourses on beauty, intelligence, and socio-economic status. Kenyans, who described South Sudanese to be *mweusi kama Makaa* [as black as charcoal] may be said to have colour prejudice against South Sudanese. When Du Bois described Marcus Garvey as 'A

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<sup>37</sup> Note that 'colour prejudice' can also be systemic. For instance, law enforcement and judicial institutions in Canada and the USA are *racist* toward African-Canadians and African-Americans; but they tend to be harsher on more dark-skinned African-Canadians and African-Americans (see Altink, 2020). About Jamaica, Altink writes: "Protesters stressed that these victims of police brutality had one thing in common: they were poor, and because of Jamaica's complex class and colour relations, mostly dark-skinned."

little, fat black man, ugly, but with intelligent eyes and big head’, he can also be considered to have a colour prejudice against Garvey. But the South Sudanese-Kenyan and Du Bois-Garvey contradiction cannot be described as ‘racist’. Additionally, Americans were racist against both Garvey and Du Bois; however, they preferred Du Bois because of his lighter skin, which they believed made him into the intellectual he was (see Smith, 1905). The same lightness of skin CADE uses to prefer Du Bois, was used by Du Bois to look down on Garvey. Racism cannot explain this because Du Bois cannot be said to be racist toward Garvey unless we consider colourism as a different form of racism (see Altink 2020).

The light skin-dark skin divide, which is called colourism in modern parlance (Dixon & Telles, 2017), has its origin outside CADA social imaginary. Some ‘Coloureds’ in South Africa, for instance, discriminate against ‘blacks’ because of the social consciousness the Apartheid regime standardized in them. ‘Mulattoes’ in the Americas (USA and Haiti, for example) did not invent the idea that they were better than ‘negroes’; they bought into the social and moral norms governing their society (James, 1963); or as Foucault (2010) would call them, rules of discourse. Colonialism and slavery therefore dictated the superiority consciousness light skin CADA assumed against their dark skin counterparts (Dixon & Telles, 2017). Light skin CADA may have not exercised their superiority attitude against their dark skin counterparts in the way CADE applied it to CADA because they lacked absolute power. They, however, adopted the light-skin-is-superior attitude from CADE. Because ‘colour prejudice’ functions between CADE and CADA and among CADA themselves (Campion, 2019; Hill, 2001), ‘racism’ would not have been helpful because it cannot describe inter-CADA discrimination and CADE’s institutional preference for light skin CADA. It may not be possible to use racism when it comes to internal CADA prejudices; however, colour still plays a status role.

Today, light skin diaspora Africans find themselves discriminated by dark skin people because they are not 'black' enough (Campion, 2019). This cannot possibly be called racism. 'Blackness' is therefore a problem within and outside CADA social discourse about the self.

## **CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical Framework**

### **Introduction**

To ensure that the data collected for this study gives a wider context regarding how ‘blackness’ affects the lives of CADA people today as examples already mentioned earlier show (see Chapter 2), four theories have been used to analyze the data noted in the previous section. These four theories are phenomenology, postcolonial theory, Foucauldian genealogy and Gramscian theory of hegemony. The theories have helped make sense of the moral issues associated with ‘blackness’ through the dimensions in which it is addressed in this work. These important dimensions include its social, economic, epistemological, and political significance to CADA and CADE. As I noted in chapter two, these dimensions, which I have called moral problematics (the moral issues associated with ‘blackness’), are the ways in which CADE used ‘blackness’ to control and fix the kind of life CADA should live. This life, as Lydia Child (1833) shows in 19<sup>th</sup> century United States for African-Americans during slavery, was not a desirable life.

Additionally, these theories have also provided another dimension of triangulation: the theory triangulation.<sup>38</sup> As Carter et al. (2014, p. 545) have argued, “Theory triangulation uses different theories to analyze and interpret data.” Using four theories to interpret my data after thematic analysis has helped dispel some unconscious assumptions I may have had prior to the in-depth reading and iterative thematization of the data. For instance, I found out that some abolitionists despised slavery, but they also believed in the natural inferiority of CADA people (Allen, 1853). I therefore started to critically read and analyze the readings and avoid any simplistic

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<sup>38</sup> I have used ‘method triangulation’ in my data collection. See Chapter 2.

proposition that pro-slavery CADE people espoused colour prejudice and hatred while anti-slavery personality did not.<sup>39</sup>

For instance, in 1853, Reverend John B. King spent two years raising money to build a church that would “exclude from membership those who held their fellow-men in bondage, and who would not admit the doctrines of the human brotherhood” (Allen, 1853, p. 8). King then learned that his sister Mary King was planning to marry Professor William Allen, an ‘octoroon’ African-American [  $\frac{1}{4}$  African and  $\frac{3}{4}$  European] and a college professor. Surprisingly, Rev. King told Allen that he would have been happy had Allen had the “remaining fourth Anglo-Saxon blood.” He then warned Allen that “He would not tolerate me as a visitor at his house, in company with his sister, unless I came in the capacity of driver or servant” (1853, p. 9). Rev. King despised slavery but he also stirred the European-American residents of the town who nearly lynched Professor Allen. He was, undoubtedly, prejudiced against African-Americans regardless of their ‘hues’ as long as there was a trace of African ancestry (visible or invisible) in them. Nonetheless, Rev. King was also against pro-slavery European-Americans. His plan was, in his estimation, a moral project meant to alleviate the suffering of millions of African-Americans then still in slavery. This is another example of how colour affected the lives of CADA (moral problematic).<sup>40</sup> These moral problems associated with colour are very relevant in social work scholarship and practice today (more in Chapter 7).

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<sup>39</sup> In 1859, Rev. J. W. Pennington, a Doctor of Divinity [honorary] from the University of Heidelberg (Germany), “was expelled from a railway-car belonging to the Sixth Avenue Railway Company, and forthwith brought an action before the superior court of New York” (Chambers, 1961, p. 132). He lost the case. Rev. Pennington was not only a highly educated and respected personality, but he was also in the North, a supposedly anti-slavery state.

<sup>40</sup> See Maynard (2017) and Clarke (2014) about how colour complexity continues to affect CADA lives in modern Canada. Also see the example given by the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) I cited in Chapter 1.



Consequently, these theories helped support findings; but they also helped refute or clarify some of the findings if necessary. For instance, that ‘blackness’ is a discursive reality has been adequately discussed in race scholarship and discourse analysis not only helped in the understanding of relevant data, but it also helped support these findings. While I find the modern utility of ‘blackness’ morally problematic, others do not. They understand that ‘blackness’ may not have any natural foundation, but they argue that it is still a useful discursive formation (see Dei, 2018; Gilroy, 1991; Hall, 1996a, 1996b; Mbembe, 2017; Foster, 2002; Walters, 2007).

Below I discuss what phenomenology, postcolonial theory, Foucauldian genealogy, and Gramscian hegemony are and how I have used them to address the ethical problematic of ‘blackness’. In addition to their importance in data analysis and theory triangulation, the theories have also been connected in a new, innovative way to address the topic under discussion.<sup>41</sup> I must note something here about my use of these theories. I have not reinterpreted these theories to produce a new theoretical understanding. What these theories have afforded me is an access to important conceptual tools for the analysis of ‘blackness’ and its ethical and social implications. What is new, in other words, is their triangulation rather than their re-interpretation. I have used them analytically in a way they may have not been used before.

Phenomenology addresses the meaning of ‘blackness’ and CADA body not as thought but as it appears in and of itself and how it was and continues to be experienced first-hand. Postcolonial theory critiques the colonial condition and period in which the meaning of ‘blackness’ analyzed

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<sup>41</sup> Michel Foucault was a staunch critic of phenomenology, so using Foucault and Husserl in the same work may seem strange. While Foucault (2010, pp.219-232; 2002, pp. 268-362) understood the value of phenomenology in rethinking the shortcomings of Cartesianism and Kantianism regarding the *a priori*, he was critical of phenomenologists’ prioritization of the ‘subject’ in the phenomenological project. For Foucault, the subject is a product of discourse. He argues that his aim in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is to “free the history of thought from all the taint of subjectivity” (Foucault, 2010, p.222). His other aim is to “free history from the grip of phenomenology” (p.224). I will still show in Chapter 7 how the two theories intersect productively.

through phenomenology took place. Foucauldian genealogy will provide theoretical tools to interrogate how ‘blackness’ became socially meaningful during slavery and imperial colonialism, and why it continues to have utility today. The colonial and slave regimes gave meaning to ‘blackness’ as a CADA identity through discourse, so genealogy helped me analyze how insidious meanings are hidden without being hidden. For example, genealogy helped me uncover how power hides its operation in everyday discourses leading to ideological control, that I may describe, using Horkheimer and Adorno (2002, p. xix) as “the idolization of the existing order.” For instance, CADE described CADA as having ‘flat noses’ and ‘woolly hair’ and CADA scholars adopted them as if they were mere descriptions of appearances. This hiding without hiding leads to the last theory, Gramscian Hegemony, which interrogates how CADE continues to control CADA without appearing to control them. This is control through consent (Gramsci) or power working both *on* and *through* people (Foucault, 1980).

## **Phenomenology**

The goal of this project is not (necessarily) to establish the meaning of ‘blackness’ but to study *what* controls, or *who* controls, this meaning. Nonetheless, critically examining the meaning of ‘blackness’ has helped me make sense of *how* this control affected and continues to affect CADA lives today. As such, interrogating the meaning of ‘blackness’ plays an important role when discussing ethical problems because blackness as Gates (1997) and Walters (2007) have argued, has multiple meanings. And these meanings point to various ethical problematics such as inclusion/exclusion in ethical dynamics (Taylor, 2001) or social stigmatization (Maynard, 2017).

Phenomenology in this project is therefore not meant to establish with certainty that ‘blackness means x’ or that ‘the colour of CADA skin appearance is x.’ What has been undertaken is the phenomenological analysis of ‘blackness’ *and* CADA body as they appear to CADA and as

understood in scholarly and popular usage. My interest was in ethical parameters that make Anthony Appiah (1994, p. 54), for instance, refer to African-Americans as “*black* Americans” but still describe them as having “all shades of skin color, *milk* through *chocolate*” (emphasis added); why German ethnologist, Leo Frobenius (1913, p. 145), designates the Yoruba people as “blacks/negro” yet gives the following description: “some dark brown, some reddish, or yellow in complexion”; or why Russo-German batonist, Georg Schweinfurth (1878), described the Jieeng (Dinka) of South Sudan as “Jet-black” (p. 135) but then again argued that the Jieeng are “among the darkest of races, but the deep *black* of their complexion gives place to a...tint of *brown* ...when they have smeared themselves with oil, or taken a bath, their skin shines like *dark bronze*” (p. 48, emphasis added). Phenomenology has been instrumental in making sense of these contradictions: appearance-based identity dynamics and appearance descriptions.

While phenomenology as a philosophical concept and its epistemological motivations can be traced to Descartes when it comes to a personal reflection on what is given in experience to arrive at what Emanuel Kant referred to ‘apodictic certainty’<sup>42</sup>, its contemporary understanding as a philosophical movement and a methodological tool of analysis is attributable to the work of German philosopher, Edmund Husserl. Like Descartes<sup>43</sup>, Husserl’s aim was to solve an epistemological problem that philosophers have struggled with since Descartes: how to arrive at epistemic certainty through a subjective analysis of an object of knowledge to ascertain “pre-

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<sup>42</sup> I must note here that while ‘apodictic certainty’ is an important philosophical concept, it is not useful in this dissertation. It is beyond the scope of this work. Besides, absolute certainty in social issues (and even science) is a lofty ideal. Additionally, as I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I am not looking for certainties in my analysis of ‘blackness’ and its historical and contemporary problems.

<sup>43</sup> Descartes himself was not a *phenomenologist*; however, Husserl has credited Descartes with his development of phenomenology because *Cartesian Meditations* helped Husserl prioritize subjective experience in his transcendental phenomenology.

predicative” knowledge “in the nature of things themselves” not from pre-suppositions about these objects of knowledge (Husserl, 1982, p. 11).

Phenomenology has therefore been instrumental in making sense of phenomenological contradictions mentioned in Appiah, Frobenius and Schweinfurth as quoted above. It helped solve or points out the conflict between what is given as evidence and what experience reveals (Husserl, 1982). With Appiah, Frobenius and Schweinfurth, there seems to be a conflict between what they seem to *see* and what they *give* as the epistemological and epistemic reality of CADA skin appearance. By ‘epistemological reality’ I mean authenticated or accepted facts about a given knowledge production processes regarding a given object. That African-Americans have milky or chocolaty appearance is not a conceptual problem for that seems to be what Appiah experiences; but that African Americans are also ‘black’ gives us reason to question African-American ‘milkiness’, ‘chocolatiness’ and ‘blackness’. This then leads us to the Cartesian doubt in the Husserlian tradition to address this conflict/contradiction. The four concepts—meditative method, intentionality, phenomenon, and *epoché*—discussed below, are important in understanding how Husserl used phenomenology and how it has been useful in this dissertation in delinking ‘blackness’ from CADA body.

### ***The Meditative Method***

This Cartesian method, according to Husserl results in “a philosophy turned toward the subject himself” (1982, p. 2). The philosopher according to Husserl “must ‘once in his life’ withdraw into himself and attempt, within himself, to overthrow and build anew all the sciences that, up to then, he has been accepting” (1982, p. 2). To achieve this, the subject must return to ‘things themselves’ by coming closer to them, the phenomena under investigation (Sartre, 1943).<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> CADA bodies in this case are examples.

The subject ‘meditates’ on knowledge gained from subjective experience from the *intending* of the object. The subject must therefore deal with two epistemic perspectives about the ‘intentional object’. Pietersma (2000) has referred to these two perspectives as the appraisal of the properties of an ‘intentional object’ from the outside as a scientist does or from the inside as a phenomenologist does. The former, according to Husserl, is pre-philosophical for it intends the world as merely given and the latter is philosophical because it looks beyond the merely intending of objects in our everydayness (Stapleton, 1983). The meditative method prioritizes subjective experiences for the subject to ‘go back to the thing itself’, the object of intentionality. When CADA and CADE are presented with CADA body, to meditate on it as an object of intentionality, is ‘blackness’ what they see?

### ***Intentionality***

‘Intentionality’<sup>45</sup> here means the directedness of consciousness toward an object (Searle, 2015; Husserl, 1983; Merleau-Ponty, 2002). Therefore, intentionality here does not involve deciding or intending in the ordinary sense. In this dissertation, the intentional object is the CADA body. When presented with an object of intentionality, the meditator describes, *immediately* not *mediately*, the properties of the object that appear in her/his consciousness. Ontologically, these properties may only exist inside the mind without any external existence, or they may also exist outside the mind of the subject (Zahavi, 2017). The question I ask is: Is ‘blackness’ only in the mind of the subject or does it have an external existence? This is addressed in Chapter 6.

The intentional object must therefore be appraised from a phenomenon presented to consciousness. And that something is an object presented to consciousness does not necessarily

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<sup>45</sup> According to Searle, “Hunger, thirst, beliefs, perceptual experiences, intentions, desires, hopes, and fears are all *intentional* because they are about something” (2015, p. 13).

mean that that object exists in reality; however, it means that ‘something’ is presented to consciousness—meaning that something is intended (Zahavi, 2017; Flynn, 2006). Husserl therefore argues that “As a consequence, phenomenology begins with problems of intentionality” (1983, p. 349). This presentation of an object to consciousness gives the phenomenon that is analyzed. The historical analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 have already standardized ‘blackness’ to be the phenomenon. In this dissertation, the subject (CADA or CADE) will be presented with an object of intentionality (CADA body); and it will be up to the subject to tell us the phenomenon.

### ***Phenomenon***

A phenomenon, according to Martin Heidegger (1962), is that which appears or that which reveals or shows itself. This means that an appearance reveals or shows itself to a subject as a first-hand experience not as a mediated appearance related by a third-party to the perceiving subject. A phenomenon also “signifies *that which shows itself in itself*” (1962, p. 51, original emphasis). Consequently, a phenomenon is that which appears to a subject or that which signifies what appears to a subject and not what the subject *thinks* of what appears. For Sartre, “The phenomenon is what manifests itself” (1943, p. xlviii). For instance, CADA body is what manifests itself in consciousness; ‘blackness’ is what colonial discourses have normalized as that which manifests itself, or that through which CADA body manifests itself.

A phenomenon, according to phenomenologists, is therefore a non-reflective or a non-predicative consciousness. Admittedly, a subject may be mistaken regarding what she/he has experienced. This is why a philosophical analysis of what is intended is necessary to arrive at what Husserl has called a ‘grounded judgement’. Was ‘blackness’ what explorers like Mungo Park or David Livingstone saw when they first encountered Africans? What appeared to them, the phenomena, were various shade of dark. Is a social workers’ or a teacher’s judgement that an

African-Canadian student, for instance, is a potential criminal really based on experience?<sup>46</sup> This grounding fulfils or negates its justification in evidence or lack of it; a “a synthesis in which what was meant coincides and agrees with what is itself given” (Husserl, 1982, p. 11).

Both Descartes and Husserl acknowledge this, so they do not take what is given to a subject’s consciousness to be true at face value without any critical analysis of the phenomenon as it appears to the subject. An analysis or the description of the phenomenon as given to a subjective consciousness is what constitutes phenomenology. Since intentionality is about what appears to consciousness and not what necessarily exists in reality, an error attributed to perception is not necessarily a problem to phenomenology. That appearance is mistaken is a matter of judgment, of analysis, not of experience itself.<sup>47</sup> A phenomenon is therefore the surging reality from experience after the object is intended before judgment or verification determines whether what appears to a subject constitutes an error. This judgement or verification of a phenomena by ‘going back to the thing itself’ requires what Husserl calls *epoché*.

### ***Epoché: Natural Attitude and Phenomenological Attitude***

Phenomenology, according to Husserl (1983, p. xvii), is the “science of phenomena”, so it is the study of “essence of things” (Merleau-Ponty, 2002 [1962], p. vii). “Essence” here does not

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<sup>46</sup> I have referred to judgements based on experience, *behaviour-in-time*, and judgements based on personal or historical assumptions, *behaviour-in-discourse* (see Garang, 2022).

<sup>47</sup> “[it] is correctly said that the senses do not err; yet not because they always judge correctly, but because they do not judge at all. Hence truth, as much as error, and thus also illusion as leading to the latter, are to be found only in judgments, i.e., only in the relation of the object to our understanding (Kant, 1998, p. 384); “We say that error is *appearance*. That is false...appearance is *always true* if we confine ourselves to it. Appearance is being. That tree that I take for a man is not a man in appearance and a tree in reality. In *appearance* it is this somewhat darker thing that surged up in the night. And *this is true*: it is the surging up of a being. And it is my variable anticipation that is false to the extent that it aims at the deeper reality” (Sartre, 1995, p. 3, original emphasis - footnote).

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mean a nature that is immanent in objects of intentionality, but objects as constituted by the meditating ego. As Sartre (1943) has argued, “The essence is not in the object; it is the meaning of the object, the principle of the series of appearances [phenomena] which disclose it” (p. xlix). The essence of things is the appearance of things as they appear to the subject, not as they have been understood in the subject’s cultural or epistemic world. The epistemological and the social world makes Appiah ascribe ‘blackness’ to the African-American’s body but the African-American body as a phenomenon seems milky or chocolaty in Appiah’s experience. The essence of things for Husserl would therefore be the appearance of intentional objects as they are presented to the subject’s consciousness not as they have been understood through “empiricistic prejudices” (1983, p. 47) or scientific prejudices (1982, p. 53).

Phenomenologists therefore study how a phenomenon “shows up for the subject” (Zahavi, 2019, p. 903) to see the phenomena afresh (Finlay, 2012). When a subject’s social surrounding dictates what a subject relays as ‘lived experienced’, we do not get what Husserl (1983, p. 6) has described as the “originary experience of concrete physical things.” To address the above *prejudices* and ensure that a phenomenon is understood through ‘lived experience’ as ‘originary experience of concrete physical things’, Husserl recommends what he calls phenomenological reduction (or *Epoché*) (Zahavi, 2019a).

When studying a phenomenon to gauge whether a given object is understood reflectively or non-reflectively/non-predicatively, a phenomenologist, according to Husserl, must make a distinction between a *natural attitude* and the *phenomenological attitude*. The natural attitude is how consciousness understands intentional objects reflectively (theoretically) as true in their givenness. The subject in the natural attitude does not normally find it necessary to doubt the ontological and epistemological status of a given object. What the subject is told about the object



of intentionality (CADA body for example) is taken for granted as an “uncritical perception” (Merleau-Ponty, 2002 [1962], p. 46).

Human subjects, according to Merleau-Ponty (2002) normally rely on “thoughts already formulated by myself or others, and relies on my memory, that is, on *the nature of my mind*, or else on the memory of the community of thinkers” (p. 46). According to Husserl (1965) human beings have been historically oriented toward a given racial, cultural, or national attitude within a normative framework. As a result, people live in a social world in which what things mean is usually taken for granted. They do not perform what Henry Pietersma (2000, p. 7) calls “epistemic appraisal”. Through epistemic appraisal, subjects judge if what they believe about a given social phenomenon or object is justified. Justified knowledge is what Husserl calls a grounded judgement. Without this grounded judgement, people believe and operationalize false assumptions because these assumptions have already been ‘formulated’ for them.

Epoché, a necessary part of the phenomenological analysis according to Husserl, is the bracketing or parenthesizing of the obvious world we take for granted (Husserl, 1982, 1983). “As radically meditating philosophers [Husserl argues], we now have neither a science that we accept nor a world that exists for us.” The ‘world’ here is not the physical world but the ‘world’ of science, culture, social norms, and epistemological paradigms (such as Mudimbe’s ‘colonial library’).<sup>48</sup>

Epoché therefore entails putting the familiar world in parenthesis and focusing on appearance as given in a subject’s experience by describing and interrogating it (Sartre, 1988a; Husserl, 1982, 1983). The familiar world that is bracketed may be the world of opinions and beliefs as Merleau-Ponty (2002) has argued. After bracketing the familiar world and temporarily leaving

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<sup>48</sup> There are critics who argue that Husserl’s phenomenology is mentalistic or that he is locked up inside his mind (see Sugrue, 2021) and Carman (1999). Husserl, they argue, failed properly to appreciate people as Heideggerian being-in-the-world. He has also not, this argument maintains, appreciated human cognition as an embodied reality (Merleau-Ponty, 2002).

the natural attitude behind, the meditator then focuses on phenomena as presented to the meditator's consciousness by describing and interrogating it to arrive at the phenomenological attitude. The phenomenologists, according to Zahavi is given an important opportunity "to explore and assess the epistemic and metaphysical suppositions" (2019b, p. 903). After the reduction, the subject will then engage in a phenomenological description or an eidetic reduction as the object is presented to consciousness. This description will be carried out until the subject "grasp ...the presence of the things itself" (Flynn, 2006, p. 21).

Here is how epoché is helpful in this dissertation. Colonial epistemology and history (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5) argue that the CADA body is 'black.' Phenomenologically, however, I will not dismiss *a priori* that CADA is 'black' and neither will I accept that the body is not 'black.' I must arrive at a 'grounded judgement' or perform an 'epistemic appraisal' through epoché by analyzing historical and contemporary textual sources. This is the suspension of judgement based on prior ideas about CADA body until a thorough phenomenological analysis is done. These textual sources (historical books, newspaper reports, slave narratives, travellers' narratives, etc.) are supposedly based on experiences or what has been observed from CADA body. What I would bracket (or parenthesized) is not CADA body because that is the object of intentionality that is presented to consciousness. What I would bracket are 'metaphysical suppositions' or cultural, social, and epistemological ideas that are already assumed about CADA body. The taken-for-granted characteristics of the body are the natural attitude that must be suspended (not uncritically rejected) so that the subject goes to the body 'itself' to reveal the phenomenon that is experienced. The subject should not be satisfied by the phenomenon experienced by a third party (CADE as an epistemological authority, for example). The subject

must go to ‘the thing itself’ (body) to show from experience the phenomenon (the colour) as it appears to consciousness. However, phenomenological reduction is not without its critics.

### ***Criticism and Defence of Epoché***

Admittedly, existentialists, inspired by Heidegger’s (1962) *Dasein* as a being-in-the-world, have criticized, or even rejected *epoché* [phenomenological reduction].<sup>49</sup> They argue that Husserl’s reduction makes the world appear theoretical when human beings live-in-the-world and cannot therefore reduce it and still understand it (Flynn, 2006). What existentialists criticize, however, are some details or some ways in which Husserl has used the reduction. Merleau-Ponty (2002), for example, argues that “Far from being, as has been thought, a procedure of idealistic philosophy, phenomenological reduction belongs to existential philosophy: “Heidegger’s ‘being-in-the-world’ appears only against the background of the phenomenological reduction” (p. xvi).

The phenomenologist, I argue, does not ‘bracket’ the world and the things in it but the ideas about the world that have been given to a subject’s consciousness through education, culture and other knowledge or ideas influencing structures. While Stapleton (1983) has argued that Husserl’s project like Heidegger in *Being and Time* is not merely epistemological but also ontological, my reading of Husserl leads me to the conclusion that Husserlian philosophy is largely epistemological. I agree with Stapleton (1983) that “The epistemological characteristics rest on an ontological basis” (p. 24); however, I would also argue that ontology is relevant to Husserl because epistemology needs intentional objects (objects of knowledge) in-the-world. Husserl (1982) hoped to transform “philosophy into a science grounded on an absolute foundation” (p. 1). As Merleau-

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<sup>49</sup> I will therefore argue that the fundamental philosophical difference between Husserl and existential phenomenologists like Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre is not that they abandoned Husserlian *epoché*. The difference lies in how *epoché* can be carefully used in understanding *Being* through *Dasein*’s being-in-the-world. They extended phenomenology beyond the relationship between ego as a consciousness and its intentional objects in the world.

Ponty has argued, “we cannot subject our perception of the world to philosophical scrutiny without ceasing to be identified with that act of positing the world” (2002, p. xvi).

Existential phenomenologists such as Martin Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre accept Husserlian intentionality as they believe it helped solved the traditional philosophical problem of mind-body dualism because intentionality means that consciousness reaches beyond itself toward intentional objects. They also agree with Husserl on the return to the subject, the *ego*, as the starting point; but unlike Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre do not isolate the *ego* from the world. They criticize the Husserlian transcendental phenomenology that appears rather intellectualist or idealistic. Its focus on the ‘I think’, they argue, cannot help us understand human being-in-the-world. Since the Husserlian natural attitude, the taken-for-grantedness of the world, is the very way in which we can understand Being, *epoché* becomes problematic to existentialism. If a phenomenologist tries to understand Being of Dasein through *care* (Heidegger), *anguish* (Sartre) or embodiment (Merleau-Ponty), then *epoché* turns a phenomenologist away from the same ways in which she/he can understand Being of Dasein in-the-world. While *epoché* may make the understanding of Being difficult, it does not foreclose such post-*epoché* understanding, if *care* and *anguish* are conscious states with intentional objects in-the-world that can be bracketed.

While Husserl puts too much emphasis on the ‘I think’, he does not ‘bracket’ the physical world with corporeal things in it; he only brackets discursive formations: ideas, beliefs, opinions, education, culture, science, ideology, etc. When effecting *epoché*, “I am *not doubting* its [world’s] *factual being* as though I were a skeptic; rather I am only exercising the ‘phenomenological’ ἐποχή (*epoché*) which also *completely shuts me off from any judgment about spatiotemporal factual being* (Husserl, 1983, p.61, original emphasis). Sartre, who is also critical of Husserl’s failure to adequately appreciate Dasein as being-in-the-world, appreciates the importance of *epoché* even

when some scholars have argued that he has abandoned it in *Being and Nothingness* (see Carman, 1999, Richmond, 2004). As he put it, “The first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to reestablish its true connection with the world, to know that consciousness is a positional consciousness of the world” (Sartre, 1943, p. li).

There is an object of intentionality to which the subject focuses through subjective experience after the reduction. When I question ‘blackness’, I still have the CADA body on which I could focus to ascertain whether ‘blackness’ is the phenomenon that appears in my consciousness when CADA body (the object of intentionality) is presented to me. According to Merleau-Ponty, “To return to things themselves is to return to the world which precedes knowledge, of which knowledge always *speaks*, and in relation to which every scientific schematization is an abstract and derivative sign-language” (2002, p. x, original emphasis). I must therefore return to CADA body if I am to understand ‘blackness’, which is supposedly derived from that body.

The phenomenological reduction does not therefore take the phenomenologist away from things or from the social world, nor does she/he want to take anything away from the character of the world and the things in it. Ideally, a phenomenological researcher only describes “our subjective modes of access to objects” (Pietersma, 2000, p. 11) without adding to the world being described.<sup>50</sup> She/he is only interested in seeing things ‘anew’ by coming closer to the phenomena being investigated (Sartre, 1943; Merleau-Ponty, 2002). In this dissertation, for example, I am only analyzing existing discourses from available texts as presented by the authors’ own words. I may add new perspectives but not new objects into the colonial and slave world I am describing and analyzing. I would be making a mistake if I added to the world I am describing because I would

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<sup>50</sup> This is why I am uncomfortable with authors who, for instance, transpose ‘race’ to the classical European world (or ancient Egypt) where identity parameters other than race, were used. Using race for the renaissance period as Heng (2018) does makes us transport modern ideas to that period.

not be describing what is *there* but importing (or constituting) phenomenological objects into the *world* I am subjecting to a phenomenological analysis. As such, “The real has to be described, not constructed or formed” (Merleau-Ponty, 2002, p. xi).

Merleau-Ponty describes this as the problem of transporting objects into consciousness rather than presenting them as objects for consciousness. I describe and analyze what these authors “seems to see”, to use Searle’s (2015, p. 108) language. For the African-American skin, Appiah *sees* ‘milkiness’ and ‘chocolatiness’; Eldridge Cleaver *sees* ‘brownness’ and ‘chocolatiness’; and Maya Angelou *sees* ‘light-brownness’ and ‘yellowness’. These are colours (phenomena) that seem to appear to their consciousnesses so I cannot add colours they do not present. Their object of intentionality is the same: CADA body.

It is indeed possible for the natural attitude and the phenomenological attitude to be the same, but this is not something a phenomenologist should take for granted. As Merleau-Ponty (2002 [1962]) has argued about Husserl, a philosopher is like a perpetual beginner. She/he must not rest convinced by what the ‘community of thinkers’ have established to be the reality of the intentional object in question.

Therefore, instead of resting satisfied with theoretical colonial arguments that CADA are ‘black’—as presented by imminent CADA and CADE scholars—I will ‘go back’ to what authors present as their phenomenological (virtual) experience not their discursive writs as embodying the reality of ‘blackness’ and CADA body. Husserl not only gives me a methodological tool<sup>51</sup>, but he

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<sup>51</sup> I have not used existential phenomenology as used by Gordon (2002) and Henry (2006) because existentialism tends to focus, primarily, on CADA human conditions as dictated by CADE through slavery and colonialism. This is the natural attitude. They acknowledge the role played by ‘blackness’, but they still discuss these conditions as ‘blackness’ or symbolized by ‘blackness.’ They question ‘blackness’ but they still use it as a standardized scholarly concept. Because they focus on the human condition, they do not ‘go back to the thing itself’ [CADA body] to bracket ‘blackness’. They have accepted, for instance, that there are ‘black’ people and ‘black’ culture.

also affords me the *freedom* to go back to the body for evidence of a grounded judgement. This freedom to question evidence is the reason why postcolonial theorists attempt to rethink what has been written about CADA as I discuss below.

## **Postcolonial Theory**

Postcolonial theory addresses colonialism and the neo-colonial conditions [coloniality] as a corrective or a revisionist project. While the official colonialism ended mostly in the 1960s, the struggle against coloniality is an ongoing process (Mbembe, 2017; Said, 1993). I therefore begin the analysis with the colonial condition the postcolonial theory addresses before I go into what the theory is and how it helps in addressing the ethical problematics of ‘blackness’ and its currency as a social control device by the colonial and the neo-colonial regimes.

### ***The Colonial and the Neo-colonial Condition***

Here colonialism will be understood very broadly. This broad understanding includes slavery and the socioeconomic condition of diaspora Africans as Ture and Hamilton (2011 [1967]) illustrate in *Black Power*. According to Ture and Hamilton, in the 1960s African-Americans were subjected to vagaries of state power (Martin, 1991) in the same way continental Africans were subjected to similar whims of colonial state apparatuses since the 19<sup>th</sup>-century scramble for Africa (Lugard, 1929; Mudimbe, 1988; Rodney, 2018 [1972]). This colonial state power, which Mbembe (2001) has described as a *colonial potentate*, is what according to Walter Rodney (2018 [1972]) underdeveloped colonial Africa in the process of developing Europe between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Developing Africa as a European colonial domain was therefore not part of the imperial-colonial program (Rodney, 2018 [1972]; Taiwo, 2010). According to German colonialist, Carl Peters, for instance, Africans had to be kept in a half-way condition between slavery and free European labour because [he argued] they do not understand freedom (Lugard, 1929, p. 356).

While Ture and Hamilton (2011 [1967]) wrote about these socioeconomic conditions as they experienced them at that time, the position of CADA judged through similar social and economic parameters is not very much different from what it was five decades ago as modern examples presented in Chapter 1 exemplify. Other modern examples of neo-colonialism are shown in research studies that show colouring of poverty (Maynard, 2017; Allahdini, 2014), group criminalization (Alexander, 2013; Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017; Guimarães, 2013) and the economic control through the WB and the IMF (Bhabha, 1994; Ogar et al., 2019; Stiglitz, 2003). The contemporary colonial condition stems from the control of narratives and economic power. Because our identities and the kind of life we live are shaped by our orientation and frameworks in a moral space (Taylor, 2001), I believe studying colonial and neo-colonial controls become imperative. Essentially, the history of Africa and Africans that continues to inform these power and control narratives have been the work of European science and scholarship since the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Eze, 1997; Mbembe, 2017; Wynter, 2003). The contemporary control of CADA, while subtle, is extensive and impactful.

What this means is that much of what we know as ‘African History’ is Africa and Africans epistemically shaped by European and Euro-American travel narratives from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Sweet, 1997; Russell-Wood, 1978). However, the impactful scholarship that resulted from these narratives took shape in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when race theorizing and colour hierarchies concretized (see Chapter 4). This institutionalized epistemic and historical constitution of Africa and Africans is what V. Y. Mudimbe (1988) has described as the ‘invention of Africa’. This discursive invention included a construction and reconstruction of epistemes on Africa and Africans by European writers based on ideas learned from classical writings on Africa (Jordan, 1974; George, 1958).



Imaginative writings based on these classical texts became institutionalized and normalized as the cultural and the biological ‘nature’ of Africans.

As such, Europeans ‘knew’ Africans before they even met them, something one may describe, following Habermas and Ben-Habib (1981, p. 5), as a “false normativity in [European] history.” This known-before-being-known reality of Africa and Africans would be amplified by travellers’ accounts and books and treatises based on travellers’ accounts (Best, 1578; Burton, 1863; Purchas, 1614; Africanus, 1896 [1600]). These writings focused on what Europe and Euro-America wanted the world to understand about Africans and Africa. Africans on the continent and in the diaspora were people to be known not subjects whose knowledge of things was important to Europeans. They were ‘things’—mostly tools or commodities (hooks, 2015; Mbembe, 2017)—in a world Europe planned to control and exploit. And these ‘things’ had to have their image controlled for “the maintenance of any system of racial domination” (hooks, 2015, p. 2).

The European interest in controlling the world was first motivated by religious supremacy before capitalism provided the *raison d’être* of global supremacy. Because religious and economic interests drove Europeans and European-American writers and travellers, they wrote about Africa and Africans in ways that either distorted, misrepresented or exaggerated the nature of Africa and Africans: “The disgusting-looking protruded belly of the ourang-outang can be observed in all the delineations of that ugly animal, and is a feature of the negro, which is an essential cause of his ugliness” (Burmeister, 1853, p. 10). Epistemic endeavours, whether scientific, philosophical, or artistic, were geared toward an image of Africans that benefited Europe and Euro-America. While there were European and European-American writers and scholars who attempted to challenge the consciousness created about Africa and Africans, their voices were drowned out by established perception of Africans (Jordan, 1974). Here is Lord Lugard (1922):

The typical African races may, as soldiers, be described as keen and courageous fighters, impulsive, obedient, and faithful, with implicit trust in their leaders. Under the best officers they are capable of becoming excellent troops in action. Their weak points are, that they lack a sense of responsibility, which makes them undependable in reporting crime and in exercising control as N.O.O.'s, and unreliable as sentries. (pp. 574-575)

According to postcolonial scholars, therefore, much of the history of CADA people was not an honest, professional documenting of African social, political, and cultural lives. Just like Du Bois's (1935) description of the history of Reconstruction (1866-1876) in the American South after the American civil war, I would argue that African colonial history was more propaganda than scientific history. Books, papers, and journalistic writings projected an image of Africans Europe and America wanted to maintain and instrumentalize. This led, knowingly or unknowingly, to the distortion and falsification during colonialism (Fanon, 1982 [1963]; M'bow, 1995; Mbembe, 2017; Tsri, 2016b) and in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries by CADE scholars (Isaac, 2004; Mudimbe, 1988; Diop, 2012 [1974]; Williams, 1974). As Lugard (1922, p. 217) has argued, "In the West [Africa] we find the mine manager with his wife and flower-garden established in a district which a year or two ago was the inaccessible fastness of a cannibal tribe." He added that "The primitive African is called upon to cope with ideas a thousand years in advance of his mental and social equipment." The problem was not that these 'thousand years in advance' was a matter of newness, it was about the near impossibility of the African mental capacity to grasp and functionalize this newness.<sup>52</sup>

What westerners wrote about Africa was merely a conformity to an established norm through intra-European relations. Whether it was Henry Morgan Stanley in the Congo, Leo

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<sup>52</sup> In Canadian schools today, African-Canadian students are considered less academic, so they are encouraged to focus on sports (see James, 2012; Maharaj & Zareey, 2022).

Frobenius in Nigeria and Togo, Mungo Park in the Senegal and Gambia or Lord Lugard in Uganda, their attitude toward Africans and their descriptive language were not only similar but the same: savage, uncivilized, heathen, children of earth, timeless people, immoral, irreligious, etc. For Lugard, the missionaries in Africa upset the imperial agenda because they advanced the “ideal of the equality of man to a point which the intelligence of the primitive savage does not appreciate in its true significance.” But his main concern about this human equality was that it would “lessen the prestige of Europeans, upon which the avoidance of bloodshed and the maintenance of law and order so largely depend in Africa” (1922, p. 589). Burton (1863) and Frobenius (1913) have also written about the risk of making Africans feel a sense of equality between Europeans and Africans. This is why Burton sneered that “When the black expels the grey rat, then the negro shall hold his own against the white man” (1863, p. 175).

However, these were not mere outbursts for Europeans acknowledged African cultural and social realities when they met their colonial and imperial agendas or when their egos have been flattered. Bent (1895, p. 26) wrote this about Chief Khama of the Bechuana: “[the] chief is essentially a gentleman, courteous and dignified.” When the Chief Khama sold a horse at “high price” and the horse died shortly later, the chief “returned the purchase money, considering that the illness had been acquired previous to the purchase taking place.” Bent then morally rationalized the chief’s civil behaviour by doubting “if every English gentleman would do” just as the chief had done. Attesting to this moral standing of Africans among the Bechuana was David Livingstone (1857, p. 38), who wondered about the peaceful Bechuana: “But how is it that the natives, being so vastly superior in numbers to the Boers, do not rise and annihilate them?” Livingstone added that “history does not contain one single instance in which the Bechuanas, even those of them who possess firearms, have attacked either the Boers or the English.”

In Sudan, Stevens (1912) noted that the Jieeng walked naked and did not seem self-conscious about doing so. However, she added that “the morality of a Dinka village would put the morality of any country village in rural England to the blush” (p. 237). This complexity between CADA denigration and acknowledgment is also illustrated by William Brown (1852). When pro-slavery Americans saw him as a fellow passenger on a ship and a delegate to a peace congress held in August of 1849 in Paris, France, they mocked him: “That nigger had better be on his master's farm... What could the American Peace Society be thinking about to send a black man as a delegate to Paris.” But when one of the same American passengers who mocked Mr. Brown saw him introduced to Richard Cobden (then an English MP) by Mr. Victor Hugo after the first day of the congress, he walked to Mr. Brown: “How do you do, Mr. Brown?....Oh, don't you know me; I was a fellow passenger with you from America; I wish you would give me an introduction to Victor Hugo and Mr. Cobden” (1852, pp. 34-45).

What these examples reveal is that African histories, social and cultural realities were subjugated or acknowledged based on CADE's attitude toward them. It was not that they did not know or did not understand them, necessarily. There are cases in which they were intentionally elided or ignored because doing so was beneficial to the slave and the colonial regimes. Here, CADE's interest was prioritized. In Chapter 7, I will discuss how this prioritization of CADE's interests has led to the centredness of CADE's epistemes, epistemologies, histories, and world view. The risk of this centredness is the understanding of Eurocentric ideas as universal or normal. This has caused problems in social work practice in child welfare, for example, where Afrocentric parental practices are frowned upon (see Adjei & Minka, 2018). Van Dijk (2006) has explained this as a manipulation of relations into *good us* and *bad them* through discourse.

Postcolonial scholars therefore find it necessary to critically study colonialism and the colonial condition that produced the above interactions. Because of the then lack of political and economic voice, CADA were not “self-determinant” (Durkheim, 2011 [1895], p. 44) due to the absolute and violent nature of colonial power. What upheld this colonial power is the violence which Fanon (1982 [1963]) argued destroyed native African systems of economic reference, social structures and re-ordered the colonial world into the Manichean compartments of good colonialists versus the evil native [colonized]. It is this absolute colonial violence that makes Sartre (1982 [1963], p. 15) write in his preface to Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* that it is impossible to transform a man into an animal “without weakening him considerably. Blows will never suffice; you have to push the starvation further, and that is the trouble with slavery.” This was also the “trouble” with imperial colonialism that destroyed African villages and way of life (Morel, 1920; Hochschild, 1999). As Lugard (1922, p. 215) has noted, surprisingly, “The advent of Europeans cannot fail to have a disintegrating effect on tribal authority and institutions, and on the conditions of native life.”

Accordingly, how the colonized and the enslaved thought and lived was prescribed and proscribed by CADE imperial politics and institutional epistemes during colonial and slave regimes (and even today). What happened during this period is a domination matrix Mudimbe (1988) has described as “the domination of physical space, the reformation of natives' minds, and the integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective” (p. 15). According to Ashcroft et al. (2004) this led to displacement that engendered alienation and the crisis of self-image.

Postcolonial theory therefore re-evaluates the colonial condition, colonial subjectivity and the colonial identities that were oversimplified, fixed, and then denigrated by CADE (Bhabha,

1994; Hawley, 2015). It is no wonder the magistrate in J. M Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* tells the young African girl who was captured by the colonial soldiers but left in the station that "People will say I keep two wild animals in my rooms, a fox and a girl." Two wild animals!

As noted above, combating coloniality is an ongoing process so postcolonial theory does not only address what happened in the past. It also addresses colonial legacies that will be shown in this dissertation to uphold morally problematic and questionable colonial identities such as 'blackness'. As John C. Hawley has contended, "many other supposedly liberated parts of the world are still held in thrall by the former colonizing powers" (2015, p. 1). The moral impact of the neo-colonial condition is not only found in the political landscape that still operates under coloniality (Said, 1993), knowledge production and university curricula are still colonized and Eurocentric (Freter, 2018; Gordon 2014b; Mbembe, 2016).

Against a universalist, objectivist paradigm upheld by some continental African scholars, university students on the continent have started to revolt against European theoretical, methodological, and curricular hegemony on African epistemologies and epistemes (Mbembe, 2016, Nyawasha, 2019; Asante, 2020). Inveighing against Tawanda Nyawasha (2019) who had criticized South African students' call for Afrocentric methodologies, Molefi Asante (2020) argued that "What is essential for the new, radical African intellectual is to question almost everything written by Europe about Africa because at its source Eurocentric information has been used to further the imperial ambitions of Europe" (p. 205). Asante is here rejecting epistemological coloniality which scholars like Nyawasha inadvertently support in the guise of universality of philosophy and science.

It is important to note here that Asante's call for the 'questioning' not dismissal of everything Europeans have written about Africa because some CADE scholars have produced

helpful scholarship on Africa. Nonetheless, epistemological neo-colonialism, like the colonial library of Mudimbe and Mbembe, is still operational in terms of what is published, who is published and whose scholarship is considered authoritative. Cohen et al. (2016, p. 2036) have called this the “publication regime.” The publication regime, like the travel writers, colonial anthropologists, and colonial administrators, still have the west as the audience of scholarship on Africa. Contemporary CADE scholars are still explaining Africa and Africans to their western audience the way Frobenius, Burton, Speke, and Livingstone did. An African scholar will only be taken seriously if given a nod by the publication regime.

And the above controls are caused by economic powerlessness. That African countries are still held in ‘thrall by...former colonizing powers’ as John Hawley has argued is typified by the influence former colonial powers still have on African economies. These economies, according to Segell (2019, p. 189), suffer from the “regressive impact of unregulated forms of aid, trade and foreign direct investment in relation to poverty reduction and wellbeing.” Said (1993, p. 19) has noted that Africa and the rest of the “Third World” have political independence but “are as dominated and dependent as they were when ruled directly by European powers.”

While official colonialism was explicit and relatively easier to identify, coloniality operates covertly and that makes its contemporary effects enduring and difficult to address. With economic neo-colonialism, African resources and wealth still ebb and flow out of Africa in the same unidirectional exploitative flow that started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This also means that African ideas, epistemes, epistemologies, and paradigms will continue to have less or no impact globally. This also means that African images will continue to be shaped by CADE and the rest of the world. Less funding to CADA scholarly productions means continued epistemological hegemony. The crisis of self-image, then, continues. Prince Archie, regardless of how ‘white’ he appears will

continue to face royal doubts not because of his moral character but because of his discursive moral standing: his appearance [‘blackness’]. The members of the royal family did not, apparently, wait for Prince Archie to grow up before the British society to adequately assess his moral character. His association with his mother’s ‘blackness’ is enough for his moral standing to be doubted.

Postcolonial scholars, however, critically interrogate the veneer of equality one witnesses in contemporary economic and cultural relations. The relations are ‘contested terrains’ (Said, 1986) but they are assumed to take place on a level playing field. These contested terrains bear heavily on the postcolonial identity and the colonial condition that still shape the ethics of identity of the postcolonial subject. Postcolonial scholars therefore study the colonial condition and the postcolonial condition for continuities and discontinuity to ameliorate the socioeconomic condition of the post-colony (Mbembe, 2001) or understand the mechanics of the neo-colonial condition and neo-colonial identities. As Fanon has argued, colonialism was not only interested in the cultural destruction of what the colonized cherished, it also “By a kind of perverted logic...turns to the past of the oppressed people, distorts, disfigures and destroys it” (1982 [1963], p. 210). This distortion and disfiguring affect African-Canadian youth today.

A physical control of the colonized cannot be complete without a mental control because the mental control makes the colonized or the enslaved perceive him or herself in the way the slave master or the colonialists have constructed him/her. This is what makes contemporary epistemological, methodological, and theoretical hegemony of CADE morally significant. Biko (2002, p. 92) demonstrated this when he argued that “the most potent weapon in the hand of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed.” The renowned African-American historian, Carter Woodson (2017[1933]), also explained this psycho-intellectual and epistemic trap in 1933: “If you



can control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his action” (p. 21). Mental control is where Gramscian hegemony through consent, as discussed later in this chapter, is relevant today.

### ***The Usefulness of the Postcolonial Theory***

With the above colonial and neo-colonial conditions, postcolonial theory as a critique and deconstruction of the effects of “imperial power,” offers “useful strategies for a wider field of global analysis” (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. viii). Postcolonial theory does not only perceive and provincialize effects of colonialism in a simple linear passage of history but also attends to “the function of local agency under the pressure of global forces; the role of imperialism in globalization; the connection between imperialism and neoliberal economics” (Ashcroft et al., 2007, p. vii). Essentially, postcolonial theory re-evaluates the colonial and postcolonial conditions that elided native subjectivity and standardized the fixity and oversimplification of identities (Bhabha, 1994; Hawley, 2015). Identities have what Bhabha has called “historical contingencies” (1994, p. 278) but this contingency was discarded by the colonial regime in favour of a fixedness and naturalness of identities. Postcolonial theorists attend to the complexities of human identities that had CADE as the only determining subject with whom history starts and ends.

Postcolonial theory therefore attempts to put the complexities and instabilities of cultural identities into consideration and avoid the naturalization of colour identities as operationalized by colonial regimes (or the neo-colonial hegemon) for oppressive purposes. In the process of eliding native subjectivity to facilitate slavery and colonialism and produce “objectified others” (Bhabha, 1994, p.255), CADE understood subjectivity or agency as their natural prerogative. In a report to the House of Lords on 14 July 1837, the Select Committee wrote that the relations between Britain and the “uncivilized nations” needs its results evaluated to “fix the rules of our conduct *towards* them” (Bourne, 1900, p.4, emphasis added). The use of the phrase “conduct towards them” instead

of “relations with” is instructive for it presupposed lack of equality and agency/subjectivity of indigenous Africans.

Therefore, postcolonial theory interrogates power-knowledge nexus, agency (and/or subjectivity) (Ashcroft et al., 2007) and identity construction (Abrahamsen, 2003). Postcolonial interpretation necessitates what Bhabha (1994, p. 250) has called “reading against the grain”. This ‘reading’ is the evaluation of colonial identities (like ‘blackness’) and post-colonial conditions CADE has treated with finality. As Edward Said (1986) has noted, postcolonial theory has led to, in the former colonized world, “a tremendously energetic attempt to engage with the metropolitan world in a common effort at re-inscribing, re-interpreting and expanding the sites of intensity and the terrain contested with Europe” (p. 54). The postcolonial subject now contests these terrains, which were difficult to contest meaningfully during the watchful eyes of the colonial regimes and their totalizing power. But this ‘reading’ and the contestation of terrains (cultural, social, political, and economic), as already argued, is not to dismiss whatever CADE has written. This is only the re-evaluation of the postcolonial condition and the re-reading of the colonial libraries to avoid any inadvertent support of contemporary coloniality.

In contesting these terrains, postcolonial theorists therefore engage with the “conditions of possibility” (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 9) against the colonial fixedness of identities (Bhabha, 1994). This is a difficult task because it involves a pushback from CADE scholars, who consider this necessary rethinking to be destructive to established scholarly [western] tradition. The contestation, however, is meant to lead to a possible decoding (Mbembe, 2002) of what CADE has standardized as, for instance, *the* African humanity, cultural nonexistence, and history (or non-history). This pushback continues to perpetuate epistemological hegemony (Solomon, 2021). Africa, as some scholars have argued, is a geographical accident or fiction (Mazrui, 1963);

however, Mbembe (2002) has argued that this ‘accident’ has been “invested with a multitude of significations, diverse imaginary contents, or even fantasies, which, by force of repetition, end up becoming authority” (p. 632). This creates power imbalances regarding who decide what happens and whose representations are considered respectable and authoritative. According to Bhabha (1994), postcolonialism will continue to bear “witness to the unequal and universal forces of cultural representation” (p. 171). This control of the formerly colonized shaped what Mills (1997) has described as norming of spaces, individuals and epistemologies and the contemporary compartmentalization of the world by skin colour. This colour-coded norming has had CADE centre Europeanness as ‘normal’ and ‘white’ (Wynter, 2013; Freeman, 2015).<sup>53</sup>

The standardization of the world around ‘Europeanness’ and European ideals as the ‘normal’ around which everything in the world should revolve, may be the reason why Goldberg (2002) urges a “thorough rethinking of the history of racial identity creation and identification in terms of modern state formation” (p. 161). Essentially, as Rukundwa and van Aarde (2007) have argued, “Postcolonial theory formulates its critique around the social histories, cultural differences and political discrimination that are practised and normalised by colonial and imperial machineries” (p. 1174). Also included is the possibility that CADA can reject or correct the deculturing effects of what Mudimbe (1988) has called the colonizing structure. What the colonizing structure did was not only the normalization of oppressive discourses, distortion of histories, and oversimplification of identities, it also caused elisions. It is not only the elision of CADA’s histories and cultures, but also of some of CADE’s morally questionable colonial actions.

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<sup>53</sup> That Europeans or CADE generally considered and still consider themselves ‘normal’ and ‘white’ should not be seen as a problem in itself because they categorized themselves as a collective European ‘people’ or ‘race’ against others such as CADA. This is why they had the ‘racial contract’. So, their self-promotion as a ‘people’ should be understandable historically because history shows that people have always seen themselves as better than others. However, how CADE used and still uses these ideas is the moral question that should interest CADA people.

These elisions are also the reason why postcolonial theory, “seeks to capture the continuities and complexities of any historical period...to transcend strict chronological and dichotomous thinking where history is clearly delineated and the social world neatly categorized into separate boxes” (Abrahamsen, 2003, p. 195). A simple conceptualization of history and universalization of this simple image is therefore subject to analysis and possible revision (decoding). According to Zeleza (2006, p. 113), postcolonial theory questions “univocal conceptions of universal history, the notion of singular modernity, and the enduring binaries of historical scholarship, such as tradition and modernity, myth and history, the West and the Rest.”

While going back to a pristine, pure pre-colonial past is not a realistic or necessary goal (see Mbembe, 2002; Fanon, 2008 [1952]), there has been an “impetus for national groups to recover the heritage that was ... not only denigrated but also erased by colonization” (Hawley, 2015, p. 3).<sup>54</sup> But as this dissertation will show, CADA scholars make clear declarations about decolonization but fall back into colonial terminologies and CADE’s constructed views of Africans. W. E. B Du Bois and George Washington Williams have already been referenced. George Dei (2018) whose paper was undoubtedly a *decolonial* project, defended the meaningfulness of ‘blackness’ as a pre-colonial identity. I will revisit Dei’s position in the critical analysis and hegemony sections. But before leaving postcolonial theory, it is important to look at some of its criticisms.

### ***Criticism and Critical Responses***

Postcolonial theory has been criticized as unhelpfully totalizing and homogenizing (Zeleza, 2006; McClintock, 1992). It, some critics argue, pays little to no attention to developmental differences among former colonized countries so it tends to critique their post-colonial conditions

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<sup>54</sup> UNESCO’s *General History of Africa* in 8 Volumes is an example of this decoding of Europeans’ Africa.

as if their experiences are homogenous in the post-colonial era. Some of these homogenizing critiques risk making the postcolonial theory ineffective in addressing inequality and social justice issues engendered by neo-colonialism. Some critics consider post-colonial countries such as the United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand to be truly '*post*-colonial'. Applying 'postcolonial' to Africa, these critics argue, may be misleading because "Africa continues to be ravaged by the legacies of colonialism and the ravages of neocolonialism" (Zezeza, 2006, p. 99). Accordingly, the 'post' in postcolonial as Ama Ata Aidoo has argued, "is pernicious fiction; a cover-up of a dangerous period in our people's lives" (cited in Zezeza, 2006, p. 99).

In addition, the problem with 'post' is also how it presupposes a linearity of the colonial history, which is criticized as an oversimplification of a complex, nonlinear colonial condition, and periodization (McClintock, 1992; Abrahamsen, 2003; Mbembe, 2002). If this linear periodization of the colonial and postcolonial conditions is used as the lens through which contemporary socio-political and socioeconomic issues are rationalized in postcolonial Africa, then neo-colonized Africans may suffer under the guise of a colonialism that is considered already 'post-' in the passage of time. Colonial and neo-colonial problems may therefore remain unaddressed.

But as long as coloniality or neo-colonialism are acknowledged and critiqued, the 'post' may be rationalized away *ala* Mill (Kripke, 1980) as only connotative. For instance, Dartmouth is no longer at the mouth of the Dart River, but it is still called 'Dartmouth'. Postcolonial may only connotate but not denote. This understanding may therefore address the question of colonial linearity expressed by Abrahamsen (2003, p. 192) that the 'post' in postcolonialism "seems to indicate a chronological periodization and linear progression through ...precolonialism, colonialism, and finally to the postcolonial present."

A corollary to the linearity question is the argument that postcolonialism centres colonialism in the lifeworld of the post-colonial subject. Postcolonial scholars are therefore criticized as advertently centring the same thing they set out to decentre or deconstruct. By making colonialism the main focus, they end up subordinating “the world’s diverse histories and cultures to the grand march of a monolithic, undifferentiated colonialism, of European time” (Zezeza, 2006, p. 93). This gives the impression that the colonized had no history outside (or before) colonialism (Abrahamsen, 2003), the very argument the colonial regimes have been advancing for centuries about Africans and CADA generally. Postcolonialism therefore risks, this criticism maintains, centring CADA’s history in the way the colonial regime did.

Additionally, postcolonialism is also criticized for privileging theoretical textual analysis over practical structural analysis (Abrahamsen, 2003) such as neo-colonial conditions (Segell, 2019; Nkrumah, 1965) that continue to keep CADA at the bottom of the contemporary capitalist structure. Discourse-focused critique (Said, 1978; Mudimbe, 1988, 1994) of colonialism seems to overlook material issues that affect the daily lives of the former colonized in their lifeworld (Merleau-Ponty, 2002). Nevertheless, postcolonial scholars address this supposed textual-structural analysis contradiction as shown below.

As some scholars have noted, it is one thing to criticize the presentation of history of colonialism in a linear manner as progress ideology, but it is another to critique the colonial condition or coloniality. For example, in the case of Aidoo’s criticism of postcolonialism, Zezeza has argued that she was not criticizing postcolonial theory but the colonial condition, which the theory critiques. While the ‘post’ of the postcolonial theory presents history in a linear manner around ‘European time’, it does not compromise, in my view, the effectiveness of the postcolonial theory in the analysis of colonialism and the neo-colonial condition. The social, economic and

cultural conditions that placed CADA at the bottom of the great chain of being may be effectively critiqued through postcolonial theory despite the above criticisms. Postcolonial theorists do not assume that the ‘post’ of the postcolonial theory presupposes the disappearance of colonialism. It only means the end of official imperial colonialism.

The postcolonial theory focus on textual analysis is indeed a direct criticism of the postcolonial theory. However, scholars who focus on the analysis of the colonial text do not completely ignore the material effects of colonialism. The colonial library (Mbembe, 2017; Mudimbe, 1988; Zeleza, 2006), which is a multi-disciplinary body of literature produced by European and Euro-American writers, was the basis of the economic exploitation of the colonized. The colonial library helped in the construction and the maintenance—elision or invisibilization (Bhabha, 1994)—of the identity of the colonized in a manner that helped in the justification of their exploitation, through violence (Fanon, 1982 [1963]; Mills, 1997) or non-violence through cultural and epistemic domination. Before tanks, bombs or the police batons, the police dogs, the water hoses, the text formulated the colonized, rationalized colonial relations, and expressed how CADE power structure was to be maintained.

It is therefore important to acknowledge that as much as Mudimbe in *The Invention of Africa* (1988) and *The Idea of Africa* (1994), Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994), Said in *Orientalism* (1993) and Ashcroft et al. in *The Empire Write Back* (2004) focus on textual analysis, they approach the critique of colonialism and the neo-colonial condition through the text because the text was the medium through which colonialism used discourse to create epistemological traps and effectuate socio-political hegemony in the daily lives of the colonized. I therefore do not believe that textual analysis (discourse analysis) downplays the material effects of imperial colonialism and modern forms of colonialism. Postcolonial theorists use the text to understand the

material condition of the colonized through the medium that was used (and still used) to operationalize colonialism. Discourse analysis is therefore important in postcolonial theory. Therefore, discourse in Foucault's genealogy becomes important as discussed in the following section.

### **Foucauldian Genealogy**

There have been scholarly doubts as to whether there is such a thing as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) because Foucault did not specify such an approach and the complex nature of his work makes that categorization difficult. While Foucault used 'discourse analysis' in his 'genealogical' and 'archaeological' works in a unique way that may give credence to those who believe their discourse analysis is 'Foucauldian', the criticism that there is no 'Foucauldian Discourse Analysis' may still be important to note before moving forward here.

Graham (2005, p. 2) has stated that "Perhaps the difficulty in locating concise descriptions as to how to go about doing 'Foucauldian' discourse analysis is because there is no such thing." I must admit that 'there is no such thing' may be too dismissive and totalizing, but the difficulty of 'locating precise descriptions' is worthy of note. It, however, sounds like a question of methodological clarity rather than its complete absence. This lack of clarity is underscored by Hook (2005, p. 4): "various methodological injunctions offered by Foucault for critical study of discourse can be better accommodated within the ambit of genealogy than within an informal set of discourse analysis procedure."

I agree with Graham and Hook about the theoretical risk of giving the impression that FDA is a clearly defined methodology so it should be used, advisedly, in the manner Foucault used it in his genealogies and archaeologies. I will continue to acknowledge—and I would assume Hook and Graham would agree with me—that Foucault's operationalization of discourse was unique



even when one may remain sceptical of or even reject FDA. This complexity is the reason why I use genealogy rather than specify this as a ‘discourse analysis’. Nonetheless, operationalizing genealogy needs an understanding (and use) of discourse and discourse analysis. So, this section will continue below with discourse, discourse analysis, and then genealogy.

### ***Discourse Generally***

Generally, discourse may refer to spoken words, signs, and texts in the context of communication (Gee, 2001) as language-in-use (Gee, 2011). While discourse is based on how language is used, the way it is defined varies based on disciplinary applications (Buchanan, 2008; Lester et al., 2017). So, language in discursive usage is not neutral because it can be context specific and action-oriented (Lester et al., 2017). Through action orientation of language (Gee, 2001), social situations or the social worlds which social groups inhabit, are created, maintained, or changed through language application.

For instance, CADE’s colonial regime created and designed the colonial world through language and brought a coherent structure into existence. In this discourse edifice, it made CADA into an ‘ugly’, a ‘savage’ and a ‘primitive’ *negro*. Du Bois and George Washington Williams, as occupants of this discursive world, took up this language in their works with an imperceptible epistemic control and epistemological traps. But then again, an anti-colonial discourse ‘killed’ the colonial *Negro* in the 1960s during the Civil Rights Movement when Africans started to self-define, somehow, outside CADE epistemological traps and Africa started to politically decolonize. It is this action orientation of language in the social world that gives a simple word ‘nigger’ the social and political power to the boy in the store and the doorkeeper at menagerie to tell Cindy Henwood (Hill, 2001) and Frederick Douglass (Williams, 1882), “There’s no niggers Allowed here!”

Language therefore governs human activities and how human beings relate “within cultures and social groups and institutions” (Gee, 2001, p. 1). According to Lester et al. (2017), language is performative as it is the medium through which people communicate. Through “language-in-use”, people argue, “negotiate, complain, account for action etc” (2017, p. 3). This social importance of language makes Foucault (1989) argue that language must be studied as a thing in nature because “it partakes in the worldwide dissemination of similitudes and signatures” (p. 39).

### ***Discourse in Foucauldian Context***

For Foucault (2002), discourse is a way in which knowledge is produced, organized, and operationalized. He argues that discourses are made of ‘signs’, “but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things” (Foucault, 2010, p. 54). He added that “It is this *more* that renders them irreducible to the language (*langue*) and to speech” (p. 54). When language is used in institutional settings to convey meanings geared toward a special agenda such as it was used for colour-based compartmentalization and hierarchization in plantocracies of the Americas (Telles et al., 2015), Apartheid South Africa, and by European imperial colonialism, discourse as ‘signs’ and what they represent attain an added dimension of social and political importance. As he has argued, discourses are “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 2010, p. 54). Whoever controls means of communication, knowledge production and political power determines how discourse structures power in society and how this power proscribes or facilitates one’s ethical life. As Stoddart (2007) has argued,

Discourses are systems of thought, or knowledge claims, which assume an existence independent of a particular speaker. We constantly draw upon pre-existing discourses as resources for social interactions with others. We may think of the discourses of academia, which we use to navigate our way through school; discourses of medicine, which are

employed by doctors and patients in medical settings; or the discourses of wilderness that are evoked by environmental groups to argue for the preservation of parks. Our sense of self—our subjectivity—is constructed through our engagement with a multitude of discourses. (p. 203)

The slave and the colonial regimes had discourses through which they structured and normed their economies, human relations, knowledge production, control, and operationalization (see Chapter 5). In this control matrix, in which various discourse formations take place, Foucault argues that discourse is “a totality, in which the dispersion of the subject and his continuity with himself may be determined” (Foucault, 2010, p. 60). In this case, discourse in power-knowledge nexus refers to how knowledge is governed institutionally in a manner that allows production, reproduction of some subjectivities or elision of certain subjectivities (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017). The apartheid regime in South Africa, for example, only allowed literature and news items that did not contradict the official government narrative about the socio-economic condition of native Africans, their identities, and their relations to the land (Mphahlele, 1962). This colour-coded apartheid discourse aimed at producing a certain type of native African (subject), a native whose discourse-constructed nature is conducive to the regime’s economic, social, cultural, and political plans in a control matrix. Renown African-Canadian poet, Marlene Nourbese Philip (2014 [1989]), has illustrated this discursive entrapment, this linguistic constraint, in her poem *Meditations on the Declension of Beauty by the Girl with the Flying Cheek-bones*. In this linguistic entrapment, the postcolonial subject struggles to wiggle out with difficulty. The *beauty* of ‘the Girl with the Flying Cheek-bones’ (CADA woman) exists even though it is negatively shaped by the demeaning constraints of the colonial language: “*In whose/ In whose language/ Am I/If not in yours*” (p. 27). The articulation of the beauty of the CADA woman, its expression, does not come

with ease as the stuttering, hesitant, and constrained construction of the poem lines from the beginning shows. It takes 49 lines for ‘the Girl with the Flying Cheek-bones’ to be *beautiful*. She is both *beautiful* and *not beautiful* within what Lauren Alleyne (2022) has described as the “colonial oppressive linguistic violence.”

### ***Foucauldian Discourse Analysis***

Discourse analysis is therefore “a method of exposing the historical conditions through which...knowledge has played a part in shaping” human conduct (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017, p. 110). In Europe and the Americas, because slavery and colonization have played a greater role to subordinate, oppress, and dominate, discourse analysis uses a critical engagement with structures of power to deconstruct institutional discourses of domination (Wodak, 1999). Van Dijk (1993) argues that “in order to relate discourse and society, and hence discourse and the reproduction of dominance and inequality, we need to examine in detail the role of social representations in the minds of social actors” (p. 251). Carter Woodson and Steve Biko, as already quoted earlier, have emphasized the importance of mental control in socially controlling the oppressed. For instance, it is not CADA that refer to themselves as having ‘woolly hair’ (Du Bois, 2018 [1915]) ‘or nappy or kinky hair’, ‘flat or depressed nose’ (Obama, 2007).

But CADA writers and scholars use these linguistic tropes as if they were created as benign, merely descriptive terms of everyday CADE discourse. As Chris Rock (Stilson, 2009) shows in his documentary, *Good Hair*, African-Americans consider European hair ‘good’ but African hair ‘bad’. But this ‘good hair’ trope is a conformity to sociocultural standards normalized by CADE’s epistemological regimes. For instance, William Brown (1852, p. 274) describes a certain George Green, who was “nearly white,” in this colourful way: “His skin was fair, hair soft, straight, fine and white; his eyes blue, nose prominent, lips thin; his head well formed, forehead high and

prominent.” However, Brown described Africans who were brought to the Americas only as “negroes of a very dark complexion with woolly hair.” As a community organizer in Chicago, former US President Barack Obama (2007, p. 169) suffers from the same internalized bias against CADA when he described an Irish-American man as ‘handsome’ but described two African-Americans as ‘two husky black men’. Brown and Obama, writing 150 years apart, are affected by the same socio-intellectual regime and its hegemony. Beauty is not associated with CADA by CADE and this percolates into CADA consciousness.

According to Arribas and Ayllon-Walkerline (2017), Foucault’s “premise is that systems of knowledge is governed by rules that determine the limits of thought and language within a given historical period” (p. 114). Institutionalized discourse gives Mrs. and Mr. Giffen, for instance, the epistemic and social licence to describe the Collo [Shilluk] of South Sudan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as “savage minds” with “big, black hands” and “savage breast [hearts]” (Giffen, 1905, pp. 114, 116). These two missionaries described the Collo using standardized European discourses about Africans. It is the same demeaning description we see in Hermann Burmeister (1853), Hinton Helper (1867, 1868), Richard Burton (1863), Mary Kingsley (1897), among others.

This standardization discourse also removed Europeans from bonded servitude and left Africans languishing in degradation. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and mid-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, indentureship and slavery subjected servants and slaves to similar (and even the same) treatments as noted earlier. However, by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, indentureship and slavery became very different and at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, indentureship was but gone and slavery meant a very different social and economic reality than it meant in the 16<sup>th</sup> or the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The ‘systems of knowledge [that] governed [the] rules’ about slavery and indentureship are limits set in language and knowledge on the ‘minds of social actors’ by institutional elites.

This temporal change in how the same word means different things at different times is what gives Foucauldian genealogy its explanatory theoretical power. Being an African slave in the colonial America of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was different from being an African slave in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the same region as free former slaves could own slaves (Wilson, 1905) or bond the service of European servants (Fredrickson, 1995). Before 1715, there was no law that limited what masters could do to indentured European servants. Masters were only fined for excessive abuse or beating of servants. They were ordered to pay, for instance, “one thousand pounds of tobacco for the first and second offenses and for the third offense could free the victimized servant” (Ellefson, 2010, p. 3). While the treatment of Europeans and Africans in the Americas would change dramatically in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the differences were either negligible or nonexistent in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### ***Genealogy***

Genealogy is a historical analysis. However, it does not concern itself with a search for concrete, primordial origins, the linearity of historical events, or their continuities. Genealogy enables what Foucault calls the conditions of possibility, where historical analyses are not about looking for origins, or fixing identities, but about their dissipations by seeking “to make visible all of those discontinuities that cross us” (Foucault, 1984, p. 95). Unlike traditional histories that are analyzed in positivistic lenses as facts-based, objective, and continuous ‘monumental histories’, genealogy’s “intention is to reveal the heterogeneous systems which, masked by the self, inhibit the formation of any form of identity” (1984, p. 95). History in a genealogical context is not the uncovering of new, objective facts but the search for “that which was already there” (Foucault, 1996, p. 142). In essence, what “was already there” (p. 42) may be hidden inadvertently (or intentionally) by rules of discourse through socialization (Gee, 2011). It could also be hidden as a

function of in-group bias as the rewriting of textbooks by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) from the mid-1890s (Cox, 2004) shows.

To rethink the ‘lost cause’ [the Confederacy], UDC discursively changed the *casus belli* of the American Civil War and how its *post bellum* history would be taught and understood in the former confederate states. UDC therefore operationalized discourse in educational institutions to intentionally (discursively) elide a version of history they did not like. Not only did UDC change the language used to describe the moral relationship between master and slave, but they also used discourse to replace the history that happened with the history they wanted to promote. In this discourse, Mildred Rutherford (1920, p. 5) argued that the South should “Reject a book that says the South fought to hold her slaves. Reject a book that speaks of the slaveholder of the South as cruel and unjust to his slaves.” Like Sarah Dawson who considered slaves ‘servants’, Rutherford, UDC and their male apologists believed that enslaved Africans were only ‘indentured servants’, not slaves, to dissociate themselves from reported cruelties of slavery.<sup>55</sup>

Discourse is therefore used to normalize systemic social control and inequality through rules that govern it in order to produce “general formulas of domination” (Foucault, 1995, p. 137). When domination becomes normalized and made socially acceptable through rules of discourse, power becomes illusive, so Foucault (1997, 1982) advises that power be analyzed in terms of *how* it (power relations) operates rather than on *what* it (power itself) is (1982, p. 788). Many Americans may not know what UDC and its discursive power is or has been, but they were affected by the invidious elision of African-American suffering endured during slavery and during the

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<sup>55</sup> In Canada (Nova Scotia), for instance, British loyalists referred to their slaves as ‘servants’ (Whitfield, 2009). This may have been a lack of a unique and entrenched institutional slavery rather than an attempt to deflect moral responsibility. This, I must note, does not mean these ‘servants’ were not slaves. They were slaves legally and socio-economically in Canada in the same way slaves were in other slave regimes in the Americas.

Reconstruction period. Rutherford and UDC used discourse epistemologically and socially to cause a historical rupture, a recontinuation of the Southern narrative that was temporarily discontinued by the Civil War and Reconstruction.

For the Southern plantocrats, the American Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation are two related discourses that led to a sudden change in their way of life in a way they had not imagined. They could not imagine that the people they had previously owned, and who had obsequiously bowed to them anytime they passed by, were now making laws for them (Du Bois, 1935). For the slaves, however, the Emancipation Proclamation ushered in a moment of historical rupture most of them did not know would arrive. But emancipation, as Frederick Douglass (1892) has argued, was a very carefully worded documents that “was thoughtful, cautious, and well guarded at all points” (p. 431). Regardless of Lincoln’s intentions that were hidden in the Proclamation as the socio-political discourse, the Emancipation Proclamation led to great celebrations by the slaves and ‘freedman’ (Franklin, 1993; Biddle & Dubin, 2013). But the celebrations would not last.

This excitement continued during the Reconstruction period until President Andrew Johnson, who replaced Abraham Lincoln after the latter’s assassination, reversed the promises of the Freedman Bureau (Du Bois, 1935, 1999 [1903]). It was another moment for the former Confederate States to recreate their history anew. The discourse changed but the substance of their power returned. They lost the war and lost their slaves but they gained a new way to control the newly freed slaves. The new discourse was the plan by “the broken oligarchy of the South, with its determination to reenslave Negro labor” (Du Bois, 1935, p. 240). When the South gained back its political and economic control over African-Americans, they created a fertile intellectual environment for the former Confederate States to discursively change their history. It was a new



rupture that informed the UDC project and their discursive power. But they made power illusive because their project was the reconstruction/invention (which they considered mere ‘writing’) of what Rutherford considered the true history of the Civil War, slavery in the South and the image of Southern heroes and heroines. For Foucault (1982), therefore, “power relations can be grasped in the diversity of their logical sequence, their abilities, and their interrelationships” (p. 788).

In genealogy according to Foucault (1996), a genealogist looks for simple, unrecognizable or taken-for-granted details in discontinuities, continuities, disruptions, irruptions, and modifications in discursive systems that appear ordered and continuous. The history of slavery taught in Southern schools after the 1920s was a discursive modification that would become a normal part of the pedagogical system as if it was a continuous version of the Southern history after the civil war. Because genealogy is a ‘history of the present’, Foucault (1980) argues that

What's effectively needed is a ramified, penetrative perception of the present, one that makes it possible to locate lines of weakness, strong points, positions where the instances of power have secured and implanted themselves by a system of organisation dating back over 150 years. (p. 62)

Because of how power entrenches and normalizes oppressive discourses, a ‘penetrative perception of the present’ becomes difficult. Many Americans did not, and still do not know, that the Confederate statues that caused political controversies in 2018 and 2019 were not built immediately after the Civil War. They were a response to Reconstruction and the attempt by European-Americans in the former Confederate states to undermine the economic and political empowerment of African-Americans and re-establish the glory of slavery they lost through the Civil War.

For instance, on February 25, 1870, the former United States senator and the former president of the Confederate states, Mr. Jefferson Davis, was replaced by an African-American, Hiram R. Revels, as the United States senator from Mississippi (Williams, 1882). This change was apparently an insult to Southern integrity. But UDC discourse was so successful that people believed the statues were built after the Civil War. As Foucault (2010) has argued, a discourse like the UDC's, "hides beneath what appears, and secretly duplicates it, because each discourse contains the power to say something other than what it actually says," (p. 133). Genealogy therefore attempts to identify these institutional manifestations as they relate to power and elided histories.

Because genealogy addresses discourses that have been normalized and accepted by the masses, rethinking them causes resistance or even violence. The campaign for the removal of Confederate statues was considered by those who were convinced by the effectiveness of the UDC discourse as a "destruction of history." They may not know that their erection was a distortion of history, so the removal of the statues was corrective, not destructive. Genealogy is therefore not a "historical consciousness" that is "neutral, devoid of passions, and committed solely to truth" (Foucault, 1996, p. 162). Genealogy brings up concepts and rethink ideas people would not want re-evaluated. So, genealogy "discovers the violence of a position that sides against those who are happy in their ignorance, against the effective illusions by which humanity protects itself, a position that encourages the dangers of research and delights in disturbing discoveries" (Foucault, 1996, pp. 162-163). Disturbing discoveries deconstruct effective illusions that stem from obfuscating discourses that govern "how knowledge, power...claims to truth interact...to form cascades of practices and to reinforce the discourses that they emanate from" (Anais, 2013, p. 125). UDC reinforced a 'White Supremacist' discourse by purporting to write history books for students.

Their rewriting discourse was saying ‘something other than what it actually says.’ It was an ‘effective illusion’ that continues to keep the South in ‘happy ignorance.’

Therefore, it becomes important not to take the epistemological basis of what we ‘know’ for granted because their historical conditions of possibility maybe a violent past discursively normalized in power relations, thereby reproducing domination. What is important according to Foucault is “not the being of things but rather the manner in which they can be known” (Foucault, 2002, p. 60). The way knowledge is ordered, controlled, and discriminated through academic disciplines (Foucault, 2002), the way society is ordered and subjected to physical and mental control mechanisms such as hospital, military, religion, and culture (Foucault, 1995), shape what we know, how we know it and why we know it. This, therefore, makes it important to study history in order to see how such controlled discourses have changed over time. It is also important to examine how discourses make people see continuities where they should see discontinuities, see discontinuities where there are continuities, or see freedom where there is a discourse-disguised control.

Genealogists not only look for what happened in the past through archives; they also study how they happen by studying the rules governing how they change (or remain the same) and why the change (or remain the same). The why and how tend to create a “system of regularities” that create obfuscating social conditions in what Foucault (2010) has called “the system of discursivity” (p. 145). A genealogist therefore studies this regularizing “system of discursivity” to uncover oppressive and injustice systems that are hidden in expressed discourse.

For CADA, these injustice systems not only used power to mark them as a sub-humanity, but they also slated them for total elimination or fossilization (Helper, 1867). Essentially, CADE used CADA body and appearance as a site of the universal discourse on biopower: Both

disciplinary power and regulatory power. Biopower, as a control and knowledge production discourse, focuses on “a set of processes such as the ratio of births to deaths, the rate of reproduction, the fertility of a population, and so on” (Foucault, 1976, p. 243). The control over these essential biological processes by the slave regime was necessary for their survival. The birth of slaves, growths, death, where they lived, sales, marriage, and purposed *breeding*, were all controlled by slave masters.

The colonial regimes also used biopower in Africa. The German massacre of Herero ethnic group in the then Southwest Africa (now Namibia) (Gewald, 2003) and the restriction of Herero to lands that are not suitable for cultivation are examples of the colonial utility of biopower. We also see this in South Africa with “Trekboars” hunting of “Hottentots” or “Bushmen” (Mills, 1997, p. 50), their extermination of much of their populations (Parliamentary Select Committee, 1837, p. 30) and the creation of native reserves (Feinberg & Horn, 2009). These reserves were usually overcrowded, and residents faced hunger (Feinberg & Horn, 2009). As the report by the British Parliamentary Select Committee (1837, p. 30), which they compiled on behalf of the Aborigines Protection Society, has noted, the population of Hottentots decreased from 200,000 to 32,000 between the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The disciplinary power “centers on the body, produces individualizing effects, and manipulates the body as a source of forces that have to be rendered both useful and docile” (Foucault, 2003 [1976], p. 249). The colonial and slave regimes used biopower to make CADA both useful and docile; a being only considered *homo faber* not *homo sapien*.<sup>56</sup> The focus on African body as the site of biopower was also exacerbated by skin appearance. For instance, in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, an indentured servant could run away from his master and disappear

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<sup>56</sup> In other words, CADA could effectively use tools, but they were not trusted with *thinking*.

into the sea of free Europeanness in America, but a slave could not. The master relied on the body: the slave was too visible. Additionally, slaves were branded, or body parts such as ears cut off as punishment besides whipping as a sign of the master's power and control on slaves' bodies and lives. There was a slave master in Barbados in the 18<sup>th</sup> century who whipped his slaves at the end of every month as a matter of principle (Ellefson, 2010).

Genealogy therefore helps in analyzing colonial libraries for hidden oppressive systems and what Irving Goffman (1963]) has called 'spoiled identities'. Some people may live their 'spoiled identities' in the way they have been constructed by discursive power for fear of further repression; others accept their spoiled identities because they have been convinced by the discursive power that spoiled their identities that their identities have not been spoiled; that their identities have not been inconveniencing and that they have been operationalized as they truly *are*. The latter group lives through what Laclau and Mouffe (2001, p. 2) have described as living "on ignorance of the conditions of...discursivity." Ignorance of one's condition of discursivity can be made sense of through Gramscian hegemony as discussed in the next section.

### **Gramscian Hegemony**

I used Gramsci's theory of hegemony through consent to make sense of how CADE continues to control CADA epistemologically and culturally without the historical violence that kept the 'negroes' in their place. 'Blackness' in its modern usage was a product of slave and colonial discourse that was imposed on CADA to control them as mentioned in Chapter 1(also see Mbembe, 2017). Its contemporary utility, however, is not directly imposed by CADE. The imposition may be implicit or hidden by rules of discourse. As Laclau and Mouffe (2001) have argued, these hegemonic rules of discourse may be "Sedimented theoretical categories ... which

conceal the acts of their original institution” (p. viii). This section is not a comprehensive analysis of Gramsci’s theory of Hegemony through consent.

What I include here are Gramscian concepts that are helpful in the understanding of how and why ‘blackness’ continues to have social, scholarly, cultural, and political currency when its oppressive history is well documented. Through hegemony, dominating social groups ‘conceal the acts of their original institution’ so I will be engaged in “the reactivating of [the] moment [that] makes those acts visible again” (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001, p. vii). Below, I continue as follows: control through violence, hegemony through violence, hegemony through consent (through civil society, the state, and intellectuals) and conclude by summarizing the key theoretical elements that will be useful in making sense of the moral problems associated with ‘blackness’ in its current and historical sedimentation.<sup>57</sup>

### ***Control Through Violence***

Colonial and slave regimes were violent systems and structures. Admittedly, violence was not only restricted to slave masters and colonial administrators. Both sides of the power divide were engaged in violent actions. However, the violence of the power holders is the most important social factor for it is the one that structures society, and it is the one to which the powerless respond when exercised as biopower (Foucault, 2003 [1976]). The enslaved became violent because they wanted to be free; the colonized became violent because they wanted their land back or their country ruled by sons and daughters.

Even when violence against colonial administrators or slave masters seemed unprovoked, it was still a response to an objectionable and oppressive system pro-slavery personalities

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<sup>57</sup> Husserl argues in *Origin of Geometry* that even geometry relies on theoretical concepts that are abstracted and stabilized in their historical development to form the discipline (see Husserl, 1970; Blomberg, 2020).

considered a ‘necessary evil’. On the plantations, overseers at times whipped slaves not for any wrongs committed but to pre-empt their possible disobedience (Ellefson, 2010). As one Ted Eastman, a notorious cruel overseer who would be killed by two slaves warned the slaves, “I was fetched here... to whip, and I will whip, and make lots of raw backs” (Glenelg, 1881, p. 136). He would indeed exercise his ‘biopower’ until he died violently in the hands of two slave brothers, Jack and Sam. It was the slave body that was the site on which he exercised his power, where he effected hegemony over the slave on behalf of the slave regime.

It is the use of the slave body as the arena of control (power) that make them revolt, kill their masters or overseers, or run away. The massacre of creole French by Jean-Jacques Dessalines during the Haitian revolution was a response to their refusal to accept African Haitians as equals and their continued subversive activities to have Haiti reoccupied by France and slavery reconstituted (James, 1963). What Creole French valued in the African slave was a body at work, not a free body and mind.<sup>58</sup>

The imperial colonial violence on the African continent is exemplified by Chief Lobengula of the Matabele against British colonial violence (Morel, 1920) and Chief Witbooi of Herrero against German campaign of extermination (Gewald, 2003). These chiefs first asked for peaceful coexistence and respect for their lives, but the colonial administrations wanted total submission, the discursive docility of ‘negro’ that had gained celebrity in the Americas (Williams, 1882; Helper, 1868). These African chiefs became violent only when their peace overtures were rejected, and their livelihood threatened by the colonists and colonialists.

Reactive counter-violence was also the case in Brazil, especially between 1882 and 1888. As Toplin (1969) has explained, slaves ran away or plotted to kill their masters or overseers. These

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<sup>58</sup> The slave body was also a *site* of knowledge production (see Rush, 1799; Washington, 2006)

all involved violent confrontations between authorities and slave hunters on the one hand, and runaway slaves and anti-slavery sympathizers on the other. The infamous violence of overseers against slaves on the plantation is tragically illustrated by Toni Morrison (2004) in *Beloved* where violence is not only a feeling of ghostly foreboding at 124 Bluestone Road, but also on the whip-scarred back of Sethe where overseers' lashes have shaped scar into a "tree", "a chokecherry tree" (2004, p. 18). The overseers were as needlessly violent in Brazil as they were in the West Indies and the United States. Their main intention was biopower meant to make, in the words of Ted Eastman, 'lots of raw backs' and instil discipline on behalf of the slave regime.

At 124 Bluestone Road, tragic memories about slavery are confounded by recollections of sad experiences: relatives who have been sold, lost relatives, children who have fled slavery, and other sad stories that make the reader of *Beloved* feel the haunting presence of the horrors of slavery at 124 even when it was in Ohio, a free state. The worst story that haunts the reader the most is Sethe's killing of her daughter to prevent her from suffering the horrors of slavery.<sup>59</sup>

### ***Hegemony Without Violence***

However, the colonial and the slave regimes did not always use violence to physically control and dominate the colonized and the enslaved. Invidious and insidious methods were used without giving any impression that authorities were involved in any form of social, political, and economic control. The Bible, as used by missionaries in colonial Africa for instance, was one example of these insidious methods of domination (Kenyatta, 1938; Mudimbe, 1988). Like the violence of colonialism, domination through ideas also achieved the same results. Oppressive

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<sup>59</sup> Morrison's inspiration for Sethe's character, according to Morrison, is Margaret Garner, who killed her daughter because she did not want her daughter to suffer through the pain of slavery. Based on her experience under the sadistic horrors of slave masters and overseers, Garner believed her children would be better off *dead* than *alive* under slavery.



systems of domination therefore do not survive on violence alone. This is where Antonio's Gramsci become helpful in understanding domination in the postcolonial era when colonial violence by the former colonial masters is a thing of the past.

What makes Gramsci important is that he understood that no system, no matter how repressive and totalitarian, is *absolute*. The colonial and the slave regimes intended to make the slave and the colonized docile bodies (Foucault, 1995; 2003 [1976]). The colonized and the slave became objects of power to make them behaviourally predictable and obedient to the system. It is the shaping of the body to make the system effective. As Foucault (1995) has argued, "A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (p. 136). Slaves in the Americas, for instance, were 'seasoned' to make them good slaves (Mills, 1997, p. 84). However, this docility, despite its unspeakable repressiveness, was never absolute.

As a Marxist political theoretician and 'internationalist' frustrated by the continuously increasing influence and impact of state and the capitalist power against the proletarianized masses and the socialist revolution, Gramsci understood that a new way of thinking had to be engendered by what he considered the failure of orthodox Marxism (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001; Gramsci, 1999) on the one hand, and the "gigantic crudification and simplification of Marx's work" on the other (Hall, 1996c, p. 418).

While orthodox Marxism accepted the contingency of social conditions and social forces as functions of historical materialism, Gramsci did not ascribe to any uncritical over-reliance on Orthodox Marxism such as the spontaneous revolution as a function of the crisis of capitalism. Gramsci thought and wrote within the Marxist tradition. However, he did not ascribe to reductionist economism that assumed that mode of production directly determined all political, ethical, and social relations in society. He ascribed to what Laclau and Mouffe (2001) have

described as the ‘logic of contingency’ against the ‘logic of necessity’ of classical Marxism. As Stuart Hall (1996c) has noted, Gramsci did not think that productive forces immediately lead to laws of necessity that determine political and ideological effect. Gramsci, according to Hall (1996c), rejected a law-like, deterministic historical materialism and economism yet worked within the Marxist tradition as his “horizon of possibilities” (p. 422). Gramsci therefore walked the sliding scale of the Marxist extremes: between deterministic mode of production and ideological control. He understood how capitalism as a hegemonic system maintains (or hides) its oppressive processes and how it could be dismantled, or its hegemony overcome or mitigated.<sup>60</sup>

Gramsci witnessed increased capitalist exploitation and state repression. The proletariat was, however, not uniting in a revolutionary, universal way. Gramsci could see the ingredients of the revolution—the crisis of capitalism—but no revolution was materializing. Something else, Gramsci realized, must be holding the revolution back. He therefore did not see a revolutionary spontaneity (Luxemburg, 1986) or the unity of the workers internationally (Marx & Engels, 2011, [1847]). Additionally, philosophical, ideological, intellectual, and epistemological contradictions within the Communist International, and the dialectic between nationalist and internationalist allegiance of the proletariats, were becoming a barrier to the socialist revolution (Hall, 1996c;

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<sup>60</sup> Also see Herman and Chomsky (1988) on how mainstream western mass media colludes with its corporate owners and respective governments to manufacture public *consent* through the ‘Propaganda Model’ (see their Chapter 1). I must note here, however, that Gramsci’s *hegemony through consent* is not necessarily restricted to ‘propaganda’ or ‘mass media’ ulterior motives. While propaganda may be involved in Gramsci’s theory of hegemony through consent, Gramscian theory is broader and more hidden [normally] than Herman’s and Chomsky’s *consent*. In addition to the mass media (which is also included in Gramsci’s theory), Gramsci’s theory includes institutions such as family, schools (public and private), religion, academia, scholarship, science, culture, etc. These institutions create hegemonies in ways that appear more *normal* than the one *manufactured* by mass media. It is not difficult to convince TV viewers or radio listeners that mainstream media may be driven by ulterior motives than by public interest. It is, however, much more difficult to convince children and parents that schools they are used to (and comfortable in), their parental upbringings, and the church services they attend every Sunday, are mistaken, or are engaged in propaganda.

Gramsci, 1999). The proletariat prioritized nationalism over their common exploitation as a social group internationally. With these contradictions, or ‘crises’ within the Socialist Left, as Laclau and Mouffe (2001) have argued, lies the genealogy of the concept of hegemony.

The genius of Gramsci’s politico-economic thinking is that the problem of hegemony was the solution to hegemony. This means that how the capital and the state operated had to be properly elaborated to understand how capitalism sustains itself beyond its control over ‘means of production’. Essentially, the politico-ideological mechanism in which capitalism sustained itself against the collective threat of the proletariats and socialist ideologues, rather than its internal contradiction, would be the path to the socialist revolution, and the ‘ethical state.’

Some of these mechanisms were: First, the political system controlled by state power. Therefore, Gramsci was involved in the communist party to help influence how political discourses are made and enforced through state power. Second, the economic power: Gramsci was involved in the organization of workers for he believed empowering workers through ‘worker councils’, for example, would help them organize against the bourgeoisie. According to Gramsci, as Hoare & Nowell Smith notes, the empowerment of worker councils would lead to “the possibility of proletarian cultural hegemony through domination of the work process” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 143). Third, the ideological reorientation: This involves the study, as noted with a reference to Hall (1996c) above, of what structures and thinkers [intellectuals] enforce the ideas of the bourgeoisie beyond the power of the state and capitalist means of production. To challenge the hegemony of capital and the bourgeoisie over the proletariat, Gramsci realized that understanding the mechanics of this hegemony would help dismantle it or use this mechanism to usher in a proletarian hegemony without violence.

Unlike Gramsci, of course, I am only interested in how hegemony through consent is maintained. I would then use it to understand how CADE's modern hegemonies impose and operationalized 'blackness.' I am not interested, in this dissertation, in counter-hegemonies or the dismantling of CADE's hegemonies. I am only interested in understanding them and how they operate. Intellectuals and civil society are two of the ways which Gramsci make sense of hegemony through consent. Below, I go into detail regarding how hegemony is operationalized with the consent of the oppressed without violence.

### ***Hegemony Through Consent***

Because some central concepts were not coherently defined (Hall, 1996c; Hoare & Nowell Smith, in Gramsci, 1999), I must specify the meaning of hegemony as used in this dissertation. Morera (2014) has pointed out that Gramsci's "thought is in many ways insufficiently rigorous, incomplete, and unedited, giving rise to many possible interpretations of it" (p. 4). As Hoare and Nowell Smith (1999) have argued, hegemony for Gramsci was either "contrasted with 'domination'" or he used it to mean the "opposite of ... 'economic-corporate' historical phase in which one social group "moves beyond a position of corporate existence and defence of its economic position and aspires to a position of leadership in the political and social arena" (p. 20). For a social group to achieve hegemony, it does not only focus on the 'defence of its economic position.' It uses its 'position of leadership in the political and social arena' to influence and control subordinate groups through means of production, operationalization of capital, and social and education institutions. A hegemonic group may therefore achieve dominance through ideas without the need to use force as noted in the previous section.

While hegemony may be entrenched (sedimented) in institutions, Gramsci understood that hegemony was a contingent historical social position that can also be occupied by the proletariat,

or socially and politically dominated social groups, given conducive circumstances and organization. This means that hegemony in this case is both organized and historical because the conditions in which it exist do not pre-exist outside history (see Morera, 1990). How then is hegemony through consent effected? There are two concepts that are important here: intellectuals and civil society. Because of the complexity of Gramsci's ideas, I will only focus on concepts that are most relevant to this dissertation. I will therefore not address other important yet related Gramsci concepts and perspectives. In this section, I explain concepts used by hegemonic groups to achieve dominance over other groups.

### *Civil Society*

Hoare and Nowell Smith (Gramsci, 1999) have noted that the concept of civil society, like other concepts in Gramsci's writing, have contradictory meanings: "Gramsci did not succeed in finding a single, wholly satisfactory conception of 'civil society' or the State" (p. 447). In some cases, Gramsci contrasts 'civil society' (private) and 'political society' (state). In other cases, he argues that the civil society and the political society form the state: "in actual reality civil society and State are one and the same" (Gramsci, 1999, p. 371).

These seeming lack of clarity in the meaning of civil society and the state may be a historical problem rather than Gramsci's inability to properly define them. For instance, in the Middle Ages following the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Church and the State were at one time one and the same, or complementary, or conflictual. The Church in some of these cases was both civil society and the State. This is a circumstance of history. Gramsci, I argue, based this analysis on historical events or philosophical ideas (such as Croce's or Machiavelli's). Citing Croce, he argues that there is a 'perpetual conflict between Church and the State.' This conflict

was also common in the Middle Ages (Hallam, 1845; Plunket, 1922). The conflict, however, resolved itself in favour of the state or the church or they found a mutually beneficial arrangement.

As Gramsci has argued, in cases in which the Church is “the totality of civil society”, the state, with a given development agenda at work, may take advantage of the “diminishing importance” of the Church “to crystallise permanently a particular stage of development, a particular situation” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 506). In this ‘particular situation’, the state may “absorb the Church in order the better to preserve its monopoly with the support of that zone of “civil society” which the Church represents” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 506). The action of Henry VIII to break with the Catholic Church, form the ‘Church of England’, and make himself the head of the Church is an example of the monopoly of the state over the church (representing civil society) (Rex, 2006). In this case, the church and the state became one under Henry VIII.<sup>61</sup>

Accordingly, the privileged group, which monopolizes the power of the state, recruits the Church as part of this monopolization exercise. So, the civil society and the political society become part of the interest working on behalf of the privileged or the dominant group. This is where the civil society and political society form the state. During the imperial colonization of Africa, for instance, the colonized regarded the church and the colonial state as one and the same; the colonial state, however, saw the church as working in the interest of the colonized (Mudimbe, 1988). The colonialists accused the church of giving Africans the concept of human equality through the scriptures. This was counter-productive to the governing of Africans as inferior beings. Both, however, exercised hegemony (through force and consent) over Africans. They were all ‘civilizing’ programs.

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<sup>61</sup> Today, the church has gone back to its traditional ‘civil society’ role. During imperial colonialism in Africa, the church’s role was ambiguous. The colonial church and the colonial states were structurally different; they were not functionally the same (see Mudimbe, 1988)

While the subsumption of civil society under the state, or state and civil society forming the state are historical realities that defy atomic definitions, I will take ‘civil society’ to mean competing and interconnected ‘private’ social groups because Gramsci contrasts civil society and the state in much of his analysis in the *Prison Notebook*. Additionally, today, it is easy to distinguish the state from the civil society. The civil society, as a social totality, is therefore composed of different social groups with various and competing interests. These interests are not only economic. As Morera (1990) has argued, “the problems that a social group faces are not merely economic problems. They are also problems of the development of culture, of education” (p. 168). From the 18<sup>th</sup> century, after the triumph of Enlightenment ideals, the monopolizing role of the church as *the* civil society diminished. The church became one of the numerous civil societies that would develop from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

What is important to note here is that trying to present a clear, unambiguous functional definition of historical state and civil society may not be realistic. Gramsci criticized the argument that the state only regulates the economy and “that economic activity belongs to civil society” (1999, p. 371). For Gramsci, the “civil society and State are one and the same” because “*laissez-faire*...is a form of State “regulation”, introduced and maintained by legislative and coercive means” (p. 371). Of course, it is possible to structurally differentiate between civil society and the state. Functionally, however, the distinction becomes difficult. This may not be the case with modern civil societies from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

For instance, there were civil society organizations that were engaged in ‘social justice’ work such as American Colonization Society, American Abolitionists Society, ‘German Friends’ in 1688 (Du Bois, 1904, p. 21), etc. These civil societies can be functionally and structurally distinguished from the state. Additionally, African-American formed civil society organizations at

the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century: churches, community associations, universities and colleges<sup>62</sup>, media organizations, meeting houses, etc (Steward, 1904). Because of the exclusionary nature of the American state and the hostile attitude of European-Americans toward African-Americans, private civil society organizations became avenues through which African-Americans formed communities, economic structures, social and cultural institutions.

The African-American church and schools were not merely places of worship and learning, respectively. They were social, moral, and political institutions. The exclusion of African-Americans by the state was due to the hegemony of the European-American civil society over the state. As Morera has argued, once a civil society has developed with a strong presence at a national level, the state must reorient itself toward the civil society “for it can no longer dominate them and overcome conflicts in an easy way” (1990, p. 163). In the period leading to the American civil war, during the Reconstruction period, and during Jim Crow, American civil society, as a socio-political totality, had hegemonic status relative to the American state (see Du Bois, 1935). In 1946, a hatred-filled mob of European-Americans dragged Maceo Snipes from his home in Taylor County, Georgia, and shot him dead because he had voted in an election (Morrison, 2016, p. 62). The state could not help Snipes. It either let it happen, or it allowed the European-American civil population to perform some of its oppressive roles.

It is therefore difficult, though not impossible, to advance the arena in which civil society operates without the state also having a role. Admittedly, the state, unlike the civil society, may use force through its military and the police to exercise hegemony. But it is important to note that these forces may be exercised on behalf of powerful social groups (as a section of civil society) that have economic and cultural influence on the state. German colonists and colonialists using the

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<sup>62</sup> Universities, colleges, and schools assumed more than their educational roles.



power of the state against the local Herero ethnic group in Southwest Africa (now Namibia) is an example (Gewald, 2003). In South Africa under apartheid, the interest of ‘white’ South African civil societies and the state converged. The brutality of the apartheid regime was exercised on behalf of the state and the ‘white’ civil societies against indigenous Africans. It is the function of this interest groups that will lead us to the concept of intellectuals.

### *Intellectuals in Civil Society*

Intellectuals are the cultural and ideological conduits through which social group’s ideas become elaborated and hegemonic without violence in society. While the hegemony of the state may at times be “characterised by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 145), the hegemony of modern civil society (population) is mostly through consent without the force of the state. Civil society is therefore the arena in which hegemonic ideas must be effectively elaborated by intellectuals to be accepted, knowingly or unknowingly, with consent. Economic assumptions, as Morera has argued, originate “in the actions of individuals in a given economic system and is defended, justified, and made acceptable by the work of intellectuals” (1990, p. 166).

### *Organic Intellectuals*

Unlike Thomas Sowell (2011), who, for example, defines an ‘intellectual’ as a personality who engages with ideas, Gramsci’s ‘intellectual’ is very broadly defined. For Sowell, therefore, a mechanic or a doctor would not be an intellectual. According to Gramsci, however, “All men are intellectuals...but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 140). This makes most, if not all, human beings, potential intellectuals. A mechanic who volunteers in a local labour union and represents ideas of his or her group to the government or against other interest groups such as business leaders or political leaders would be an intellectual (organic).

However, if the mechanic is only involved in his or her work as a mechanic than she/he would not be an intellectual.<sup>63</sup> Not everyone, therefore, plays the role of intellectual in society even if everyone has the potential. As Gramsci (1999) has put it, “although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of non-intellectuals, because non-intellectuals do not exist” (p. 140). Father Henson, a former American fugitive slave living in the 1850s in Canada, for example, described himself as “so ignorant ... unable to read, and having heard so little as I had of religion, natural or revealed, should be able to preach acceptably to persons who had enjoyed greater advantages than myself” (Henson, 1858, p. 132). However, he argues that he was regularly asked by the “comparatively educated” and the “lamentably ignorant...to speak to them on their duty, responsibility, and immortality, on their obligations to their Maker, their Saviour, and themselves (p. 132). While Father Henson could not read or write, he would still be considered an intellectual by Gramsci because of his function in disseminating religious values to slaves. The capitalist, Gramsci argues, also create ‘organic’ intellectuals to elaborate ideas for their social group: “The capitalist entrepreneur creates alongside himself the industrial technician, the specialist in political economy, the organisers of a new culture, of a new legal system, etc” (p. 135). This ‘intellectual’ becomes “an organiser of masses of men; he must be an organiser of the “confidence” of investors in his business, of the customers for his product, etc” (p. 135).

While Gramsci differentiates between urban and rural intellectuals (see Gramsci, 1999, pp. 148-161), ‘organic’ and ‘traditional’ intellectuals are the most relevant in this dissertation. Most rural intellectuals (doctors, clergy, land aristocrats, artisans, etc) are mostly ‘traditional’. Urban intellectuals are a mixture of both (traditional and organic). For Gramsci, organic intellectuals arise

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<sup>63</sup> While Sowell would exclude the mechanic in his definitional, structural conceptualization of ‘intellectual’, he would accept the mechanic as an intellectual if and when his/her ideas become socially effective (elaborated) in society or in government policy on behalf of his/her social group.

within a given social group so they become the avenue through which group ideas (discourses, interests) become elaborated. According to Gramsci, every social group “creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields” (pp. 14-135).<sup>64</sup>

Organic intellectuals therefore arise within and with the group for which they elaborate ideas. For instance, Gramsci argues that “for the moment, American negroes have a national and racial spirit which is negative rather than positive, one which is a product of the struggle carried on by the whites in order to isolate and depress them” (p. 159). This ‘negative’ intellectuals are organic to the African-American community in their historical function and formation.

However, Gramsci, perceiving African-Americans in the ‘stigmatized’ way they were perceived in the US as non-Americans (‘discredited’ and ‘discreditable’ in the Goffmanian sense), argues that there is “a surprising number of negro intellectuals who absorb American culture and technology” (p. 158). He therefore wonders about two things: 1) If the “American expansionism should use American negroes as its agents in the conquest of the African market and the extension of American civilisation”; 2) Or if the unity of “American people” [European-Americans] would “provoke a negro exodus and the return to Africa of the most independent and energetic intellectual elements” to make the “mythic” and “primitive” Africa “the common fatherland of all the negro peoples” (pp. 158-159).

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<sup>64</sup> This development of internal ideas shapers and external dissemination of these ideas appears in Goffman (1963, p. 141) when he discusses the ‘normal’ and the stigmatized’: “the stigmatized individual should make an effort at sympathetic re-education of the normal, showing him, point for point, quietly and with delicacy, that in spite of appearances the stigmatized individual is, underneath it all, a fully-human being.” Goffman categorized ‘negroes’ among the ‘stigmatized’.

While Gramsci saw the potential of the ‘negro’ intellectual’ to benefit the American state, European-Americans only wanted African-Americans to leave the USA. The later role [#2] would be attempted by ‘negro intellectuals’ as they wanted to produce the Africa Gramsci has noted. Martin Delany (1852), Alexander Crummell (1898), Edward Blyden (1887), William Sheppard (1904), are examples of ‘negro intellectuals’ who wanted to take the American ‘civilization’ to Africa. Blyden (1887) notes that “the Friends of Africa in England” organized “a scheme for the regeneration of Africa by means of her civilised sons, gathered from the countries of their exile” (p. 113). Du Bois (1968) noted that “once I thought of you Africans as children, whom we educated Afro-Americans would lead to liberty. I was wrong” (p. 406). In this case, the ‘negro’ intellectual would have played an organic role in helping spread American imperialism, and traditional role in ‘civilizing’ Africa. ‘Negro intellectual’ would, however, be ‘organic’ to the ‘negro’ or the ‘black’ race. Today, most CADA intellectuals continue to play this ‘organic’ role in rethinking the history through the critical interrogation of the colonial libraries and the effect of neo-colonialism. They do this to ensure that CADA worldview and ideas, which have been historically elided by the slave and the colonial regimes, are elaborated to the world.

### *Traditional Intellectuals*

Ideally, traditional intellectuals perceive their work to be independent of interest-based ideological, economic, and cultural groups, so they consider their ideas universally applicable. But Gramsci argues that there are no intellectuals that are outside all social groups (Hall, 1996c). The old ecclesiastical intellectual class was, according to Gramsci, “organically bound to the landed aristocracy” (p. 137). However, the ecclesiastical intellectuals are traditional intellectuals for they “held a monopoly of a number of important services: religious ideology, that is the philosophy and

science of the age, together with schools, education, morality, justice, charity, good works, etc” (p. 137).

While their formation can be traced historically to their inclusion in the landed aristocratic class, their ideas (discourses) about government, identity, ‘education, justice, charity, good works’, cultural norms, social mores, etc, became elaborated widely in society because they are not, ideally, group specific; they are necessary to any social group. The contents of such discourses, may, however, be group specific. Social work, with its discursive historical origin in the works of CADE intellectuals (anthropologists) in the 19th century (see Foucault, 1980, p. 62) is, in principle, a universalist discourse in its intent. Its discursive, moral content, however, is still Eurocentric (hegemony of CADE intellectuals) (Chapman & Withers, 2019). Because traditional intellectuals “experience through an *‘esprit de corps’* uninterrupted historical continuity and their special qualification, they thus put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group” (p. 138). For instance, CADE intellectuals have over four centuries of intellectual hegemony; CADA intellectuals only started comparable works at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Intellectuals and Societal Elaboration of Ideas*

The two concepts (organic and traditional) are helpful in this dissertation because most CADA intellectuals would be considered ‘organic’ and CADE scholars considered themselves ‘traditional’. While CADE scholars as we have already encountered wrote as ‘organic’ to elaborate Eurocentric, group position (Blumer, 1958) through pan-European historical ideals, they portrayed themselves as traditional intellectuals whose ideas were universal. CADE intellectuals enjoyed a long historical continuity, so they easily assume a position of being ‘autonomous and independent of the dominant social group’.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century, CADE intellectuals used science, reason, and what they believed was the true nature of Africans, “to preserve the integrity and the position of the dominant group” (Blumer, 1958, p. 5). However, there are scholars who truly believed with no ulterior motives that their ideals were free from group interests, so their ideas tend to promote theories (discourses) of the dominant class or social groups without being aware of their negative influence. Kant and Blumenbach, for example, believed their race science was a matter of evidence. Their scientific ideas, as I will discuss in Chapter 5, became instrumental to 19<sup>th</sup> century CADE social Darwinists. These scientific discourses of the time, which found their way through educational institutions, became some of the authoritative conduits through which CADE would make their group ideas hegemonic. As Gramsci has argued, “the importance assumed in the modern world by intellectual functions and categories” is the “organization of education” through transfer of “the private to the public sphere” (cited in Sassoon, 2004, p. 28). Organic intellectualism has become traditional intellectualism.

The transition from control over means of production to control over social forces, social formations and educational institutions is the movement from the economic to the social, political, and ethical. Controlling means of production is therefore not enough. It only opens the way for a more structured and sustained control of ideas that rule society. To control the social, political, and ethical relations in society, the dominant social groups must ensure that their ideas become the ruling ideas.

But for these ideas to become the ruling ideas, they must be elaborated to become the dominant ideas. Gramsci calls this elaboration “catharsis”, which is a “passage from the purely economic... to the ethico-political moment that is the superior elaboration of the structure into superstructure in the minds of men” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 691). Hegemony becomes controlling

when it has entered ‘minds of men’. This is not done, necessarily, through force but through the consent of the subordinate groups or the governed (Stoddart, 2007; Lears, 1985).

As Lears (1985) has argued, “Consent, for Gramsci, involves a complex mental state, a ‘contradictory consciousness’ mixing approbation and apathy, resistance and resignation” (p. 570). Hegemony therefore spreads through our basic institutions like “families, workplace networks, and friendship groups...and undertakings of everyday life” (Lull, 1995, p. 34). What this engenders is a social condition in which hegemonic and oppressive ideas become institutionalized as popular common sense in society, so people tend not to question them. As Gramsci has argued, it is “precisely in civil society that intellectuals operate” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 209).

While the political society (the state) is usually considered the capital enabler through legislations as Gramsci has noted, he also argues that for ideas to take hold in society and to engender hegemony, civil societies must be involved to ensure ruling ideas become normalized. In 1982 on a farm (Scheepersrust) near Olivershoek in South Africa, a church was “pressured” by administrative authorities in Drakensberg using the 1913 Land Act to evict 44 African families who were tenants of the land (AFRA Report, 1983). Consequently, oppressive, ruling ideologies become normalized through what Lull (1995, p. 34) has called “self-evident cultural assumptions”, which is an imposition of domination through the “winning of a substantial degree of popular consent” (Hall, 1996c, p. 424).

Civil societies do not operate simply as the moral vanguard of the proletariats against the government or the social group that is in a dialectic relation with the state and capital. Civil society, as mentioned earlier, can also become part of the hegemonic system. Apartheid South Africa and Jim Crow America are examples where civil society and the political society worked together to maintain hegemonic discourses and structures. In these two regimes and societies (UDC for

example), it was the intellectuals working organically with the state while styling themselves as ‘autonomous’ women and men.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have argued that phenomenology will help in bracketing what we assume to be the meaning of ‘blackness’ and the appearance of the CADA skin in order to allow ourselves (who ever attends to the task) to be free from cultural and epistemic influences so as to judge for ourselves *how* CADA skin appears to us. Phenomenology helps us avoid taking what CADE historical, scientific, and social discourses have normalized in what Foucault described as systems of discursivity. The discursive system prevents us from looking beyond CADE historical and hegemonic colonial discourses. Instead of presenting CADA body as an object of intentionality to a subject (CADA or CADE) to reveal the phenomenon that appears, colonial discourses dictated that what the subject perceived was (and still is) ‘blackness’. Phenomenology, as a philosophy of *freedom* and ‘beginnings’ (Stapleton, 1983), ‘brackets’ colonial discourses to afford the subject the opportunity to say what they experience (phenomenon) by going back to the body, the ‘thing itself.’

These colonial discourses are interrogated using postcolonial theory by rethinking the discourses that CADE has standardized as the history of CADA. And the way to understand this is also to study how ideas about CADA and their identities changed overtime, why they changed and who governs this change.

Using discourse, genealogy helps us interrogate oppressive ideas that are hidden in discourse without actually being hidden. And these oppressive ideas are hidden in discourse and applied by CADA as if they have lost their oppressive aspects. The IMF’s loans to African countries (Bhabha,1994), for instance, are styled primarily as a way to help African economies



grow; but their main function is the control over African economies by former colonizing and slaving states. Gramsci's hegemony through consent has been used to understand how this control through consent is operationalized through intellectuals and civil society.

Phenomenology therefore interrogates the meaning of 'blackness', postcolonial theory interrogates the social conditions in which 'blackness' acquired its meaning, genealogical discourse tracks the change in the meaning of 'blackness' overtime and how some of these changes may be discursively deceptive and finally, hegemony helps us see how oppressive meanings are maintained without violence today.

In the next chapter, I delve into the history of CADA identity to understand the intellectual tradition that created 'blackness', why it created it and how we may make sense of the contemporary normalized 'blackness' within a hegemonic global history shaped by CADE in their attempt to justify the slave trade, slavery, colonialism, and colour-based segregation. As Gramsci has argued, some historical assumptions or mistakes become “‘historical facts’, whose explanation is to be found in history and in the social conditions of the present” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 471). It will therefore be useful to look at what may be considered 'historical facts' and how they are made sense of today.

## CHAPTER FOUR: CADA Image and Identity in European Imagination

### Introduction

This chapter presents the genealogy of appearance-based identities from the classical antiquity through the Renaissance period. This is the period in which the complex relationship between Europe and Africa that continues to the present day began. While Enlightenment writers such as Immanuel Kant and David Hume used travel narratives to write about Africa, they also theorized about Africans from Roman and Greek writers. It is therefore imperative that a history of terminologies we use is put in its proper historical context before it is related to its present usage. This historical analysis is important in addressing areas of epistemic and historical continuities and discontinuities (Foucault, 2010).

Foucault (2002), in *The Order of Things*, has shown that enlightenment writers in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries adopted some discourses from the classical epistemes while creating new discourses that did not exist in the Classical Age: “The Classical *episteme* is articulated along lines that do not isolate, in any way, a specific domain proper to man” because “He is a quite recent creature, which the demiurge of knowledge fabricated with its own hands less than two hundred years ago” (p. 336). But, Foucault argues, this ‘Man’ has been advanced to us by Enlightenment episteme and historiography as if he has “been waiting for thousands of years in the darkness for that moment of illumination in which he would finally be known” (p. 336). But continuities exist. Achille Mbembe (2001) has shown how the social imaginary, violence and liberal pretensions that informed colonialism, and which were in turn informed by the Enlightenment thinking, can be traced to the Middle Ages: “The heritage of the Middle Ages is indisputable” (p. 37).<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> It is important to note that even new discourses—as discontinuities—in the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries used the classical period as their cultural, historical, and epistemological horizon. To use a concept

The classical period [Imperial Rome and Ancient Greece] therefore form an important backdrop to modern European epistemes and historical anchorage. As already mentioned in Chapter 3, there are historical analyses by both CADE and CADA writers where continuity is invoked when the discourse in question can be better explained by discontinuity.<sup>66</sup> There are also cases in which discontinuity is invoked when the discourse in question can be explained by continuity. While discrimination against CADA is a modern social phenomenon (see Jordan, 1974), William Smith (1905), for instance, justifies a fabricated continuity “That the Negro is markedly inferior to the Caucasian is proved both craniologically and by six thousand years of planet-wide experimentation” (p. 12).<sup>67</sup> It is historically inaccurate to talk of ‘negro’ six thousand years ago.

It is also important to emphasize historical analyses because the operationalization of history and knowledge production is preceded or followed by power, which has legacies today. As Foucault (1980) has argued, “The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power” (p. 52). Edward Said (1995 [1978]) has also shown this in the case of the Orientalist Middle East where “Much of the information and knowledge about Islam and the Orient that was used by the colonial powers to justify their colonialism derived from Orientalist scholarship” (p. 329). Paul Gilroy (1993) has also emphasized the important link between present social conditions and historical ‘imprints’ regarding power and knowledge: “[though] it arises from the present rather than past conditions, contemporary British

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utilized by Immanuel Wallerstein (2004) in *World System Theory* in the development of capitalism as the world’s structuring base, the resources used to create the new discourses by modern Europeans between the 1400s and 1960s are not *endogenous* to that periods; they extend to the classical world.

<sup>66</sup> Discontinuity: “[the] fact that within the space of a few years a culture sometimes ceases to think as it had been thinking up till then and begins to think other things in a new way” (Foucault, 2002, p. 56); “threshold, rupture, break, mutation, transformation” (Foucault, 2010, p. 5)

<sup>67</sup> Craniology was invented in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and there is no continuous six thousand years of experimentation on ‘negro’.

racism bears imprints of the past in many important ways” (p. 7). Gilroy added that the ‘crude’ and reductive conceptualization of culture in British ‘racial politics’ “today are clearly associated with older discourse of racial and ethnic differences which is everywhere entangled in the history of the idea of culture in the modern West” (p. 7).

And much of these ‘idea of culture in the modern West’, and how it affects our understanding of CADE and CADA identities, can be traced, in most cases, to ancient Rome and Greece. As much as my analysis of the moral issues related to ‘blackness’ and their social implications are contemporary, understanding their historical changes overtime and the knowledge/power nexus that has buttressed them for centuries, needs, in my view, some understanding of the origin of ‘blackness’ in the classical antiquity. As I will discuss in this chapter, some CADE scholars take it at face value that ‘Ethiopianness’ as understood in the classical world is the same as ‘blackness’ or ‘negroness’ of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. I will also discuss how scholars like George (1958) and Jordan (1974) believed that some of the ways in which Africans were described by Europeans as beast-like from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, were derived from Greek’s perception of ancient Ethiopians as found in the works of Herodotus, for example.

As discussed below, ancient Greeks and Romans were familiar with continental Africans. They also interacted with them on intellectual, economic, and cultural levels (Fredrickson, 2002; Snowden, 1993; Kelly, 1991). It is also the period in which the origin and notable transformation of appearance-based identities can be traced. Frank Snowden (1970), arguing from archaeological evidence, periodized the first appearance of Continental Africans in the Greco-Roman world from the Minoan period, but most notably from the 6<sup>th</sup> century before the current era (BCE). Essentially, this is the era in which ancient Greeks, Romans and modern Europeans engaged in mutually

beneficial cultural exchanges with Egypt and ancient Ethiopia.<sup>68</sup> Like any cultural exchange, there was also cultural pride and denigration. As will be discussed in the following three sections, it was a complex relationship in which Africans were hailed for cultural achievements, praised for their beauty, criticized for some of their ‘bizarre’ cultural practices, and denigrated for their appearances.

While the relationship between the Greco-Roman world and Ethiopians was a complex and contradictory cultural and intellectual discourse, it started to become increasingly oversimplified in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the period now known as the European Renaissance (15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries). This oversimplification took the turn for the worse during the Enlightenment period as will be discussed in the third section of this chapter.

The first section looks at appearance-based identities and their moral implications in the Greco-Roman world. This section will also address the question of whether there is any historical ground for the synonymization of the appellation ‘Ethiopian’ with ‘Black’. The second section looks at the moral status of Africans during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, what it meant to live as a dark-skinned person of African descent during that period and how Europeans perceived Africans living on the continent. This is an important period of great cultural and intellectual revival in Europe, so the perception Europeans had of Africans was not merely a description of the different ‘other’. This perception was integral to Europeans’ self-understanding and self-exertion (Jordan, 1974).<sup>69</sup> This cultural revival gave Europeans a new self-confidence to start a

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<sup>68</sup> Ethiopia was the area inhabited by dark-skinned Africans South of Egypt. For the Greeks, ‘Ethiopia’ comes from the Greek word *aithiop*, meaning burnt or red-brown face (Tsri, 2016a). This means that ‘Ethiopian’ was not restricted to continental Africans. It was also used to describe other ‘burnt faces’ in Asia like Indians. Ancient Greeks, on the other hand, believed their faces were less burnt (Williams, 1882).

<sup>69</sup> It is important to note that Europeans have not always been the ‘masters’ of the world, so controlling the world from the 15<sup>th</sup> century gave them a new self-exertion as people (Europeans and Christians).

cultural and intellectual move away from the dogmatism of the Christian church. This confidence also gave them the impetus to triumph over Imperial Islam and other Eastern civilizations such as those of China, Japan, and India. It would be the beginning of European mastery of the world, of its Adamic pretensions as *the* guardians. CADE and CADA still grapple with many “dimensions of this intellectual inheritance” (Gilroy, 1993, p. 8).

The last section of this chapter looks at Africans in the consciousness of Europeans during the Enlightenment period, an era that is considered to have ushered in the European ‘modernity’ (Taiwo, 2010). This is the period in which Europeans subordinated faith to science and philosophy and shed “the inability to make use of one’s intellect without the direction of another” (Kant, 2006, p. 17). Through Enlightenment ideals, Europe arguably overcame the ecclesiastical and the biblical power of the church. This power was a legacy of the church of the Middle Ages.

## **The Greco-Roman World**

### ***Ingroup/Outgroup Dynamic: Negative and Positive Prejudices***

Every society has its own customs for self-organizing internally. It also has discursive and cultural practices on how it relates to people it considers its out-groups. The strategies governing ingroup-outgroup divide depend on society’s classificatory parameters as will be discussed in chapter 6 on identity (see Appiah, 1992; Hall, 2013; Taylor, 2001). Internal self-organization and external relations may involve self-praise and denigration of out-groups. However, external relations with outgroups are not always followed by denigrating discourses because there are cases in which in-group members appreciate some qualities of out-group members.

Allport (1954) describe this as a positive prejudice. For instance, ancient Roman writers like Tacitus (56 -120 CE) believed that despite “their weaknesses...the Germans represented the ultimate form of virility” (Isaac, 2004, p. 10). Isaac argues that Romans considered Germania to

be the opposite of the ‘civilized’ Rome. However, Romans still acknowledged the bravery of Germanic tribes and their struggle against the Roman empire to maintain their natural freedom. In *The Annals*, for instance, Tacitus wrote that “for both sides hope lay in bravery alone, and safety depended upon victory. The Germans displayed no less courage than the Romans” (Tacitus, 1906, p. 75). This did not, however, mean that ancient Romans believed in the equality of customs and civilizations between Germania and Rome.

Notably, nevertheless, the above complex relationship between Ancient Romans and Germans would also characterize how ancient Greeks and Romans perceived and related to continental Africans living in the Roman empire and those living on the continent outside the empire. As noted above, and as will be discussed in the following pages, this complex relationship—the interplay between admiration and denigration—would disappear at the macro level, at the level of culture, social values and institutionalized discourse in CADE societies from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the micro level, however, this complex relationship, the interplay between negative and positive prejudices (Allport, 1954), remained as the examples to be given will show. The attitude of Ancient Romans toward Germanic tribes would be adopted by Europeans toward modern Africans from the 16<sup>th</sup> century but mostly from the 19<sup>th</sup> century because of slavery and later, imperial colonization of Africa. It is the ‘intellectual inheritance’ that would inform the “colonial rationality” (Mbembe, 2001, p. 25) or the “colonizing structure” (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 15) in Africa. The expression ‘noble savage’, which Europeans would later use to describe Africans, was used by Romans against ancient Germans (Painter, 2010). The colonizing structure/rationality has in turn informed the modern African postcolonial state (see Mbembe, 2001).

The classical period and the Middle Ages are therefore integral to our understanding of relations of power, cultural anchorage, and knowledge production today. In the Greco-Roman

world, social hierarchies existed (Nkrumah, 1970). However, the social and the identitarian parameters used to organize the Greco-Roman world were not reduced to skin appearance (Bartels, 1997; Brann, 2009; Braude, 1997; McCoskey, 2002; Snowden, 1993, 1984, 1970). Admittedly, denigration and self-praise were a social reality in the Greco-Roman world. Aristotle, as Nkrumah (1970) spoke of, “enjoined his fellow countrymen not to enslave Greeks but only an *inferior* race with less spirit” (p. 44, emphasis added).<sup>70</sup> But generally, and this is well documented, ancient Egyptians referred to themselves as ‘the people’ and Greeks and Romans referred to others as ‘barbarians’ (Isaac, 2004; Snowden, 1984; Tsri, 2016a).<sup>71</sup> Jews as God-chosen people is a well-known sociopolitical and socio-religious reality globally (Taylor, 2001). For Jews, the ‘barbarian’ is *goy* [gentile] (Rosen-Zvi, 2016). Such an ingroup-outgroup dynamic is therefore a moral problematic as it acts as an organizing principle and a determinant of good or bad life (Appiah, 1992; Taylor, 2001). In CADA-CADE relationship, this is apparent as Du Bois’ and Ruth’s examples in Chapter 1 exemplify. They determine who is deserving of inclusion in the moral circle such as the Jim Crow colour line and the colonial colour bar.

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<sup>70</sup> Nkrumah used ‘race’ here as if ‘race’ was the same word used by Aristotle. I consider this usage, as I noted earlier, historically problematic. Using modern terms for a period in which they were not used risks making modern consumers of knowledge think these concepts existed in the past.

<sup>71</sup> I must note here, however, that a ‘barbarian’ was not necessarily an *inferior* being. Henry Morgan in *Ancient Society* (1877) has also placed ‘barbarism’ below ‘civilization’ in his periodization. A barbarian was merely an alien ‘Other’ with different customs and culture, or those whose languages could not be understood by ancient Greeks and Romans (Tsri, 2016a). Strabo here explains how Plato and Eudoxus learned from Egyptian ‘barbarians: “albeit] secretive and slow to impart it, Plato and Eudoxus prevailed upon them in time and by courting their favour to let them learn some of the principles of their doctrines; but the barbarians concealed most things. However, these men did teach them the fractions of the day and the night which, running over and above the three hundred and sixty-five days, fill out the time of the true year” (Strabo, 1967, p. 85)



### ***Ingroup/Outgroup and Epistemological Power***

What determines whether the praise and denigration narratives in ingroup-outgroup dynamic last is the power over social conventions, intellectual and epistemological discourses. For instance, the learning Greeks obtained from Egyptians would be downplayed and praise of Greek originality and genius overplayed by 19<sup>th</sup> century European writers (Bernal, 2003; Kelly, 1991; Levine, 1989; Braude, 1997; Makumba, 2007). The Greco-Roman discourses as we learn them today come, mostly, through CADE scholars, who tend to regard themselves as operating outside any social group interest. They style themselves as intellectuals Gramsci has called ‘traditional intellectuals’ (see Chapter 3 on *traditional* and *organic* intellectuals).

But most of these scholars are *organic* scholars. They are organic to CADE as an ingroup. They locate the origin of western civilization in ancient Greece by way of ancient Rome. The role of ancient Egypt and Nubia is either elided or significantly downplayed. The epistemological power of western organic scholars has subjugated knowledges (Hartman, 2000) obtained from ancient Egypt and Nubia. Europeans valorized Greece and Rome over Egypt because they could associate with Rome in a way they could not relate to Egypt; and they had the power to subjugate ideas that did not buttress Europe’s self-praise. Martin Bernal (2003) and Cheikh Anta Diop (1974) have challenged this subjugation of Egyptian and African role in the civilization of Europe. This ingroup-outgroup dynamic and its knowledge-power nexus feeds into modern CADE hegemony over CADA. It has a strong bearing on what CADA accepts because most, if not all, of CADA history from the 15<sup>th</sup> century was written by CADE scholars. Even though our understanding of ‘blackness’ today has changed overtime, it is still important to understand its historical reality in order to adequately address if the new understanding has been delinked from its problematic history (see research Question 1). The history of ancient Rome and Greece has also helped me

interrogate if conflating ‘Ethiopian’ with ‘negro’ is historically justified or the use of ‘mulatto’ in ancient Egypt is appropriate.

Interrogating ‘blackness’ in the Greco-Roman world has a strong bearing on contemporary epistemological and moral horizons that inform the modern normalization of ‘blackness’. As Braude (1997) has argued in the historical and epistemological gap between the Middle Ages and the modern era, this problem arises because the “Eurocentric periodization and territorialization of human history have cut the early modernist off from that period and region” (p. 104). This ‘Eurocentric periodization and territorialization of human history’ has been criticized by postcolonial scholars as the centring of the history of the world around ‘European time’ (Abrahamsen, 2003; Zeleza, 2006; Bhabha, 1994; Mbembe, 2017, 2001; Mudimbe, 1988, 1994). It is also the reason why the empire wrote back (Ashcroft & Tiffin, 2004) to challenge European and Euro-American hegemony over knowledge production and conception of history and human reality. What seems normal in the European representation of Africans, for instance, is not necessarily normal in the African consciousness. However, some African writers have taken some European ideas, derived from the Greco-Roman world, to be normal descriptions of African reality. For instance, David Livingstone (1858) described African hair (following Herodotus) as not hair but a “wool of sheep” (p. 196). It is now common to find CADA describing their own hair as ‘woolly’ or ‘nappy’ in the way European described them.<sup>72</sup>

Undoubtedly, ancient Egyptians were culturally influential in antiquity as Greeks and Romans have acknowledged their cultural and intellectual debt to Egypt (Banker, 2020; Kelly,

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<sup>72</sup> Before colonialism created cultural and epistemological hegemony in Africa, Africans told Livingstone that his ‘hair’ was not hair “but a wig of [a] lion’s mane” (p. 196). This African perspective would disappear because of slavery and colonialism. Africans would only see things, even CADA body, based on how Europeans perceived them.

1991; Bernal, 2003). The prominence of Romans and Greeks in contemporary history, history of ideas and epistemology is a result of Western European discursive attachment to the Greco-Roman civilizations as the progenitor of western civilization. Paying close attention to ‘blackness’ in the classical antiquity therefore becomes morally important given the way modern Europeans have instrumentalized Roman and Grecian ideas about Africa. Even when Greeks learned from Egyptians as Strabo tells us, mainstream CADE scholarship still has Ancient Greece as the singularity of western civilization. Including the Greco-Roman history in the analysis of the moral problems associated with ‘blackness’ may seem unnecessary or superfluous. However, scholars who write on ‘blackness’ today trace its origin to the Greco-Roman world. It would therefore be unhelpful for me, in my view, to critique their work without addressing the same history they analyze. It would also be unreasonable for me to question, for instance, Williams’ (1974) and Du Bois’s (2018 [1915]) use of ‘mulatto’ in ancient Egypt, or the synonymizing of ‘Ethiopianness’ with ‘blackness’ or ‘negroness’, something that was common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century among CADE and CADA writers.

### ***Social Hierarchy and Status in the Greco-Roman World***

While ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome were rigidly hierarchical societies, they did not make appearance pivotal to social prejudice and the social structuring of the Greco-Roman world even if appearances were still part of social and cultural discourse (Jordan, 1974; Snowden, 1970). Snowden has noted that appearance was used metaphorically in everyday discourses in expressions like tanning to be like an Ethiopian or “washing an Ethiopian white” or “a flower as dark as an Ethiopian” (Snowden, 1970, pp. 3-4). These expressions did not however mean denigration or inferiorization *per se*; but they do show that the ancients were aware of the appearance of the skin of continental Africans (Kelly, 1991; Levine, 1989). The expressions were what they believed was

the phenomenological view of continental Africans. According to Snowden (1984) a social status such as being “free or servile” (1970, p. 169) was more important to the Romans and the Greeks than physical appearance. People with darker skin, Snowden argues, occupied positions of power. Banker (2020) has also argued that “cultural and ethnic background, not skin color, were the primary force of social differentiation between peoples” (p. 2). Meisenhelder (2003) argues that ancient Greeks lived with continental Africans with little bigotry associated with skin appearance.

### ***Ethiopian Skin Colour Among Pre-Christians and Earlier Christian Exegetes***

However, skin appearance became morally significant when the Christian Bible attained socio-political currency in antiquity. While Greeks and early Romans were aware of colour gradation among ancient Ethiopians, they did not develop an elaborate consciousness against the ‘blackness’ of the Ethiopian skin. But later Romans would develop an elaborate institutional social consciousness against Ethiopian ‘blackness’ in the Biblical context. This is an important rupture moment, a point of historical discontinuity (Foucault, 2010) of the social meaning of ‘blackness.’ Discontinuity Foucault (2010) argues, “separates us from what we can no longer say, and from that which falls outside our discursive practice” (p. 147). The Christians in the Greco-Roman world would not, however, make it prejudicial like Europeans and Euro-Americans of the colonial and slave regimes (Mbembe, 2017; Maynard, 2017).

This moment of discontinuity would create a new discourse on ‘blackness.’ Indeed, early Christians in antiquity admired and venerated Ethiopians in the Homeric tradition (Fredrickson, 2002). Homer, in both *Iliad* (1865) and *Odyssey* (Homer, 1945), makes references to various gods including Zeus, Poseidon and Thetis going to the Ethiopians to feast. Speaking about Achilles, Thetis (Homer, 1870) says, “For Jove went yesterday beyond the sea/To attend a feast of blameless Æhiops;/The gods all follow him” (p. 24).

The ‘blackness’ of Ethiopians in the pre-Christian and early Christian antiquity did not pose a major moral problem. It was merely descriptive and categorical (Tsri, 2016a). Hrabovsky (2013) argues that among the wise men who visited Jesus with gifts, one was dark-skinned. Some scholars even argue that the three wise men were all dark-skinned (Tsri, 2016a). Other important Biblical figures that are considered by historians to have been ‘Ethiopians’ were Zipporah, the wife of Moses. This is the Moses of the ten commandments and the miraculous parting of the Red Sea. Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab of Israel is also considered to have been an Ethiopian (Hill, 1922). To early Christians in antiquity, therefore, the skin of Ethiopian did not pose a major exegetical problem because their darkness did not mean sinfulness in the real world. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, CADE scholars argued that negative feelings against Africans, because of their ‘blackness’, existed in the classical antiquity and beyond (see Smith, 1905). This is to stick with a continuity that has no historical basis.

### ***‘Blackness’ of the Skin and Exegetical Contradictions***

The central place of ‘light/whiteness’ and ‘darkness/blackness’ in the Christian tradition, however, poses a problem of moral interpretation. Whiteness was associated with heaven, purity, and ethical life while blackness was associated with hell, sin, and impurity (Tsri, 2016a). These of course had little, if anything, to do with the phenomenological nature of ancient Ethiopian skin. But the metaphorical association of Ethiopian skin with ‘blackness’ would associate ancient Ethiopians with the biblical ‘impurity’ and ‘sin’ as a matter of social and linguistic conventions. As Snowden (1970) has argued, the perception of ‘blackness’ by this time was either exegetical in terms of sin or Satan or symbolic in terms of darkness, night, or illness.

To latter Christians in antiquity, therefore, the ‘blackness’ of Ethiopian skin and the blackness of sinfulness would engender exegetical contradictions. The skin of the Ethiopian was

‘black’, symbolizing sin. Ethiopians themselves, however, were not necessarily sinful. They were brothers and sisters in Christly collegiality; that is, Ethiopians were part of the Christian world. But that Ethiopians were ‘black’ still posed a moral problem because sinfulness meant blackness. Indeed, the exegetical association of blackness with sin synonymized the Ethiopian skin with sin.

*Christian ‘Blackness’ and ‘Whiteness’*

Fortunately for Ethiopians, the exegetical problem had an exegetical solution. Because they were an integral part of the Christian world in antiquity, the Ethiopians, like all Christians, could become sinful and symbolically black and holy and symbolically white. As Jerome has argued, “We are Ethiopians (Aethiopes)...who have been transformed from blackness into whiteness (candorem)” (cited in Tsri, 2016a, p. 50). This means that Romans and Greeks could also be transformed from ‘whiteness’ to ‘blackness’ if they became sinful. This therefore helps answer the moral problem posed by Jeremiah’s (13: 23) question: “Can an Ethiopian change his skin or a leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.”

Of course, Ethiopians cannot change their skin, and neither can a leopard change its spots. But Jeremiah was making an exegetical point about the risk of making sinfulness natural. This would make it impossible to make a sinful person holy. Accordingly, Jeremiah’s question is about the problem of a cultivated immoral/sinful character that is equated with the impossibility of changing one’s skin. It seems like a benign comparison. But it does create a problem of distinguishing between the blackness/whiteness of one’s Christianized soul and the ‘blackness’ of the Ethiopian skin, on the one hand, and the whiteness of the Christianized Ethiopian, on the other. Here, we have the blackness/whiteness of a Christian soul. This could be any Christian, Ethiopian or otherwise. There is also the ‘blackness’ of the Ethiopian skin and the whiteness of the Christianized Ethiopian. So, in this context, ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’ exegetically and

symbolically applied to Ethiopians, Greeks, and Romans. The ‘blackness’ therefore become a moral problem not to Ethiopians only but to Christians. The ‘blackness’ of Ethiopians becomes less of a problem if all Christians can become symbolically ‘black’.

### *Christian ‘Whitening’ of Ethiopians*

To the Roman exegetes, therefore, sin as blackness could be removed through Christian purification (Tsri, 2016a). Essentially, as Meisenhelder has argued, there was a “present being that was black and sinful and a potential being that could accept Christianity and become ‘whitened’ and virtuous” (2003, p. 103). As I mentioned above, this could be any Christian, not just Ethiopians. Admittedly, the ‘blackness’ of the Ethiopian skin and the ‘blackness’ of sin are conceptually different. The exegetical realities, however, make the distinction problematic and confusing. Additionally, keeping them distinct in daily usage becomes socially difficult. Since Ethiopians were physically ‘black’, it is easy to associate them with sinfulness in a way those with lighter skins could not. When Jerome argued that Ethiopians were transformed from ‘blackness’ to ‘whiteness’ through Christianization, he understood that there is a distinction between Ethiopians having a ‘black’ skin and Ethiopians having a black soul in a Christian parlance. Tsri (2016a, pp. 52-57) has called the former “categorical/descriptive blackness” and the latter “symbolic blackness”.

### *‘Black’ and ‘White’ as Non-Identity Descriptions*

While ‘descriptive blackness’ poses no problem because ancient Greeks and Romans used terms that can be translated to ‘black’ (Snowden, 1989; Tsri, 2016a), ‘categorical blackness’ raises other issues. Blackness and whiteness were used loosely to describe people in the classical world, but they did not become identities in themselves *per se*. The ancients described the Ethiopian skin to be ‘black’, but they did not create an identity category called ‘black people’. The people were

‘Ethiopians’ with various skin shades. To reiterate, there were no ‘whites’ or ‘white people’ and ‘blacks’ or ‘black people’ in antiquity even when the skin of the Ethiopian may have been described ‘black’ and the skin of Greeks and Romans described ‘white.’ Snowden (1970) and Tsri (2016a) have, however, argued that the Greeks did not consider their skins ‘white’ even when they used white descriptively. That there were no ‘black people’ and ‘white people’ in the classical antiquity is important to emphasize. It is easy to conclude that ‘black people’ and ‘white people’ existed in the classical world because ‘white’ and ‘black’ were used socially. Despite this moral confusion, it is still important to note that blackness was not used in a prejudicial manner even though its social (symbolic) and religious (exegetical) use created moral confusion.<sup>73</sup>

### ***Non-Colour Prejudice: Climate-Based Temperaments and Civilization***

However, lack of institutionalized prejudice and bigotry based on skin appearance did not mean social equality. The Greco-Roman world was, as noted earlier in this chapter, hierarchical. Their hierarchical structure was premised on social standing in society. Their inequality structure did not, necessarily, correspond to inferior dark African and superior light European. Benjamin Isaac (2004, 2006) and Frank Snowden, Jr. (1970) have argued that ancient Greeks believed they had the best temperament, intelligence, and socio-intellectual skills because of their intermediate climate. According to this view, those who lived in hotter climates [Ethiopians] were darker and those who lived in colder climates [Scythians] were paler (Snowden, 1970, p. 25). These extremes, according to ancient Greeks, made Ethiopians and Scythians inferior in admirable qualities (Isaac, 2004; Snowden, 1970; Tsri, 2016a). The fact that ancient Greeks and Romans were very familiar

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<sup>73</sup> I will revisit this later within this section. I will argue that it is a historical mistake to synonymize ‘Ethiopian’ with ‘negro/black people’ as one finds in Snowden (1993, 1989, 1984, 1970), Williams (1974), Du Bois (1915), Williams (1882), among others. These scholars took it for granted that ‘Ethiopianness’ is ‘blackness’. Ancient Ethiopians may have been described as ‘black’ in appearance, but ‘black’ did not become an identity until the 16<sup>th</sup> century.



with different skin appearances without using them for social stratification is of great moral significance because skin appearance—in the form of Foucauldian biopower (Foucault, 1997, pp. 240-264) and docile bodies (Foucault, 1995)—would become central to economic, social, and political control of CADA by Europeans from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Mbembe, 2017; Cooper, 2010).

Nonetheless, in the Greco-Roman world, Snowden argues, “The distinguishing mark of an Ethiopian was the colour of his skin” (1970, p. 2). This is morally significant in the context of this dissertation. There are scholars who have blamed racism on European natural aversion to African ‘blackness’ (Helper, 1867; Jordan, 1974; Sweet, 1997). According to this view, African skin colour appeared as a displeasing *natural* phenomenon to Europeans, so this may have made it easy to enslave Africans. For these scholars, therefore, the origin of colour prejudice against CADA may have been a natural response to a displeasing skin and facial appearances (Helper, 1867; Jordan, 1974) and not slavery or capitalism (Douglass, 1881; Williams, 1944). I will revisit this argument later under slavery and social control in Chapter 5. But a few examples here on the natural aversion argument may help. This may clarify the moral argument about ‘blackness’ and the attendant discontinuity in its usage between the classical antiquity and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The modern utility of ‘blackness’, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, started in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but it was shaped in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the slave and the colonial regimes.

Writing about CADA, Helper (1867, p. 105) argues that “Black is only one of the many vile qualities of their nature.” Edmund Burke (1885, p. 139) relates a story from a Mr. Cheselden about a boy who had been blind until he was about thirteen or fourteen after which he had an operation to gain his sight. As Burke writes, “the first time the boy saw a black object, it gave him great uneasiness; and that some time after, upon accidentally seeing a negro woman, he was struck with great horror at the sight” (1885, p. 135). This naturalized ‘horror’ was not necessarily among

the ancients. While the ancient perception of difference was phenomenological, there is a more discursive dimension to the modern perception of difference. But the ancients were aware of CADA skin appearance and its aesthetic implications as discussed above. This discursive ‘horror’ percolated into the 20<sup>th</sup> century to make the European-Canadian boy advise Cindy Henwood to leave the store because ‘There’s no niggers allowed here’ (see Chapter 1). It is the ‘horror’ Marlow sees in Africa, the *heart of darkness* (Conrad, 2007, p. 100). This is also the ‘horror’ that makes William Smith (1905) lament intermarriages between African-Americans and European-Americans. According to Smith, mixing African and European genes causes moral degeneracy and aesthetic degradation.

The ancients, therefore, did not stratify their societies by colour. However, they still differentiated ancient Ethiopians on appearances, ethnic groups, and geographies. In addition to the ancients being familiar with and referencing different skin appearances among different ethnic groups and geographies, they were, like us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, also familiar with appearance differentials and gradation among ancient Ethiopians. They wrote of pure Ethiopians (Kushites or Nubians) beyond the border of Upper Egypt (Kelly, 1991; Tsri, 2016a; Snowden, 1989). Notably, the ancients seemed, in most part, to have avoided overgeneralization and oversimplification of identities that would characterize identity discourse between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Blumenbach & Bendyshe, 1775 [1865]; Jefferson (1832 [1787]; Helper, 1867; Smith, 1905; Frobenius, 1913).

Leo Frobenius (1913), for example, generalized what he witnessed in West Africa to ‘all Negroes’; Henry Morgan Stanley (1899) generalized what he witnessed in East and Central Africa to ‘all Negroes’; Hinton Helper (1867) generalized what he witnessed in America South of Mason-Dixon line to ‘all Negroes’ and Thomas Carlyle (1849) generalize what he witnessed in England

and the Caribbean to ‘all Negroes’. The ancients did not fall for this simplistic view of identity and human reality based only on appearance as discussed below.<sup>74</sup>

Additionally, Romans and Greeks also classified Ethiopians into the ‘civilized’ and the ‘uncivilized’ (George, 1958). This normative judgement was positive for ‘civilized’ Ethiopians whose cultures, values, and traditions the ancients knew (Snowden, 1991, 1989). But it was negative for those whose cultural knowledge came from speculative writings (George, 1958). Strabo (Strabo, 1967), for instance, portrays the Ethiopians under Queen Candace of Merowe as cultured and organized people even when he referred to some of their gods as ‘barbaric’: The priests “appoint as kings those who excel in beauty, or in superiority in cattle-breeding, or in courage, or in wealth” (Strabo, 1967, p. 147). While Herodotus and Homer wrote of and described ‘noble Ethiopians’ (Meisenhelder, 2003; Snowden, 1984; Tsri, 2016a), Herodotus also wrote about “dog-headed” and “headless” Ethiopians “who have their eyes in their breasts” (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 83).

In the Greco-Roman world, therefore, prejudice existed. What emerges clearly from the Greco-Roman view of ancient Ethiopians or other ‘barbarians’ is not absence of prejudice based on ethnic, geographic or appearance identity. What it reveals is the absence of discriminatory ideals based on naturalized discourse on skin appearance operationalized in terms of ‘colour’.

### ***Colour Prejudice in Antiquity***

There are, of course, objections to the lack of colour prejudice argument in the Greco-Roman world. While most classical scholars agree about the absence of prejudice on the way it would appear from the Enlightenment period to the present, there are scholars who argue that there

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<sup>74</sup> Of course, the appellation ‘Ethiopian’ was itself a generalization as it was used by the ancients to describe anyone with a ‘burnt’ face or skin in Africa and Asia (Snowden, 1970). However, Greeks and Romans acknowledged and appreciated cultural differences among Ethiopians beyond skin differentials.

is evidence of colour prejudice in antiquity (George, 1958; Smith, 2009). George (1958, p. 63) and Smith (2009, p. 59) quote Diodorus Siculus (Diodorus of Sicily) who wrote between 60 and 30 BCE, saying, “The majority of them [Ethiopians] . . . are black in colour and have flat noses and woolly hair. As for their spirit, they are entirely savage and display the nature of a wild beast.” However, they note that most of these seemingly denigrating descriptions were speculative rather than phenomenological (Tsri, 2016a).

In the above quote, it is important to emphasize, Diodorus is describing “other tribes of the Ethiopians, some of them dwelling in the land lying on both banks of the Nile” after describing other Ethiopians with a sophisticated way of life (Diodorus & Warmington, 1967, p. 103). In these pages, Diodorus considered the customs of these latter Ethiopians to “differ greatly from those of the rest of mankind” (Diodorus & Warmington, 1967, p. 99). Before describing Ethiopians, who are ‘entirely savage’, Diodorus had just described other Ethiopians with sophisticated political systems, system of writing, social rites, foods, etc., as well as having systematized ways in which kings were chosen by the priests. It is also important to note that the Ethiopians with this sophisticated way of life were not necessarily lighter in appearance than those who were ‘entirely savage and display the nature of a wild beast.’ Like Strabo, Homer, Herodotus, Diodorus was also aware of ‘civilized’ and the ‘uncivilized’ ancient Ethiopians. Unlike Europeans and European-Americans from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but mostly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Diodorus did not overgeneralize based on skin colour.

It is important to emphasize, however, that most of these ancient writers believed that their statements were not denigrations but factual recollections (Isaac, 2004).<sup>75</sup> They praised their

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<sup>75</sup> This was also the ‘discursive practice’ (see Foucault, 2010, p. 131 for definition) in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; the time at which clarificatory sciences and philosophies emerged and materialized. I will revisit this in Chapter 5 when I discuss the emergence of human classification.

customs, values, and ways of life because they believed they were better. They did not engage in intentionally denigrating overgeneralization that would characterize the modern era from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. When there were customs and values to admire among the Ethiopians, they acknowledged them. Strabo (Strabo, 1967, p. 9), for example, argued that ancient Ethiopians were nomadic and led a “resourceless life, on account of the barrenness of the country and of the unseasonableness of its climate.” For ancient Egyptians, he argued that they “led a civic and cultivated life and have been settled in well-known regions, so that their organisations are a matter of comment.” What is notable here is how Strabo blamed and praised the environment and the climate rather than Ethiopians and Egyptians as people. Strabo does not naturalize what is good and what is bad with the people. He faults the climate and the environment.

But the sophisticated Egyptian life Strabo describes had deteriorated by the time Egypt became a province of Rome during the time of Caesar. He argues that the native Egyptians “were quick-tempered and not inclined to civic life” (Strabo, 1967, p. 51). While he has also argued that Alexandrians, who he described as a “tribe”, were also not “inclined to civil life” (p. 51) and were of mixed origin, “were Greeks by origin and mindful of the customs common to the Greeks” (p. 51). What stands out here is the descriptive nature of the narration, positive or negative. This is also the case with Diodorus. Diodorus acknowledged Homeric Ethiopians as “faultless men” whose sacrifices “are the most pleasing to the heaven” (Diodorus & Warmington, 1967, p. 91).

### ***Critical Remarks On ‘Blackness’ and Identity in Antiquity***

Based on the above discussions, the following ethical imperatives are important to emphasize. First, to use Allport’s (1954) phrases, negative and positive prejudices existed in the Greco-Roman world. Second, there were normative standards through which Ethiopians were glorified and some of their customs criticized. Third, the ancients were aware of the ‘blackness’

of the Ethiopian skin and its various gradations; however, they did not use it to create identities or standardize superior-inferior dualism. I will discuss this ‘blackness’ as an identity shortly.

The Ethiopians who were ‘entirely savage and display the nature of a wild beast’ were not so by virtue of their appearance. They were so, according to the ancients, because of their way of life and customs. When Strabo described the three classes in Egypt as a province of Rome, he did not categorize them by skin colours. The three classes were “Aegyptian or native stock of people, “mercenary class”, and the “Alexandrian tribe” [native Egyptians and Greek] (p. 51). Therefore, there seemed to have been normative standards in the Greco-Roman world that allowed glorification of Ethiopians while still rejecting some of their customs. There was also the descriptive use of skin colour to think about human difference without using it to create identities or use it as the basis of intelligence and cultural superiority. This norm would start to disappear at the end of the Middle Ages as discussed in the following section.

I will emphasize what I mentioned in the third point above. As Snowden (1970) has argued, the most distinguishing character of Ethiopians was the colour of their skin. And this colour, apparently, was ‘black’. While the appearance of the ancient Ethiopian skin was noted, and in some cases denigrated, it neither became the basis on which they were judged, nor did ‘blackness’ become an ethnic appellation in the way it would become at the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade. Some Ethiopians, according to the ancients, had ‘black’ skin. It is therefore tempting to embrace a historically unjustifiable continuity of ‘blackness’ by synonymizing ‘Ethiopian-ness’ of the Greco-Romans with ‘blackness’ of today and ‘negroness’ of the pre-civil rights and imperial colonialism. Additionally, ancient Ethiopians should not be confused with ‘negro’ because ‘Ethiopian’ applied to people who would not qualify as ‘sub-Saharan Africans’ today.

As I noted earlier, and I should reiterate here, the term ‘Ethiopian’ also applied to Asians with ‘burnt’ skin and faces. Asian ‘Ethiopians’ were less ‘burnt’ than African ‘Ethiopians’, but they were all ‘burnt’, nonetheless (Snowden, 1970). There were also Ethiopians with ‘woolly hair’ and Ethiopians with ‘straight hair’. Straight haired Ethiopians were both on the continents of Africa and Asia. Pliny (1855) have also noted that there were ‘white Ethiopians’ [Leucæthiopians] who were dark but not as dark as the Ethiopians modern Europeans would later call ‘negroes’ (p. 404). Leucæthiopians had straight hair and dark skin. Their skin, however, was not as dark as the skin of the Ethiopians of Merowe.

Before the transatlantic slave trade, there were no ‘negroes’, discursively speaking, and there were also no ‘negroes’ with ‘straight hair’ until the American slave regime created them through the moral degrading of slave masters, who would rape enslaved women without any moral compunction and then reject (in most cases) their own children. Some of these children were Europeans in appearance. We find in slave narratives ‘white negroes’ who could pass for ‘white’ (Drew, 1856, Brown, 1852; Allen, 1853), so they became ‘negroes’ with straight hair like *Leucæthiopians*.

However, the ‘negro’ with long hair in the Americas and the ancient Ethiopian with long hair cannot be remotely categorized together. So, the use of ‘negro’ to refer to ancient Ethiopians without a restricted and well explained context, may be historically misleading. Du Bois (2018 [1915], 2007 [1930]) and Williams (1882) have shown how it is difficult to clearly show who was a ‘negro’ for there were continental Africans who were categorized ‘black’ but not ‘negro’. Strangely, some of the darkest people on the continent such as Nuer and Jieeng (Dinka) of South Sudan were considered ‘negroid’ not ‘negroes’ (Deng, 1973). There is also the problem of using ‘negro’ for Egyptians (Diop, 1974). Williams (1974), Du Bois (2018 [1915]) and Snowden (1970)

take this even further. They argue that ‘brown’ skin Egyptians could be considered ‘negroes’ because ‘mulattoes’ or ‘white negroes’ would look like ancient Egyptians. But this is to transpose concepts into epochs in which they did not exist.

‘Black’, as noted earlier, was used for other dark-skinned people in Asia and the Oceania such as those of Solomon Island, Papua New Guinea and Andaman Island so ‘blackness’ and ‘negroness’, which became synonymized, were not necessarily so. While it is reasonable and historically accurate to say that some of the people the ancients called ‘Ethiopians’ may look like modern Africans south of the Sahara, it is still important to use appellations used in the classical world before a comparison is made. This would ensure that the moral framework or horizon (Taylor, 2001) of the slave regimes and colonialism is not inadvertently synonymized with the framework of the classical world.

The history of the classical world presented above has therefore helped me see areas of historical continuities and areas in which modern ideas are transposed to the classical world when they were discourses created by modern Europeans from the 15<sup>th</sup> (about slavery) and the 18<sup>th</sup> (the age of the Enlightenment) centuries. It has also helped me notice where we can blame some of our modern ideas on the Greco-Roman scholarly traditions, which westerners tend to see as the continuation of their civilization (S. Kelley, 2002)<sup>76</sup>, and when slavery and capitalism may be faulted in their operationalization and commodification of ‘blackness’ (Mbembe, 2017; Maynard, 2017). If the intellectual progenitors of the western scholarly tradition did not use ‘blackness’ to stratify their societies, or use it as the determination of social exclusion, we may therefore look elsewhere for the reason why ‘blackness’ became the determinant of the moral exclusion of CADA during the slave and colonial regimes. As noted early in this chapter, CADE tend to downplay or

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<sup>76</sup> Husserl (1965, pp. 158 - 159) locates the “spiritual birthplace” of Europe to be the Greece of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE.



dismiss what they learned from non-Greeks such as ancient Egyptians and Ethiopians (see Diop, 1974; Bernal, 2003). This tradition still exists in profession such as social work today where African cultures and ideas are dismissed, ridiculed, or downplayed (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Duhaney et al., 2022).

### **The Middle Ages and The Renaissance Period**

What emerged in the previous section about CADA identity and the Greco-Roman consciousness toward ancient Ethiopians is a nuanced people-to-people relations (Makumba, 2007) that cannot be oversimplified into a single narrative, whether positive or negative at the macro level. However, it was also clear that ancient Romans and Greeks understood that the appearance of the skin was an important part of ancient Ethiopia whose phenomenological reality could not be wished away.

This nuanced and rich relations would become oversimplified during the Middle Ages, but mostly from the Renaissance period (Braude, 1997). New sociocultural dimensions were added to ‘blackness’ of Ethiopians. With these sociocultural dimensions—such as ‘blackness’ of the African skin representing inferiority and ugliness—European-African relations started to move toward European self-glorification and the debasement or purposeful denigration of ‘Ethiopians’ and ‘Moors’. ‘Moor’ as an appellation was socially important in early Renaissance. It would, however, be used interchangeably with Ethiopian. In some cases, it was used to portray an identity other than Ethiopian (Bartels, 1997; Brann, 2009) as it acquired ethnic and religious usage. In some cases, a Moor was a Muslim, and in others, a Moor was a Turk, an Arab, an Ethiopian or even an Indian (Bartels, 1990, p. 434). In other instances, a Moor was just an African Muslim of a darker complexion (Diop, 1974), who was considered less ‘savage’ because of Islamic influence (Bartels, 1990.)

I will start with the Middle Ages before moving to the Renaissance period. I will, however, move back and forth between these periods whenever necessary to stress a point. The Renaissance period provided the most significant moral horizon (Taylor, 2001) that would shape CADA identity during the Enlightenment era. Ideas that would shape European imperial colonialism in Africa began in the Middle Ages (see Mbembe, 2001) and continued during the Renaissance period before Enlightenment thinkers gave them new operative functions. Here, again, I pay attention to continuities and discontinuities, ancient discourses, and emergent ones. Foucault (2002) has noted that some of the new discourses in the 16<sup>th</sup>, the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries were conflated with classical discourses.

In fact, the classical era and Christianity, as intellectual discourses, gave Europeans a sense of identity and moral direction. Europeans used them to shape who they are and how they would relate to themselves as Europeans. But they would continue to shape these discourses as their encounter with ‘new races’ intensified from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, they presented themselves as people with *fixed* and *defined* moral outlook, a wholly ‘civilized’ (not self-civilizing) people. But as Husserl (1965) has argued, “humanity has never been a finished product, nor will it be, nor can it even repeat itself” (p. 158). In the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, CADE thinkers would use these ideas, the new discourses about European being wholly civilized people, a ‘finished product’, to buttress slavery and colonialism. But they were not ‘a finished product’ as explained below.

### ***Christianity, Cultural Disorientation, Re-Orientation, and New Self-understanding***

After the collapse of the Roman Empire in the 5<sup>th</sup> century of the current era (Hanson, 1972), Europeans, especially the Christian church, found itself with a sense of disorientation. According to Hanson, the collapse of the Roman Empire caught the church off-guard. However, Rome left Christians with an important legacy through the centralization of Christianity as the imperial

religion during the reign of Constantine (Plunket, 1922). While the centralizing political power was gone with the collapse of Rome as the political centre, that did not follow with Christianity. Christianity, I would argue, ironically became an important beneficiary of the collapse of Rome. While state political power subordinated religious political power in the Roman Empire, the religious political power would subordinate state political power, or it became the pivot of state political power, after the end of the Roman Empire. The legacy of this power was apparent during the earlier encounter of Iberians with continental Africans and the indigenous peoples of the Americas. Spain and Portugal needed the blessing of papal bulls (see Mudimbe, 1988, pp. 57-48) from the 15<sup>th</sup> century for Africa (Portugal) and the new world (Spain). Gramsci, as noted in Chapter 3, understood this when he argued that there are cases in which the Church as a representative of civil society becomes one and the same with the state as the political power.

What this means is that Christianity became the organizing moral, social, political, and intellectual centre of Europe between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 6<sup>th</sup> century. This also meant that the world that was part of Christianity under the Roman Empire, was also, nominally at least, considered part of Christendom. However, the advent and the power of Islam from the 7<sup>th</sup> century (Mata, 1999) would even make the then peripheral provinces of the Roman empire such as Carthage and Christian Nubia and Ethiopia important to Christian Europe as Islam threatened to occupy those ancient centres. After a spirited endurance under the persecution by the pagan imperial Rome under Nero (Plunket, 1922) to become the imperial religion in the fourth century (313) CE (Hanson, 1972), Christianity did not appreciate the speedy encroachment of Islam. Islam threatened to undo what was achieved under Imperial Rome.

The fight against Islam therefore made ancient Ethiopians part of pan-Christianity because Islam became the most important existential threat than the appearance of Ethiopians (Mata, 1999).

But the exegetical and the symbolic problems associated with the ‘blackness’ of the Ethiopian skin in the consciousness and discourses of ancient Christian exegetes and societies persisted and even intensified during the Middle Ages. It is one of the instances where continuity appears. The cultural disorientation produced by the collapse of the cultural centre of the ‘civilized’ and modernized Europe under Rome meant that Europe was on the search for self-understanding and self-establishment. Christianity provided a sense of moral and social direction, a semblance of continuity with the Roman culture and civilization. Europe was still largely pagan. Christianity was still a ‘foreign’ religion so *any* mark of difference, was a cause for cultural suspicion.

While the Church may have not celebrated the collapse of the Roman empire because it was “still basking in the sunshine of a patronage” of the Empire (Hanson, 1972, p. 273), the end of the Empire had a silver lining for the church. Contrary to Sidonius Apollinaris, who argued in the 5<sup>th</sup> century that “the Christian Church [and the empire] are indissolubly intertwined”, Hanson argued that the “Church exists to support the Empire rather than vice versa” (1972, p. 273). But during the Middle Ages, the church and the state indeed became practically intertwined and the church even became more powerful than the state. This means that society would be structured according to the Christian teachings. The collapse of the Roman Empire and the social ascendancy of the Christian church in Europe from the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the rise of Islam from the 7<sup>th</sup> century would shape (or reshaped) the identity and perception of ancient Ethiopians and Moors.

According to Hanson (1972), the history of Christianity in the Middle Ages became the process of establishing Augustine’s *De Civitas Dei* [The City of God] on earth. Augustine did not think that Rome was an eternal city the way Rome had been made a legendary creation that was too big to fail (Plunket, 1922). While Charlemagne helped defeat a rebellion against Pope Leo III in 800, it is the Pope who would increase Charlemagne territorial powers rather than vice versa

(Plunket, 1922; BBC History, 2014). The power of the church would, just to illustrate, become so enormous in the Middle Ages through the 16<sup>th</sup> century that Henry VIII had to rebel against the Catholic church to attain a “royal supremacy over the church of England” (Rex, 2006, p. xiii). The censorial power of the church—or the “pastoral power” as Foucault (1982, pp. 782-784) would call it—prioritized the scripture so biblical teaching became the prism through which Europeans perceived themselves, their customs and the different othered others such as Ethiopians and ‘Saracens’.<sup>77</sup>

However, Christianity was still shaping itself as much as it shaped European societies. As Braude (1997) has argued, the Bible during the Middle Ages was rare and when it was available, it was polyphonous so there was no unified, coherent monophonous Bible. When it was accessible, it “was typically understood through a variety of interpretive media vital for the illiterate faithful, [so] it could easily encompass many different and even contradictory meanings” (Braude, 1997, p. 107). Europe, as a society still grappling with the loss of its cultural centre and the nascent nature of Christianity as a unifying anchorage, could not possibly develop a reliable cultural ontology of the cultural ‘Other.’ A society that did not understand itself was struggling to understand others.

### ***‘Blackness’ and the Hamitic Hypothesis***

A coherent understanding of who the ‘Ethiopians’ were in the Bible was therefore difficult to concretize because the story of the Noah cursing his son, Ham (see Hamitic Hypothesis below)<sup>78</sup>, had little to do with the genealogy of humanity based on skin appearance. As Braude has

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<sup>77</sup> ‘Saracen’ was an appellation used by European writers in the Middle Ages to refer to Muslim Arabs (Ali, 1916; Plunket, 1922). While there are different theories as to why Muslims were referred to as Saracens (Abuthawabeh, 2019), it is generally believed that Muslims in the Middle Ages called themselves Saracens because they believed they descended from Sarah, Abraham’s wife. As Abuthawabeh (2019) has argued, “Arabs, therefore, were called ‘Saracens’ after Ishmael’s mother Sarah” (p. 147)

<sup>78</sup> In Genesis 9: 20-27, Noah cursed Ham’s son, Canaan and his descendants, to be the servants of his brothers’ descendants because Ham had laughed at his drunken and naked father instead of covering him.

shown, the curse of Ham, which became the centre of the alleged divine justification for the Africans' curse from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, did not have a coherent origin, if at all, in the Middle Ages. The three sons of Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth were used to represent different people by different exegetes. While Ham was discursively fixed as the progenitor of Ethiopians and therefore modern Africans by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ethiopians were also associated with Japheth in the Middle Ages. Admittedly, some medieval exegetes divided humanity according to Noah's sons after the flood; they, however, did not assign colours to the sons and neither were they very certain about the 'races' to which Noah's sons became ancestors. The "unstable medieval identities" vex our contemporary colour-identities, because, for example, Ham was at one time illustrated with European features (Braude, 1997, p. 122).

Here is a little digression to make a point about how important the Hamitic hypothesis (Anderson, 2022; Seligmann, 1913) would become for the slave and the colonial regimes. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, no European or European-American reflected on the fact that Ham was once pictured as a European man and that Ham was not depicted as a weak, slave-to-be to his brothers; he was shown as a powerful empire builder in Asia. Even anti-slavery CADE and CADA scholars took it for granted that Africans were the descendants of Ham. Williams (1882), for instance, dismissed the curse instead of first questioning the categorization of Africans as descendants of Ham. There would be no need to even defend Africans from the curse if the categorization itself is a historical and theological error. So, Africans as empire builders is a far cry from the African Ham who was docile, weak, and perpetual slave to the rest of humanity. Here, the structure, as Foucault would say, gave characteristics rather than characteristics giving form to the structure. The idea of Africans as descendants of Ham was read into the Bible rather than using the Bible to inform our understanding of Ham as the text of the Bible tells us. To use Foucault's

(2002) words, this was “a new way of connecting things both to the eye and to discourse. A new way of making history” (p. 143).

### ***‘Blackness’ and Social and Religious Symbolisms***

While the variability of the Ethiopian identity and European attitude toward them continued to be unstable throughout the Middle Ages into the Renaissance period, what the post-imperial authority of the church meant for ancient Ethiopians in the Middle Ages was contradictory. As it was in the Greco-Roman world, Ethiopians were both admired and despised; they were sinners and holy men and women (Braude, 1997). This is typical in normal every human cultural and social discourses regardless of indices of differentiation (Gilroy, 1993) people use to categorize and structure their society. Since many Europeans during the Middle Ages had limited contacts with ancient Ethiopians, most of what they knew about Africans came from classical or exegetical writings. This means that opinions about ancient Ethiopians were limited to formal biblical discourses informed mostly by the Bible or what ‘blackness’, which the ancients had already associated with the Ethiopian skin, meant socially. Devil, sin, and hell were associated with darkness and blackness. The Church was the hegemonic political, moral, and social authority so it had “the control of the means of communication, [which] is the empowering factor in any colonial enterprise” (Ashcroft et al. 2004, p. 78).

According to Hrabovsky (2013, p. 74), “In the Middle Ages with the influence of the Christian religion, the devil (διαβολος – diabolos: divide, split up) was seen as a cause of division and discord and was in the position of the antagonist and creator of chaos.” In the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, black bile also acquired a religious dimension as a devil’s origin, so the ‘blackness’ of Ethiopians became associated with the black bile and therefore the origin of the devil (Tsri, 2016a). As Deroux has argued, blackness was associated “with the passions that ought to be cured, purged,

or mastered” (2010, p. 86). While blackness symbolized what Christians in the Middle Ages wanted to purge from the human soul, there was still no elaborate, fixed, and institutional ideology about Ethiopians being evil or being human inferiors. Ethiopians were still part of Christianity.

***‘Negrophilia’: Ethiopians in Christly Collegiality<sup>79</sup>***

Consequently, Ethiopians featured in identity discourse during the Middle Ages because of the threat of Islam from African Moors and African Saracens (Hallam, 1845). As Christians, ancient Ethiopians and other continental Africans were considered part of the global fight against Islam to establish *De Civitas Dei* on earth. Because of the threat of Islam, the normal in-group prejudice against ancient Ethiopians did not take a discrete, self-contained, institutionalized discourse. The European Middle Ages were, according to Richard Lobban (2020), the era of “feudalism, religious superstition, anti-science, intolerance, and authoritarian Christianity” (p. xxvi). Christianity was the predominant unifying cultural force that was still attempting Gramscian ideological elaboration. Latin was another. Because of the dogmatic nature of Christian beliefs of the time, most Christians had turned themselves against the Greco-Roman ideas because of the latter’s association with Paganism.

This is another point of discontinuity with the classical world because of the authoritarianism and the socio-moral intolerance of the Church to pagan ideas. However, important continuities would be reintroduced during the Renaissance period. Europeans would revisit their ‘spiritual home’ (Husserl, 1965) to reclaim Greco-Roman histories, cultures, and social norms as their heritage. For the Church, however, evil and death were prioritized as forces against which Christians had to fight through Christ. According to Rush (1945, p. 372), “[Saint] Gregory’s teaching is an outline of the belief in death as a struggle with the devil, a belief that was

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<sup>79</sup> Also see Archer-Straw (2000) for ‘Negrophilia in 1930-Paris.



characteristic of Christian Antiquity.” Medieval superstition therefore made it easy for Muslims, Jews, and pagans to be associated with the devil and death. These superstitions would later be associated with CADA in the 19<sup>th</sup> century slavery discourse (Helper, 1867, 1868).

From ending the occupation of Iberia from its Muslim rulers in 1492 to halting of Islamic expansion in the 732 CE in Tour, France, to the rise of the Ottoman Empire in 1517, Christian Europe saw Islam as their greatest threat because of its imperial tendencies. However, the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century scientists, philosophers, writers, and explorers, initiated colour prejudice against Africans while assuming colour prejudice to have had a classical and medieval origin. But as Braude (1997) has argued, “Much of what has been assumed to be medieval and well established turns out to be, in many respects, novel and modern” (p. 104). Knut Holter (2008) has argued that Africans were naturally slaves has no biblical textual evidence. For Holter, there are three Africas<sup>80</sup>: the “‘literary Africa’ [of] the Old Testament...the ‘historical Africa’ that is the peoples and individuals who inhabited Africa in the first millennium B.C...[and] the ‘Africa’ of Old Testament interpretation [of the] literary and historical aspects...interpreted from certain ideological perspectives” (Holter, 2008, p. 377). Africa and the people who inhabited it was not oversimplified in the Middle Ages because ideas about Africa ranged from good to the bizarre.

Therefore, in the Greco-Roman World and during the Middle Ages, the appearance of the skin remained descriptive as it was never used to construct identities. There was also no singular social consciousness developed toward ancient Ethiopians, Libyans, African, Egyptians, etc. Pliny for example captures how complex African identities were: “The names of its peoples, and its

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<sup>80</sup> To the classical world, ‘Africa’ was primarily the part of the African continent that was known to the ‘civilized’ ancient world. Pliny (23-79 CE) (Pliny, 1855) separated Africa (which he said the Greeks also called Libya) from Ethiopia and Egypt, so Africa was not the name of the whole continent but part of it. Pliny writes of River “Nigris, which separates Africa proper from Ethiopia” (Pliny, 1855, p. 395) and that “Egypt is the country which lies next to Africa” (Pliny, 1855, p. 407).

cities in especial, cannot possibly be pronounced with correctness, except by the aid of their own native tongues” (Pliny, 1855, p. 374).

While identity and attitudinal ambivalence continued into the Renaissance period (Meisenhelder, 2003), contacts between continental Africans and Christian Europeans started to change perception. Admittedly, the ambivalence would remain until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; however, the appearance of the skin for the first time would be used as a categorizing reality and as an identity. The ambivalence remained about ‘Moor’ as noted earlier. At times the Moor is a ‘tawny’ and at times the Moor is ‘black’ as in ‘Blackamoor’. There was still no clarity but skin appearance, whether of Ethiopians or Moors, became part of Christian and social discourse on Africa. Muslim and Christian Moors (or Christianized ones like Leo Africanus) and Christian Ethiopians were considered cultured, so they did not raise considerable issues of difference.

However, travel stories like those of Leo Africanus (1500) and Richard Hakluyt (1904 [1598]) brought pseudo-phenomenological accounts of Africans on the continent, both the ‘civilized’ and the ‘savage’ Ethiopians of the classical era. These travel stories conflicted sharply with phenomenological accounts of Ethiopians and Moors (Christians and Muslims) living in Europe. Reacting to David Hume, who, using travel narratives to argue that no ‘negro’ in Europe and the new world has ever distinguished himself in the arts and sciences, James Beattie (1805, p. 309) criticized Hume that traveller’s narrative cannot be generalized “except from a personal acquaintance with all the negroes that are now, or ever were, on the face of the earth.” Beattie therefore concluded that traveller’s narrative “will not amount to any proof of what is here affirmed” (p. 309). A phenomenological proof like this would be what Husserl described as a ‘grounded judgment’ that overcomes discursive ‘prejudices.’ As Husserl (1982) has argued, ‘grounded judgement’ through the transcendental experience is “the most originary evidence,

wherein all conceivable evidences must be grounded—or from the most originary legitimacy, which is the source of all legitimacies and, in particular, all legitimacies of knowledge” (p. 150).

Heng (2018) has noted that European Christians regularly met dark-skinned Ethiopian Christians on pilgrimages to Jerusalem or in trading posts in the Mediterranean in the late Middle Ages. These Europeans had a phenomenological perception of Africans through skin colour and values. The darkness of the Africans they met was overshadowed by Christian collegiality. The perception of Ethiopians during this period was largely positive. Positive views of Ethiopians were due to Christian myths such as the historical claim that the first convert to Christianity was an Ethiopian eunuch. Classical accounts of the three wise men who visited the new-born Jesus being dark skin (Tsri, 2016a) also informed this positive view because Ethiopians were part of Christendom. In this case, as mentioned earlier, Islam was more of a threat to the Christian world in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Matar, 1999) than a dark-skinned Christian.

While the Mediterranean Europe and Iberians had close contact with Muslims, Northern Europeans like the English only knew Muslims from what Islam meant to Christianity from literary sources (Matar, 1999). There were of course Christian Moors and Muslim Moors (the ones who ruled Spain for seven centuries and North Africa for more than a millennium). Islam was therefore a haunting threat whether discursively or phenomenologically. This may have, as noted earlier, made Christian Ethiopians and Moors less of a cultural threat.

Even as Islam dominated North Africa from the 10<sup>th</sup> century CE, important pockets of Christianity from Christian Rome remained. Egypt, for instance, became predominantly Islamic from the 10<sup>th</sup> century; Nubia (Makuria, Alwa and Dongola), the land of ancient Ethiopians, however, would remain Christian until the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Lobban, 2020). To European Christians, Christian Nubia was therefore culturally relatable. Other examples that may have informed

positive views about Ethiopians and Christian Moors were the accounts of the mythical Ethiopian Christian kingdom of Prester John (Meredith, 2014; Bartels, 1992; Fredrickson, 2002), and other religio-mythical stories like Black Magi and Black Saint Gregory the Moor (Fredrickson, 2002; Heng, 2018). This ‘Negrophilia’, as Fredrickson terms it, intensified at the end of the Middle Ages between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. According to Fredrickson (2002), “At roughly the same time that Jews were being demonized, blacks [sic]—or at least some blacks—were being sanctified” (p. 27).

### ***The Emergence of Anti-Ethiopian Sentiments***

However, this ‘Negrophilia’ did not last. According to Fredrickson, two historical incidents may have caused a shift in attitude toward Ethiopian Christians. The first incident is the reported refusal by the representatives of the Ethiopian Coptic Church in 1442 to “bow to the authority of the pope at an ecumenical conference” (2002, p. 28). The second incident, Fredrickson argues, comes from the Portuguese visit to Ethiopia where they found what was considered the Christian Kingdom of ‘Prester John’.<sup>81</sup> The Christian empire European Christians thought would create an alliance with them to defeat Islam turned out to be, in their opinion, less than an impressive civilization. These incidents did not completely undo the positive view of Ethiopians; however, Ethiopia lost the religious and cultural lustre it once enjoyed. There would, in the greater scheme of things, be no Homeric Ethiopians as the new discourse by the Portuguese condemned Ethiopians to the realm of the classical ‘savage’ Ethiopians. This Ethiopian ‘fall from grace’, would create a new denigration discourse, a new discontinuity, that would be picked up by the slave and the

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<sup>81</sup> Compare this with Egypt and the Napoleonic expedition in 1798. Edward Said (1978) has argued that Egypt, which many Europeans respected as an important cultural centre, lost its cultural stature when Napoleon occupied it in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. They found Egypt more *metaphysical* than *scientific*. This was, of course, their [Eurocentric] perception.

colonial regimes. This 'intellectual inheritance', to use Gilroy's (1993) expression, still informs the contemporary negative view of CADA and Africans as explained in Chapter 1.<sup>82</sup>

### *Anti-Ethiopianness and Travellers' Narratives*

Of course, as European explorers followed Portuguese in exploring Africa, not all writings on Africa would be based on phenomenological accounts because some remained blatantly discursive (George, 1958; Mudimbe, 1988). Fantastical and mythical claims learned from antiquity about ancient Ethiopia were abandoned (George, 1958); however, other myths would be created from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Bartels, 1992; Jordan, 1974). According to Winthrop Jordan (1974), most Europeans met dark-skinned Africans as they also became aware of animals who looked like humans such as monkeys, baboons and orangutans. For Jordan, the presence of dark-skinned Africans, some of whom walked naked in the same environment in which human-like apes walked the jungle produced new myths about Africans. These new myths would replace Herodotus's "dog-headed", "headless" Ethiopians "who have their eyes in their breasts" (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 83). It is not surprising that Thomas Jefferson would argue in the 18<sup>th</sup> century that African-Americans prefer European-American women "as uniformly as is the preference of Oran-ootans for the black women over those of their own species" (Jefferson, 1832 [1787], p. 145).

But like the classical narratives of the 'savage' and 'civilized' ancient Ethiopians, Europeans during the Renaissance period also categorized continental Africans into the 'civilized' and the 'barbarous' (George, 1958). Earlier travellers' accounts mentioned "remote African primitives" who were ignorant of the law alongside accounts of "African kings...nobility...African dukes, counts and knights" (George, 1958, p. 65). As Bartels (1992) has

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<sup>82</sup> See the modern examples of Western negative view of Africans I explained in the *Research Problem* section through Professor Shabir Madhi on *Omicron* and former soccer star Ian Wright on African Cup of Nations, and Europeans' attitude toward it.

argued about Richard Hakluyt's travel accounts in 1598, he produced "an Africa which is at once familiar and unfamiliar, civil and savage, full of promise and full of threat" (p. 519). In a revealing passage, Hakluyt challenged people he considered inexperienced and untutored not "to presume to make them a laughingstock to the common people, because we are not accustomed to such sustenance." 'Such sustenance' are Ethiopians eating "locusts" and Indians who "live upon frogs or sea-crabs, or round shrimps" (Hakluyt, 1884 [1598], p. 464). Hakluyt is here advising Europeans to go beyond perceptive limitations conditioned by their cultures and epistemes. Lewis Gordon (2002) would describe what Hakluyt is recommending as 'epistemic openness': "the judgment [that] "there is always more to be known" (p. 88). This is also what phenomenology requires; that is to judge issues *in-time* (through experience, through Husserlian grounded judgment) not *in-discourse* (see Garang, 2022).

However, it was not only the dark-skinned Africans who were considered 'primitive' and 'wild'. Leo Africanus (1896 [1600]) complained about the Berbers of North Africa being "rude and vnciuill [uncivil]" (p. 541) and other people of Muslim North Africa being "rude and barbarous people" (p. 501). Whereas European Christians were phenomenologically conscious of dark-skinned Ethiopians and Moors because of the latter's Christian pilgrimages (Heng, 2018), there was still the longing to observe and understand Africans in their native milieu for comparative or epistemic purposes. This makes these reports of 'civilized' and 'barbarous' Africans morally significant for their discursive and phenomenological (experiential) implications.

However, the Europeans' earlier exploration by the Portuguese, followed by the Dutch, the French and English, made Europeans aware of how close they were physically and culturally relative to 'Moors' and 'negroes' in customs, manners, dressing and skin appearance. They regarded appearance differentials between Africans and Europeans as a radical difference. The

English and Spanish were different in appearance and in some cultural respects; but the differences between the English and Spaniards paled when compared to Africans. Muslims, who for centuries had had cultural intercourse with dark-skinned Africans (Sweet, 1997), had already used ‘black’ as an appellation so it is not surprising that the Portuguese would use ‘negro’. The Portuguese’s utilization of skin appearance, as it would also be for other Europeans, was different. The appearance of dark-skinned people, out of scientific curiosity and for the purpose of European self-understanding, had to be explained (Jordan, 1974). By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Christian Bible was still the explanatory authority, so the ‘blackness’ of Ethiopians and Moors had to be explained not from classical environmental theories, but from the Holy Book (Braude, 1997; Sweet, 1997; Hrabosky, 2013).

### ***Colour Prejudice as a Modern Phenomenon, a Discontinuity***

Whereas Christian exegetes in the classical world and the Middle Ages were not certain about Japhet, Shem and Ham and their relations to Africa, Europe and Asia, Europeans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century started to not only fix the relations but also *coloured* the skins of Noah’s sons (Hrabosky, 2013). George Best (1578), for example, gives Cham [Ham] to Africa with his son, Chus [Cush], which he believed has been cursed. Sweet (1997) has argued that the association of the curse of Ham with ‘black skin’ was started by Jewish interpreters of their oral tradition in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In this biblical discourse, Best (1578) therefore concludes that “the cause of Ethiopians’ blackness, is the curse, natural infection of the blood” (p. 32) not temperature or climate as the ancients believed (Snowden, 1970; Isaac, 2004; Tsri, 2016a). Braude (1997, p. 111) goes even farther back in time, arguing that Flavius Josephus was the first to connect the three sons of Noah in the first century of the current era that “Japhet was Eurasian, Ham Afrasian, and Shem Asian.” However, he added that some later Rabbinic scholars argued that there was no link between the sons of Noah

and Africa, Asia and Europe either because they ignored Josephus or they were not aware of his writings on the topic.

Accordingly, the argument by Sweet (1997) that “The story of Ham has functioned to justify the subjection and degradation of blacks for over a thousand years” is historically inaccurate and misleading (p. 148). Sweet has attempted to turn a discontinuity into a continuity, a new discourse into an old one. The association of Ethiopians with Ham’s curse was contradictorily expressed in the Middle Ages by Jewish scholars and the Bible did not become a coherent scholarly text until the Renaissance period. Additionally, the association of Ethiopian ‘blackness’ and Ham’s curse is of much recent embedding of evidence into the text through linguistic interpretation (Hrabosky, 2013).

Sweet’s interpretations, to use Braude’s (1997, p. 105) apt expression, are “notions of racial distinctiveness dragged backward from our own era.” Martin Luther for example accepted with the narrative that made Ham the ancestor of Asia; not as the one whose scions were cursed, but one blessed with wealth and power (Braude, 1997). But because Noah cursed the descendants of Ham to be ‘ugly’ and subservient to his brothers, Ham had to be made the ancestor of Ethiopians and modern Africans to make slavery, which made the enslavement of Africans not only excusable but also biblically, divinely endorsed. Africans as descendants of Ham was about, to use a Foucauldian language, the table/structure determining characteristics, and giving names, rather than characteristics creating the *table* or *structure*: This is “the reality that has been patterned from the very outset by the name” (Foucault, 2002, p. 142). In other words, “The process of naming will be based, not upon what one sees, but upon elements that have already been *introduced* into discourse by *structure*” (p. 151, emphasis added).



The curse of Ham and its association with ancient ‘Ethiopians’ and modern Africans does not go back more than a thousand years, nor did it start with the beginning of the first slave raids on the coast of Africa in the 1440s as Hrabosky (2013) has claimed. It started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and concretized in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to justify the continued enslavement of Africans and their utility in the western political economy.

While the curse of Ham neither mentions slavery nor ‘blackness’ but darkness and subservience, the curse was appropriated to fit developing social consciousness. Muslim Andalusians, who ruled the Iberian Peninsula from the 8<sup>th</sup> century of the current era, enslaved dark-skinned Africans from *bilad el Sudan* (Land of Blacks), so the attitude and the treatment of dark-skinned Africans (Cooper, 2010; Mbembe, 2017) was a continuation of an existing social consciousness (Sweet, 1997). But we need to note also that Islamic Iberian rulers enslaved both dark-skinned Africans, light-skinned Africans, and Europeans (Sweet, 1997). So, this social consciousness was not, necessarily, specific to skin colour<sup>83</sup>.

But as travellers’ accounts became widely read in Europe, what initially became salient was not that these people were darker or ‘black’ but that they were heathens wallowing in sin and darkness. This did not mean that ‘blackness’ became a nonissue in the European consciousness. As Leo Africanus (1896 [1600]) wrote about the residents of Timbuktu in the ‘Land of Negros’: “[their] attire is somewhat decent and comely: their women are beautiful; but their men are of a tawny and swart colour, by reason they are descended of black fathers and white mothers” (p. 255). Here Africanus is contrasting being ‘beautiful’ with being tawny and swarthy in colour, presupposing that being of ‘black’ and ‘white’ ancestry preclude being beautiful. Africanus

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<sup>83</sup> Also see Korpela (2014) for an insightful analysis of intra-European slavery between 1000 and 1500 CE. Also see Davis (2003) about ‘white slavery’ by Arabs along the Mediterranean coast between 1500 and 1800 CE.

aesthetic contrast would influence William Shakespeare's portrayal of Moors' beauty and character in *Othello* (Neill, 1998).

In *Othello*, Shakespeare draws on existing discursive meanings of 'blackness' to morally evaluate Othello, who is "black-skinned [and] exonerated as being metaphorically white" (Adler, 1974, p. 252). But he also used Iago's treachery against Othello to portray Othello not as a Europeanised and 'civilized' Moor but an 'Other' whose character cannot be trusted no matter his current station in the Venetian society. First, in introducing Othello, Roderigo tells Brabantio, "Signior, it is the Moor" (1.2.70). Why was a respected Venetian general identified as 'the Moor' instead of his name and rank? It is the impossibility of a complete integration of the Moor in the Venetian society. Accusing Othello of being a "thief" who has enchanted his daughter and stole her, Brabantio charged that his daughter [1.2.90] "Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom of such a thing as thou—to fear, not to delight!" Three moral fundamental issues emerged in these 24 words by *Brabantio* and *Roderigo*. First, Othello is referred to as 'the Moor' even when it was unnecessary to refer to him so. Second, he is not only described metaphorically as 'the sooty bosom'—a reference to his 'blackness'—he is also 'thingified' (to use Césaire's concept) as 'such a *thing* as thou' (emphasis added). Third, he is also portrayed as a fear-engendering 'object', 'a thing', because Desdemona ran 'to fear, not to delight!' This is name creating reality.

Lewis Gordon (2010), following Fanon, has described this fear-engendering dynamic of 'blackness' as the "phobogenic designation" (p. 196). As Fanon has argued, "We have said that the black man is phobogenic" (2008 [1952], p. 132). Shakespeare used 'blackness' in *Othello* in a way it had never been used before and this, for some scholars, marked a turning point in the Renaissance period about skin appearance, moral character, and identity. This is also the case in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* where Aaron's 'black' emotional disposition was something to be

expelled or contained (Deroux, 2010; Tsri, 2016a). Not only would blackness and all its social connotations come to connote (and even denote) the African skin appearance, but it would also come to represent the moral status of Africans, the case Iago and Brabantio tried to exemplify in Othello, ‘the Moor’. This is where representation shapes reality and reality in turn shapes representation (Woldmikael & Woldemikael, 2021).

### ***Skin Colour as an Identity and the Debasement of Africans Through Slavery***

With the increased enslavement of Africans by Europeans from the 1440s (Mbembe, 2017) and the discovery of the New World in 1492 (Braude, 1997; Lugard, 1922), the ambivalent attitude toward continental Africans and their identities became increasingly oversimplified, naturalized, and singularized (see Helper, 1868; Flournoy, 1835). Religious spheres of influence were starting to give way to economic interests before modernity’s dawn. The ‘blacks’ of the Arabs, the ‘negroes’ of the Portuguese, the ‘Moors’ of the Middle Ages and the ‘Ethiopians’ of the ancients became discursively singularized into an economically productive identity: “negro” [the ‘black man’]. Even so, this singularization was not absolute because who was ‘black’, who was ‘negro’ and whether a ‘black man’ was also a ‘negro’ continued to raise scholarly and epistemological challenges (Du Bois, 1915; Williams, 1882; Gordon, 2014b). Even today, we are still asking who is ‘black’ and who is not ‘black’. Some African-Americans, for instance, question President Obama’s (Walters, 2007) and Meghan Markle’s ‘blackness’ (Woldmikael & Woldemikael, 2021).

According to Bartels (1997), Africa was not the primary destination of many European imperial powers until the discovery of the New World and the profitability of the African slave trade and slave labour in the Americas. Lord Lugard (1922) has also noted that the discovery of the New World and the development of India “diverted for some three centuries or more the tide of exploration which might otherwise have set towards Africa” (p. 2). Both Christopher Columbus

and Vasco Da Gama were interested in a passage to India. This is interesting because Africa was known to Europeans since the Classical period. In fact, the Portuguese began exploring the West coast of Africa before Christopher Columbus was born (Philip, 1929). By the time Christopher Columbus ‘discovered’ the Caribbean Island of Hispaniola in 1492 and Amerigo Vespucci proclaimed the discovery of a ‘New World’ in 1503, Africans were already being enslaved by the Iberians from as early as 1400s (Mbembe, 2017; Guasco, 2014). Both free and enslaved Iberian Africans were among the ship’s crew who discovered the New World (Mbembe, 2017; Du Bois, 1915; Guasco, 2014). As the enslavement of Africans continued between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, slavery became increasingly associated with appearance and synonymized with dark-skinned Africans in Portugal.

Slavery in antiquity and the Middle Ages was not based on appearance but on conquest and social status. In the Moorish Iberia, both dark-skinned Africans and pale-skinned Europeans were enslaved. However, Iberians started to replace European slaves with African slaves among Iberian Christians and Muslims to do agricultural and domestic work. Why enslave people who look like you when those markedly different culturally and physically had been ‘discovered’? According to Mbembe (2017) and Cooper (2010), a ten percent of the population of Lisbon was African or Afro-Portuguese by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>84</sup> This is perhaps why Africans (free or enslaved) were in mainland America prior to 1619. This period is considered by scholars to be the beginning of slavery in the United States (Guasco, 2014).

While slaves were recorded in Canada as early as 1628, it was not until the governors of New France (Quebec) asked King Louis XIV for permission to import African slaves to fulfil

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<sup>84</sup> It is not surprising that Marie Angelique, who was accused of having burned down the city of Montreal in 1734, indicted and hanged, was Afro-Portuguese (see Cooper, 2010).

labour shortages and compete with their Anglo-American colonies (Cooper, 2010; Smith, 1898) that the colonists in Canada began equating slavery with ‘blackness’. Subsequently, skin appearance was becoming a normative factor in determining who was to be enslaved. Gradually, ‘blackness’ became both a description of appearance and an identity for the first time. Africans were not only described as ‘black’, but they also *became* ‘negroes’ or ‘blacks’ or ‘black people’. ‘Negro’ and ‘black’ were no longer adjectives, they became *nouns*; and not just nouns but *proper nouns*.

### **Enlightenment and Human Classification**

Some social identities found shape during the Enlightenment era, others were repackaged from the Greco-Roman world, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance period. However, others were created by the slave and the colonial regimes. Regardless of when and how they were created, these identities became instrumental culturally, socially, and economically in CADE’s control of CADA. These identities created people and defined their moral station in life. Social identities, according to Appiah (2005, p. 66), make demands on people and bring them to being through identity labels. These labels once applied to people produce “social and psychological effects.” In a case where there are no power imbalances or cases in which one social group is not under another hegemony or domination, the ‘social and psychological effects’ do not create much social anxiety and economic marginality. As discussed in the classical antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance eras, ‘social and psychological effects’ of social identities were not only complex and contradictory (Braude 1997), but they also did not depend on appearance differentials.

The social complexity that makes Othello an admired Venetian general but at the same time denigrated by Brabantio as a ‘thing’, a bewitching and thieving ‘Moor’, would disappear from the Enlightenment era. Since ‘Moor’ was used confusingly as a dark-skinned African and as a

light-skin Arab of North Africa, the ‘blackness’ of Othello, the Moor and a Venetian, cannot be conceptually distinguished from the ‘blackness’ of CADA generally, yet they are not the same.

From the Enlightenment period as will be discussed below, identities, especially CADA identities, became overly simplified, naturalized, and singularized. What identities meant and how they were operationalized would fall into the hands of Europeans, European-Americans, and CADE generally. For 400 years, according to Robert Williams (1963), prejudiced European-Americans “have perpetually striven to create an inferiority slave complex in [Negro’s] wretched soul. All of the social forces of the white man’s society, including Christianity have been directed toward the objective of creating an entire race of subhumans” (p. 3).

### ***CADA Collective Colour Identity, Inter-European Solidarity and Global Supremacy***

Before the 1680s, ‘white’ was not a collectivizing social identity for Europeans in the Americas. People of European descent self-identified using their nationalities or ethnicities: Anglo-Saxon, Nordic, Germanic, Slavic, Celtic or Gallic (Painter, 2003, 2010). With martial and trade competitions among European powers from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a sense of a collective European identity played no purpose. However, the ‘discovered’ people who were very much different from the European in the Americas, Africa and Asia made intra-European differences intense yet gradually negotiable. Imperial ambitions made cooperation difficult but the European sense of superiority at times necessitated intra-European cooperation. After witnessing how some indigenous Africans defied Europeans in Lagos as colonial authorities appeared helpless, Leo Frobenius (1913) argued that “But the white race is running the gravest risk of letting its authority pass out of its own hands and thus staking its own existence” (p. 40). Frobenius was echoing a socio-ethical condition established more than two hundred years before (Allen, 1994).

The Enlightenment era, which may have started with the Cartesian ‘I think, therefore I am’ may have given enlightenment philosophers and scientist the epistemological authority to inform European consciousness and imperial ambitions: ‘We conquer; therefore, we are superior’. Three fundamental issues would inform this new attitude. The *first* is the new European self-confidence and the desire to conquer the world after the final defeat of Iberian Moorish empire in 1492 at Granada by Isabelle and Ferdinand (Sweet, 1997). The *second* is the new epistemic and epistemological power from philosophy and science that would use reason instead of the religious superstition of the Middle Ages (Mata, 1999). This is the power-knowledge nexus Foucault would expound so insightfully. The *third* is the new technological advances in seafaring and martial technologies. Lugard (1922) writes in a footnote that “It is interesting to note that it was the conquest of the ocean which directly led to the expansion of the peoples of Europe, and relieved them from the age-long pressure of Asia on their frontiers” (p. 3).

After overcoming their Asian competitors from this ‘age-long pressure’, European imperial powers would then out-compete themselves: from the Portuguese dominance to English naval supremacy. As Taiwo (2010) has argued, “Europeans...anchored their superiority not on their racial pedigree but on their cultural or civilizational advancement” (p. 10). Of course, this attitude would later change as the two became inseparable: Europeans became superior because of their ‘civilizational advancement’, and they advanced in civilization because of their ‘racial pedigree’.<sup>85</sup> While the Ottoman Empire would become another powerful Islamic empire after it captured Constantinople on May 29, 1453, the European march to global dominance was something the Ottomans could not stop. And this, in the consciousness of the European of the time, proved their superiority.

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<sup>85</sup> They would also advance this civilization-superiority circuitry to Africans: Africans were inferior because they were “uncivilized”; and they were “uncivilized” because they were inferior.

However, it is important to note that the global hegemony of European powers from the 16<sup>th</sup> century overshadowed previous imperial eras.<sup>86</sup> This new dominance in relation to Europe-Africa relation, was the advent of European *carte blanche*. Africa and Africans, inside and outside the continent, would be treated with no remorse and Africa approached imperially like a *terra nullius* and *terra incognita* (Hrabosky, 2013). Taiwo (2010) elegantly captures what happened during this epoch: “What is distinctive about modernity is not so much that it builds high technology and creature comforts but that it enjoins modes of being human that have been considered superior to previous and alternative forms in human history” (p. 5). And it was not only the ‘modes’ but also the ‘human’—the new ‘Man’ (Wynter, 2013)—of those new modes.

#### *Cross-Colour Solidarity and Socio-Economic Status*

I turn to this era below in the context of social, political, and economic control and how they impacted and consolidated CADE’s and CADA’s appearance identities in a way not seen in previous eras. CADE would not only centre themselves, but they would also discursively control and fix global identities on a chromatic ladder laced with internal moral valuation.

As I discussed in the classical antiquity, in the Middle Ages and in Renaissance Europe, it is foolhardy to try to fix human social reality and identities into a social singularity (Bartels, 1992). However, the new European ‘Man’ wanted to defy human complexity, to present this European ‘Man’ as a ‘finished product’ (Husserl, 1965). While slave rebellions go back to as early as 1522 in Hispaniola (Torres-Saillant, 2010, pp. 2, 36), the Bacon’s Rebellion<sup>87</sup> of 1676 alerted

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<sup>86</sup> Compare this with Walter Mignolo’s (2011) critique of Carl Schmitt’s *New Nomos*, and how Schmitt believed pre-1500 and post-1500 worlds were different or similar. Also see Chapter 3 (the Post-colonial Theory section) on how European colonialism recorded history around ‘European time’.

<sup>87</sup> The *Bacon’s Rebellion* was led by Nathaniel Bacon against Governor William Berkeley of colonial Virginia between 1676-1677. Governor Berkeley had refused to help Bacon and his counterparts kill and remove Native Americans from their land. The historical importance of this rebellion is that Bacon united African slaves and European servants in a fight against Governor Berkeley. This African-European socio-economic



plantocrats, Anglo-American politicians in the colonies and slave traders about the dangers of social and economic alliances between Africans and European lower classes (Allen, 1994; Tochluk, 2010). Because humanity cannot be a ‘finished product’, there was no fixed natural reality that separated Europeans and Africans so European servants, African slaves and poor ‘whites’ found commonalities in their socio-economic realities. Inter-human relations are ever evolving, so they had to be fixed socially by the powers that be.

According to Allen (1994) African slaves and Anglo-American servants jointly in Virginia rebelled against bond servitude. It was a unique class solidarity by Africans and Europeans that plantation aristocrats did not want repeated. The natural human relations that had developed between European servants and African slaves had to be discursively and legally broken. Whether it was in Jamaica (Long, 1774), Canada (Cooper, 2010) or the United States (Allen, 1994), African slaves and European servants worked side by side and regularly ran away together as discussed below. There was no *natural* aversion they felt toward one another.

Admittedly, ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’, which Arabs and Portuguese in the Iberian Peninsula had already used to create colour identities, would gain socioeconomic utility in the service of plantation bourgeoisie. Appellations such as Moors, Guinea, and ‘negro’ were based on ‘blackness’ of the skin, but the new appellative ‘blackness’ would take a sinister turn in the Americas. From the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’, not moral values or social status as it was in Antiquity (Snowden, 1984) and the Renaissance period (Fredrickson, 2002; Heng, 2018]), would be used to divide America and create a safe social buffer between enslaved Africans and wealthy colonists. But it was a slow process. For instance, Edward Long (1774, p. 699) argued that in 1670 Sir Thomas Modiford “proposes six able Negroes, and four white

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unity would become nearly impossible from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the enforcement of the colour line divide became too deterministic and constraining to overcome.

servants” for a new settlement where “Negroes” were becoming cheaper and “common white servants were to be had without wages.” European servants could be used ‘without wages.’ ‘Whiteness’ was either not inclusive, or it had not gained the social currency it has today. Even the description of the appearance of European runaways utilized a similar language used to describe Ethiopians, Moors and sometimes Arabs as the examples below show.

On October 28, 1737, the *Virginia Gazette* (1737b) ran an advert from a Matthew Current about an Englishman described as “a short Truss Fellow, of a very dark Complexion, smooth Fac'd, with a downy Beard, round Shoulder'd, dark hair...” Also on March 17, 1738, the *Virginia Gazette* ran an advertisement from John Mitchell about a runaway Irish servant [Patrick Flood], described as “a pretty tall lusty Fellow, of a black swarthy Complexion.” With Flood was Sarah Carroll, described as having “wry Look, and a *swarthy Complexion*” (Virginia Gazette, 1938).

That European servants were still running away may suppose discontent with their station and treatment even when ‘whiteness’ started to give them social privileges from as early as 1690s (Tochluk, 2010). Of course, the description of an Englishman as having ‘a very dark complexion’ and an Irish having ‘a black swarthy complexion’ may be an exaggeration of their appearances because of their social status as laborers. However, this perplexing description and language shows a lack of standardized view of appearance and identity and homogenized ‘whites’ views of themselves as a ‘race’. However, it does reveal the then extant aristocratic consciousness toward poor Europeans and European-Americans that would disappear by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when European superiority became an important social, political, and scientific necessity. Aristocracy and social status were still more important than ‘whiteness’ so there was no socio-linguistic finesse put into the description of lower-class Europeans in the American colonies. All CADE were still not in the same moral circle and the fixedness of identity (Bhahba, 1994;

Mbembe, 2001) that would emerge in the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries had not taken hold. We still did not have what Mbembe (2001) would call a “single-factor explanation of domination” (p. 5).

Admittedly, as the following examples show, laws were new and their social elaboration in the Gramscian sense took time. For instance, in June 1783, two Anglo-Americans [Wilmoth Rich & David Rich] and one African-American slave [Andrew] were taken to court in Richmond County, Virginia, having been accused of “hogstealing.” While both Andrew and Wilmoth were found not guilty, David was found guilty and punished to receive “Twenty five lashes well laid on his bare back for the same at the public whipping” (Virginia Gazette, 1783). Punishing a European and letting an African go without punishment is something that would become nearly impossible in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when a ‘single-factor domination’ [‘whiteness’] took hold.

By this time, Europeans (continental and diasporic) were starting to prioritize themselves, their Europeanness. But there were still aristocratic self-interests even as the public in Britain was starting to react negatively to indentureship because of reported ill-treatment from letters sent home to parents by servants. There were also cases of children being abducted and adults hoodwinked by unscrupulous merchants and brought to America where their rights were violated (Williams, 1944; Bassett, 1896).

While European servants were still being mistreated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the public disapproval of indentureship go back more than a century. In 1664, a Royal Commission was headed by the Duke of York “to report on the condition of...exportation of servants” (Bassett, 1896, p. 76). However, the king and the duke had an ulterior motive because they wanted a reduction in European servants being taken to make way for a more profitable trade in African slaves. In a vile self-interest free from any ethical concerns of conflict of interest, the King and the Duke of York had formed the Royal African Company in 1661 with the duke leading it and

the king being a stockholder in the company. There was a developing sense of ‘care’ for European servants but there was also the problem of self-interest, of potential huge profit. They wanted to stop the indentureship to make their involvement in African slaves profitable, but they had a chance to profit while advancing a moral and humanitarian face to the British people. The king and the duke did not, however, change the living condition of the servants in the American colonies. Toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as the examples given earlier show, European indentured servants were still being mistreated.

This is worthy of note because Johann Friedrich Blumenbach had published his *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* in 1775. European indentured servants were still being mistreated at the time when European theorists had started to create collective appellations for Europeans and the people of European descent. In this work, Blumenbach described Europeans, who he referred to as ‘Caucasians’ (Painter, 2010) as ‘white’ and the most beautiful of all the four human types he outlined. While a collective European consciousness was starting to take a scientific shape, its social and political aspect as a Pan-Europeanism was slowly developing as will be discussed below with early ideas about ‘race’ and the use of skin colour to divide humanity. Even by 1798, Moreau de Saint-Méry (1913) could write that “Any white servant would be dishonored if he ate with people of color” (p. 324). This is of course a personal prejudice for this attitude was not that developed by that time.

By 1691 in colonial Virginia, freeing African slaves became unlawful and intermarriages between Anglo-Americans and African slaves became legally punishable (Tochluk, 2010, p. 59). As Morgan has argued, the Virginia “assembly deliberately did what it could to foster the contempt of whites for blacks and Indians” (cited in Allen, 1994, p. 17). By 1705, beating and whipping of European indentured servants was becoming discouraged. The African in America was gradually

being pushed toward what an Ohio judge would describe in *Jordan v. Smith* in 1846 as “the lowest depths of degradation” (Supreme Court of Ohio, 1873, p. 201). Admittedly, laws against the mistreatment of European servants were instituted from as early as the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the uproar against their mistreatment goes back to the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (see The Royal Commission example above). However, European servants were still part of ‘the lowest depths of degradation’ in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century alongside African slaves.

Before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, the identity of Africans and the attitude towards them was still in flux and contradictory because “there was not even agreement on whether all ‘Africans’ were black” (Hudson, 1996, p. 249). As noted above, wealthy plantocrats were still describing Irish and English servants with a descriptive discourse that would become characteristic of Africans’ skin colour in the Americas in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. I must note here, however, that by the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, elaborate scientific theories of ‘race’ such as social Darwinism, craniology, polygenesis, monogenesis and naturalized European superiority had either not been invented or they had not found firm social and epistemological (scientific) footing. This may be the reason why an Irish was confusingly described as ‘black’. The ethical implication of this description would take a strict socio-political turn. But the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the 18<sup>th</sup> century were the periods in which naturalized and systematized ideas (scientific or philosophical) were a discourse among scholars and scientists.

#### *Colour-Based Identities, Scientific Classification and Inferiorization/Superiorization*

On April 24, 1684, Francois Bernier (2001 [1684], p. 248) divided the inhabitants of the world using both geography and physical characteristics. This, according to Stuurman (2000, p. 2), was the first non-biblical genealogy of human variety in which “neither the sons of Noah nor the Lost Tribes of Israel have any role to play in his account of world population.” The African

type was “Type 2” in the four “races.” Excluding North Africans, which he included in the Type 1, he described these type as having “thick lips and...snub noses”; “the blackness that is their essential trait”; “their beards consist of *only three or four* strands” and “their hair is *not truly hair* but instead *a sort of wool* similar to the coat of one of our hunting-spaniels” (emphasis added). Bernier used characteristics that would inform the 18<sup>th</sup> century ‘science of race’ that became emblematic of ‘scientific racism’ of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Among the four types, Africans are the ones whose description is extensive and detailed.

However, racialized identities would not be formalized and institutionalized until the following treatises were published in the 18<sup>th</sup> century: *Systema Naturae* (1735) by Swedish batonist, Carl Linnaeus; *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* (1775) by German physician and naturalist, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach; and *Observation on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764) by the Prussian philosopher, Emmanuel Kant. While Linnaeus and Blumenbach used colour description and descriptive language that make the European types (*Caucasian* for Blumenbach and *Europeanus albus* for Linnaeus) they did not use an explicit language of superiority-inferiority dichotomy. Africans were described in an unpalatable language, but they had not socially become ‘the lowest depths of degradation’. For instance, Blumenbach (1797) believed a mulatto was a ‘racial degeneration’ between ‘White’ and ‘Black’. For Linnaeus, however, Africans were ‘black, sluggish, relaxed’. For Blumenbach, Africans degenerated from the original human type, ‘Caucasians’. The superior consciousness was, of course, not explicit; it, however, remained a subtext in Bernier’s, Linnaeus’s, and Blumenbach’s descriptions of Africans. These studies were considered scientific; but they were judged comparatively against the European type that was praised. They were not statements of ‘scientific facts’, but moralized empiricisms.

But for Emmanuel Kant, the superiority of Europeans and the inferiority of Africans (and other ‘savages’ like Americans ‘Indians’) became explicit. For instance, according to Kant “The Negroes of Africa have by nature no feelings that rises above the ridiculous” (2011 [1764], p. 58). Kant went on to reference David Hume, who had challenged anyone to point out a ‘negro’ in any part of the world who had distinguished himself in the arts and sciences at a level that is worthy of praise.<sup>88</sup> For Kant, the “whites” and “blacks” were different “with regard to the capacity of the mind as it is with respect to color” (2011 [1674, p. 59]). For David Hume (2018, p. 170), ancient Germans who were at a considerable level of barbarity “still had something eminent about them, in valour, form of government, or some other particular.” This leads Hume to conclude that “I am apt to suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites.” Julien-Joseph Virey (1775–1846) would later support this mental inferiority by arguing that the ‘negro’ has a smaller brain capacity compared to ‘superior’ races (Panese, 2014). The appearance and the mental capacity of the ‘negro’ were conflated and their inferiority considered a natural fact. The difference in appearance, for Kant, Hume, and Virey, is not a matter of culture, norms, and environment as some of their contemporaries such as Buffon, and Herder and Forster have argued (Eberl, 2019; Hoquet, 2014).

The observed behaviour of CADA, whether conditioned by slavery and other socially limiting apparatuses in place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were rationalized as the result of their inferior mental capacity (natural or cultural). But as George White (1764-1836), a former slave, argued at the time, “Perhaps nothing can be more conducive to vice and immorality, than a state of abject slavery, like that practised by the Virginia planters upon the degraded Africans” (2001 [1810], p. 6). Because slaves were cruelly deprived of all objects of enjoyment that make life meaningful, White added that in the absence of overseers and masters, and “without much restraint or reserve,

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<sup>88</sup> Hume either ignored or he did not know the work of his African contemporary, Philosopher Anton Wilhelm Amo (Eberl, 2019; Appiah, 1992; Hountondji, 1996; Morera, 2014).

[slaves] fall into...practices, which are contrary to the well-being of society, and repugnant to the will of God, whenever opportunity offers" (p. 6). Although the above behaviour is necessitated by circumstances and turns the "slave into the cringing, treacherous, false, and thieving victim of tyranny" as Father Hanson (1858, p. 15) argued twenty years after White's death, it was still used to judge the slaves as an African thieving nature. Thomas Jefferson, who did not have much regard for CADA generally and slaves in particular, echoed White and Hanson and argued that slaves' "disposition to theft with which they have been branded, must be ascribed to their situation, and not to any depravity of the moral sense" (1832 [1787], p. 149).

But writing about "negro" lack of "foresight" in the same work, Jefferson (1832 [1787], p. 13) argued that "A black...will be induced by the slightest amusements to sit up until midnight, or later, though knowing he must be out with the first dawn of the morning." Arguing against what he considered to be the emotional superficiality and superstitiousness of the "Negro", Kant argued that "The blacks are very vain, but in the Negro's way, and so talkative that they must be driven apart from each other by blows" (2011 [1764], p. 59). David Hume supports this 'vanity', arguing that "You may obtain any thing of the NEGROES by offering them strong drinks" (2018, p. 174).

The 'negro' could not therefore be taken seriously respecting his customs, behaviour, and mental capacity. This mental and emotional trivialization of CADA may explain how Kant made sense of a sociocultural discourse between Father Jean-Baptiste Labat and a 'Negro Carpenter'. When Father Labat rebuked the carpenter about the way he treated his wives, the man wryly retorted that "You whites are real fools, for first, you concede so much to your wives, and then you complain when they drive you crazy." In moralizing this statement, Kant argued that "There might be something here worth considering, except for the fact that this scoundrel was completely black from head to foot, a distinct proof that what he said was stupid" (2011 [1764], p. 61).



Kant acknowledged that ‘There might be something here worth considering’ but the man was ‘black’ and that was all Kant needed to dismiss the man’s argument without subjecting it to a logical analysis. Since Kant could not agree with the African carpenter through reason, he “resorted to irrationality” (Fanon, 2008 [1952], p. 102). ‘Blackness’ as a justification for the man’s ‘stupidity’ points to colour prejudice (which in itself is ‘irrational’). Kant calling the carpenter a ‘scoundrel’, however, may have been an emotional perturbation caused by an African calling Europeans ‘fools’ when he invoked some of their social and moral contradictions.

But here intellectual attitudes were slipping into social consciousness as they became elaborated in the Gramscian sense by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Helper, 1868; Wood, 1970). The loose, inconsistent social control of African slaves in the Americas that was started in the last two decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, would be uniformly applied in the control of slaves and former slaves in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a *single-factor* narrative at a macro level. By this time, the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, CADE had convinced themselves that CADA must be made inferior to keep them enslaved in the Americas and to keep them controlled in Africa. There were theories to use, cultural resources to control means of communication and the capital to fund social, political, and economic control. Africa, as Mbembe (2001) has argued, had become “the black hole of reason, the pit where its powerlessness rests unveiled” (p. 7); and where CADA’s ‘psychic life’ was explained in a language fit for a ‘beast’, a monster.’ It was a new social imaginary whose legacy lives with us today. Writing about this animalization of CADA today in a foreword to Toni Morrison’s *The Origin of Strangers*, Ta-Nehisi Coates (2017) notes:

When Officer Darren Wilson killed Michael Brown he reported that Brown appeared to be “bulking up to run through the shots,” an act that rendered Brown as something more, but ultimately something less, than human. The subhuman aspect to the killing was reinforced

by the decision to leave brown's body to bake on the concrete in the middle of summer. (p. xiv)

The police description, killing and the treatment of Brown's dead body is the legacy of the history I have outlined in this chapter. The killing and treatment of Brown is what Mbembe (2001), in the context of Africa, describes as "a meta-text about the animal—to be exact, about the beast: its experiences, its world, and its spectacle" (p. 1).

## **Conclusion**

What may be concluded in this chapter is that skin appearance was not used to stratify European societies nor was it used to create identities until the beginning of the raids on African villages by Portuguese in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. There were no 'negroes' or 'blacks' or 'black people'. Europeans started to explore the coast of Africa, so these appellations did not exist in the classical antiquity, the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance period. It is therefore problematic and historically inaccurate to equate 'blackness' with Ethiopianness. While appellations based on appearance started in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans would not use appearance to create a collectivizing identity until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. 'Whiteness' or 'white people' did not become important until plantation aristocrats in the American colonies used it to bring poor whites onto their sides, into a 'white' moral circle. But socially produced and objectified reality, to use Mbembe's (2001) expression, take time to elaborate into the social consciousness of a people.

Theories of 'race' and the use of colour to categorize people and praise the beauty of Europeans started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; however, Europeans were still being treated like slaves in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Modern Europeans did not create the use of skin colour to describe or categorize people. They either operationalized it to a different social, moral, and intellectual level, or they created novel discourses to "imbue [it] with meaning" (Mbembe, 2001, p. 6). This

project is about the moral problems associated with ‘blackness’ as operationalized today, so it is important to note when discourses on identity (especially colour identities) and European attitudes that inform these identities, are continuities from the classical antiquities—the spiritual home of modern Europeans according to Husserl (1965)—and when they are discourses created during the Middle Ages, the Renaissance period, or the Enlightenment era.

This chapter therefore shows that there was no natural aversion to African skin colour so the problems that are associated with ‘blackness’ and how it was used as tool for social control can be made sense of historically with CADE political economy and its social superstructure from the slave and the colonial regimes. Since CADE is still at the margin in Canada (Maynard, 2017) and the world (Mbembe, 2017), for instance, it is important to understand historical continuities and discontinuities. To understand why, for example, young African-Canadians are mistreated in schools or why African-Canadian parents are not respected as ‘good parents’, these continuities and discontinuities are important in understanding contemporary social imaginaries (Taylor, 2004) in their historical contexts. These social imaginaries are important in social justice discourses (more in Chapter 7).

## CHAPTER FIVE: Slavery, Capitalism and Social Control

### Introduction

In Chapter 4, I focused on the Greco-Roman world, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance period, and the Enlightenment Era classificatory science. The first three epochs provided the social, moral, and epistemological frameworks through which modern Europeans understood themselves and the world from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The history of these epochs not only informed Enlightenment discourses and social imaginaries, but they also shaped how the slave and the colonial regimes would deal with ‘subject races’. The colonial rationality or ideology, which these four epochs shaped, continues to inform contemporary relations of power. As explained in the previous chapter, it is important to pay attention to historical continuities and discontinuities. The first three shaped modernity through continuities (appropriated old discourses) and discontinuity (new discourses from old ones).

There has been, in this continuity/discontinuity context, a historically inaccurate thesis that colour prejudice against CADA may have been a *natural aversion* to the darkness of African skin so it cannot, this thesis claims, be blamed on the slave regime (see Sweet, 1997; Jordan, 1974). However, as I explained in chapter 4—and as I will also explain in the following section from the beginning of the Transatlantic slave trade in the 16<sup>th</sup> century—this is historically inaccurate. The natural aversion thesis, in the context of this dissertation as a social-justice-oriented work, may give the impression that mitigating colour prejudice today is superfluous. The legacies of the slave and the colonial regimes continue to uphold this aversion (see Mbembe, 2001, Maynard, 2017; Wallerstein, 2006).<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Maynard traces the state-sanctioned oppression of CADA from the slave regime to the present. Mbembe argues that the modern African *postcolony* was shaped by the ‘colonial rationality’, which, he

In this chapter, I explain how social imaginaries and identitarian discourses of the previous epochs concretized through capitalism and slavery from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They would produce deadly control regimes that would lead CADA to the ‘lowest depth of degradation’ through the *slave capital* and the *colonial capital*. To control CADA, the slave and the colonial regimes had to portray them as sub-humans, in some cases, or children, in other cases, who needed moral guidance and work discipline. As Mbembe (2001) has put it, “The Native was a great child crushed by the long atavism, was incapable of autonomous thought and could make no distinction between vice and virtue” (p. 33).

To make them economically useful, however, CADA had to be portrayed as physically strong and capable of withstanding physically exhausting work for long hours. It was this assumption, this discursive technology about their resilience, that made them useful economic tools to the plantocrats in the Americas. It was a protracted discourse that was fuelled, as discussed in the last chapter, by what CADE theorists believed was what evidence was telling them about Africans, and their self-interest as European people to shape knowledge in that direction.

Accordingly, the use of science given the evidence of the time without any intentional ill-feeling towards Africans existed alongside the expropriation of science by those who exaggerated existing evidence for slavery, economic benefit, and self-esteem. CADE were not yet confident about their sense of self, so they had to put themselves above and beyond others regardless of the evidence they used to justify this mythological Europeanness. As noted in the previous chapter through Husserl, Europeans were still self-civilizing as people, but they presented themselves as a

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believes, was informed, in part, by the social imaginaries of the Middle Ages. These imaginaries include the potentate, violence-cum-governance, and intolerance of dissent. Wallerstein argues that five nations [Britain, USA, Germany, Italy, and France] in the 19<sup>th</sup> century dominated the writing of history. They would later, through the colonial ideology, control how the history of the world was written from their nationalist perspectives.

‘finished product.’ What remains controversial is whether Africans became the quintessential objects of slavery because of the then pre-existing attitude (Sweet, 1997; Hrabosky, 2013) or it was slavery that created the attitude towards Africans, making them the premier economic hands and bottom feeders of the new chain of being (Douglass, 1881; Williams, 1944). Because evidence shows that the same negative attitude that was expressed against CADA was already used within Europe and the Americas against other ethnic groups, social groups, and the poor and peasants, I conclude that the attitude toward Africans did not predate the transatlantic slave trade. Except for the length of African servitude in the Americas, most of the oppressive attitudes and actions toward Africans were also applied to CADE. In other words, Europeans were not bonded for life.

From here, the chapter is divided into three sections followed by a conclusion. The arrangement of the sections follows the temporal change in CADE’s attitude and its effect on CADA identity, moral standing, and socio-political and socioeconomic fortunes. CADA’s attitude toward themselves also changed progressively. The trajectory of the change, while still controlled by CADE, was mostly positive. The first section addresses the roots of African slavery in the Iberian Peninsula and how it opened the way for what would become the European dehumanization of African people through slavery and colonialism. The next section addresses the rise of the abolitionist movements and how it fuelled the discourse on Africa-centred identities and CADE negative responses to it. In the third section, I address the shift from slavery to colonization and the rise of colour-based segregation. The sections also correspond to how CADE and CADA responded to their respective attitudes and CADA’s colour-based identities. While CADE played a role in the shaping of CADA identities over the time periods covered in these sections, CADA did not have any power over CADE identities.

## **African Slavery, Its Iberian Beginnings and CADA Dehumanization**

The 18<sup>th</sup>-century CADE scholars, as discussed in Chapter 4, and which I will revisit briefly below, laid the intellectual and ‘scientific’ foundation for what the colonial and the slave regimes would make the social basis for CADA oppression, degradation, infantilization and control (Mbembe, 2017). They provided the intellectual-cultural, historico-social framework (Taylor, 2001; Husserl, 1965) for the relations of power, the distribution of social goods, and what would later become the colour-based moral circle (the colour line/colour bar). Not only was CADA considered mentally inferior and socially infantile, but they were also reflected as physically ugly and repulsive, the opposite of the European who were considered the epitome of beauty. These discourses, which would be taken up by colonial anthropology through its colonial library, had no fidelity to the phenomenological reality of Africans. Africans would not be judged and understood through their natural appearances. They had to be understood through instrumental discourses—Christianity, science and philosophy and capitalism—to make them fit into a defined structure.

### ***Scientific Justification of Slavery and Debasement***

Here are examples of these scholarly horizons. For Petrus Camper (Lynn, 2002), the beauty was in the facial angle but for Blumenbach (1865), it was in the shape of the skull. In both cases, the standard, the ideal of the human form, is the European body. These race-science ideas led to explicit expression of CADE beauty and CADA ugliness. As Christoph Meiners has argued, “The Black and ugly peoples are distinct from the white and beautiful people by their sad lack in virtue and their various terrible vices” (cited in Isaac, 2004, p. 105). Like Kant (2011 [1764]), Meiners believed physical beauty is intricately linked to morality. For George Curvier (1854, pp. 49-50), “The Caucasian, to which we belong, is distinguished by the beauty of the oval which forms the head.” He added that these features are the reason they have built civilized nations and put other

people under subjection. But for the “Negro Race”, he argues, the physical features are the reason CADA continue to be in the “barbarous state: “[its] color is black, its hair crips and cranium compress, and nose flattened. The projecting muzzle and thick lips approximate in the ape: hordes of which it is composed have always barbarous” (p. 50). These were not simple, value-neutral descriptions; they were normative assessments draped in scholarly, scientific robes.<sup>90</sup>

However, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars did not invent the negative attitude toward CADA. They only gave it the authority of science in a way scientists, philosophers and other learned people could relate to. While these scholars did not always agree in their scientific scholarships and their view of ‘the negro’, these views were limited, mostly, to intellectual discourse. For instance, Blumenbach criticized Camper about the issue of facial angle but they both subscribed to the degeneration theory that still placed CADE at the top of the human hierarchy (Panese, 2014). Camper, who was explicit about the superior beauty of Caucasians, also acknowledged that “the negro also has its beauty, and even its *maximum* and its *minimum*” (cited in Panese, 2014, p. 51). Regardless of the contradictions, controversies and intellectual disagreements that remained among these scholars, they gave scientific and intellectual respectability to the concept of ‘race’ (Sandford, 2018; Bernasconi, 2003) and the ‘natural truth’ to the concept of colour hierarchy with CADE on top and CADA at the bottom.

While the 18<sup>th</sup> century and earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century discourse on race may have led to “the collapse of the ‘Great Chain of Being’ as the dominant metaphor for the natural order” (Jenkins,

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<sup>90</sup> Here are some legacies of the above denigrating horizons 150-200 years later. A while ago a South African woman wrote this under one of my posts on Instagram. I have left it in the way she wrote it: “black skin in itself is not pretty. the flat nose. thick lips. kinky har. When a black women wins a beauty contest it usually is because she has some non black dna in her. mixed race. a higher nose. lips full but not thick. straight hair. lighter toned skin. Sure blacks have a good jone [bone] structure. masai. tall. bone structure. strong muscles. toned. but pretty no not in the whole” (Maryln Struwig, 2019). Also see Sarah Chan’s story on BBC (2022) on being “spat in the face for the colour of my skin.”



2020, p. 355), it still created a new order. As Harris (2011) has argued, the new “Great Chain of Being” used human anatomy that led to Africa becoming the “major site for the emergence of a racial, or racist, branch of anatomical science” (p. 176). The great chain of being changed without changing. As Foucault would argue, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century discourse positioned CADA on the new homo-hierarchy with a transgression of discursive limits that would only end up discovering (really creating) a discourse whose limit it had attempted to transgress (Foucault, 1996, pp. 29-52).

Now with science justifying the place of CADA on the new chain of being based on ‘race’ and appearance, slave traders would not only rely on loosely understood classical ideas and biblical teachings such as the curse of Ham (Braude, 1997; Sanders, 1969; Sweet, 1997), but they would also have the authority of science to justify enslaving Africans and keeping them in slavery in perpetuity. For the Iberians who initiated the transatlantic slave trade and other European imperial powers who would join them, the enslavement of Africans based on Christian conversion was no longer as respectable as scientific justification. Religious justification would of course remain for the slave and colonial regimes (Flournoy, 1835; Ross, 1876). However, Diaspora Europeans, who saw themselves as ‘men of science’, and wanted to transcend the limitations of European thought of the Middle Ages, found scientific justification of CADA’s place authoritative. Enlightenment science added value to existing justificatory discourses for the enslavement of Africans. This is, to quote Deleuze, “the false representativity of power” (cited in Foucault, 1996, p. 211).

### ***The Roots of African Slavery in Iberia as Incidental***

However, it is important to note that the 18<sup>th</sup>-century discourse on ‘race’ and the natural place of CADA was informed by what was happening to CADA people from the first time ‘Moors’ were captured by a voyage led by Antão Gonçalves and Nuno Tristão to the coast of Guinea. These Moors, who included a ‘noble’, Adahu, had to be returned by Gonçalves to be ransomed for ‘ten

Moors' of 'Gentile' origin to be brought back to Portugal. While King Henry of Portugal, the Infant King,<sup>91</sup> and the voyage leaders were interested in 'booty' and honours in these expeditions, the Infant was mostly interested in Moors who could help him understand "the Indies, and ...the land of Prester John" (de Azurara, 1896, p. 77). The aim of Portuguese leaders was not slaves *per se*. Slaves were a means to an end: more knowledge about Africa, expand the reach of Christianity, and reclaim the lost Christian kingdom of Prester John (Russell-Wood, 1978). As Lançarote, who led an expedition following the two successful expeditions by Gonçalves and Tristão argued, "we have left our land to do the service of God and the Infant our Lord, who may expect from us with good reason some performance to his advantage" (p. 63). Quoting *African Repository, The Freedom's Journals* notes on April 6, 1827, that the search for the land of Prester John was "one of the great objects of all their [Portuguese's] expeditions" (Africa, 1827, p. 14).

The intensity of their religious sentiments and missions as they attacked Moorish villages were characterized by shouts of "St. James," "St. George," "Portugal" (p. 66). What Azurara portrays in the *Chronicles* is not a narrative of people who were intentionally starting a slave trade or civilized people looking for possible commercial exchanges but vainglorious men looking for personal, religious, and political rewards for themselves and for their prince. The language and the attitude of the voyagers and of Azurara was that of a Christian crusade characteristic of the war against Islam. Azurara constantly referred to Portuguese as 'Christians' and the victims of their pillages as 'enemies' even when their victims ('booty', in their terms) were attacked in their villages unawares. The Moors and the 'negroes' had no 'war' against Portugal. When Lancorate and his crew had pillaged many villages, killed several villagers, and took captives, he praised their God "for His guidance and the great victory He had given them over the enemies of the faith"

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<sup>91</sup> 'Infante' and 'infanta' were royal titles given to sons and daughters of Portuguese monarchs, who were not in a direct line to the throne.

(p. 74). And when they came back, they gave the “fifth [46] of the Moors”, numbering 235, and the booty they brought with them where the Infant had sent them “for the service of [Lancorates said] God and of yourself” (p. 79). When they referred to their captives as ‘enemies’, they were not referring to *enemies* of Portugal but *enemies* of Christianity, or, to use Mbembe’s (2001) expression, “Latin Christendom” (p. 37).

The enslavement of Africans therefore started as accident of Portugal’s greater imperial and religious interest. While Russell-Wood argues that Gonçalves’s initial expedition in 1441 that captured Adahu and one other captive was intended by Infant Don Henrique “for the express purpose of capturing blacks”, the narrative does not give that impression. What one finds in the two volumes of de Azurara is Infant’s greater desire to expand his own dominion as glory to his own person and in the interest of Pan-European Latin Christendom.

### ***African Slavery and Tradition of Slavery in Andalusia***

However, the practice of capturing slaves on the coast of Africa and later in the interior, was informed by Portuguese experience under the Moorish empire, their religious confrontation with Moors and Islamic empires, and from antiquity. Capturing and enslaving captives in wars, which in the Christian Middle Ages was styled as ‘just war’ (Sweet, 1997; Russell-Wood, 1978), was part of Imperial traditions in the ancient world. There was nothing special about it being the capture of Africans even when Sweet (1997) has argued that dark skin [‘black’, *abid*] slaves were considered less than the ‘white’ slaves [*mumalak*]. It is true that Portuguese and other Europeans did find the appearance of dark-skinned Africans visually unpleasant.

For instance, Mary Kingsley (1897) criticized those who believed “Fanny Po” women were the most beautiful on the West African coast, adding disapprovingly that “Elmina, or an Igalwa, or a M'pongwe” women were better looking because of the Spanish blood,

[which] gives a decidedly greater delicacy to their features: delicate little nostrils, mouths not too heavily lipped, a certain gloss on the hair, and a light in the eye. But it does not improve their *colour*, and I am assured that it has an awful effect on their *tempers*, so I think I will remain, for the present, the faithful admirer of my sable. (p. 72, emphasis added)<sup>92</sup>

Kingsley, who was, admittedly, affected by the dehumanizing treatment of Africans by Europeans, was writing more than 400 years after Azurara. Like Kingsley with West Africans, Azurara was affected by the treatment of the captive Moors. In his descriptions of the 235 Moorish abductees by Lancorate, he expressed his sympathy and the sympathy of Portuguese who came to watch the miserable ‘booty’. Azurara, however, argues that some of these abductees would later be trained to acquire skills and professions, others would marry native Portuguese, and others even lived with Portuguese families that would leave them inheritances. This would be impossible when the natural aversion thesis became sedimented into the CADE’s consciousness through, and by, the slave and the colonial regimes. The integration of these abductees into the Iberian society contradicts a fixed attitude Sweet (1997) and Hrabosky (2013) have attempted to naturalize against dark-skinned Africans. To Azurara and the Iberians, what was imperative was that the abductees accepted Christianity and the Iberian way of life. Iberians, according to Azurara “made no difference between them and their free servants, born in our own country” (1899, p. 84). One “little

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<sup>92</sup> Note here that Kingsley, like the 18<sup>th</sup>-century writers, believed that colour affects ‘tempers’; Kant believed colour made the African carpenter ‘stupid’. However, Edward Blyden (1905) praised Kingsley and her ‘scientific’ work in West Africa: “Miss Kingsley was one of those simple beings — would there were more of them—to whom nothing seems an impossibility that is noble and just” (p. 2). Kingsley’s (1897) ‘scientific’ work, which Blyden praised, included normative descriptions like “ugly tribe” (p. 224) and “her ugly husband” (p. 72).

Moor” among the 235 captives brought by Lançorate who was given to the church became “a friar of St. Francis” and sent to “St. Vincent do Cabo” (p. 80).<sup>93</sup>

When the Castilians (Spanish), the Italian, and the Dutch and later English, French and the rest of the European ‘nations’ joined these voyages, there were several issues that had already been established while others remained shrouded in ambivalence: 1) Slavery was not started with dark-skinned Africans, it was already an institution established since antiquity. It was based on martial conquests rather than on skin colour; 2) Africa was becoming both a place for ‘booty’ and a place to expand ‘national’ dominion as long as there was some economic value to find; 3) Christianity expansion in North Africa: As other European powers became aware of the Portuguese exploits in the coast of Guinea, the Portuguese understood that the control of these exploits had to be formalized just as they had sought the authority of Pope John XXIII in 1415 for initial expeditions.

Therefore, Portugal had to appeal to papal authority to ensure that Africa was the prerogative of the Portuguese imperial ambitions. Like other European powers that would join these voyages, their interests in Africa were not African slaves *per se* nor was it the conquest of Africa. I have already quoted Lord Lugard as saying that Africa as a space in which state authority and economic infrastructure needed setting up began only at the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Until then, Africa was only a means to other imperial ends: a trade route and labour for plantation economies of the Americas. Coastal slave ports or factories were enough so there was no need to enter the interior of Africa until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but mostly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There was that desire to defeat ‘Saraceans’ and reach India with all its spices and tradable goods. This is the sea route Vasco da Gama would open up when he rounded the Cape of Good Hope to India in 1494

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<sup>93</sup> When Rev. William Shephard was sent to the Congo in 1890 by the Southern Presbyterian Church on a missionary trip to Africa, he was not allowed to head the mission because he was an African-American. Samuel Lapsley, a European-American, had to be the head.

(Lugard, 1922). Before the Suez Canal was constructed in 1869, the only way to reach India and the East by sea was to go around Africa through the Cape of Good Hope. Vasco da Gama achieved what Christopher Columbus could not. European needs in the world were not predetermined; they changed as their economic, scientific, and technological capacities changed. The social imaginary that informed their attitudes toward CADA followed these modulating changes in time and space.

Discrimination against Africans followed these modulations. Africans lived in Spain and Portugal from the 1440s, free and slaves, but there was no Africa-specific colour ideology that targeted only dark-skinned Africans. “That the racism that came to characterize American slavery was well established in cultural and religious attitudes in Spain and Portugal by the fifteenth century” (Sweet, 1997, p. 144) is a personal interpretation of the narratives that borders on personal prejudice. It is to read modern attitudes into the past as Braude (1997) and Snowden (1984) have argued. This point of view mirrors Winthrop Jordan’s (1974) view that colour prejudice against African slaves in the Americas predated the transatlantic slave trade. The main reason for periodizing the attitude against dark skin before the transatlantic slave trade seems to be a counter argument against Douglass (1881) and Williams (1944), who have argued that colour prejudice in the Americas started with the transatlantic slave trade.

I tend to agree with the latter view. While there may have been prejudice against dark-skinned Africans in Portugal and Spain, it did not prevent their integration into the Iberian society as their presence in the discovery of the ‘New World’ shows (Du Bois, 1915 [2018], pp. 99-113). This is not to say that there were no African Slaves in Portugal and Spain. My point is that the attitude toward Africans was constructed based on their instrumentality in the political economy of the slave and the colonial regimes.

### *Europeans in the African Consciousness before Slavery and Colonialism*

However, some western scholars create discourses that tend to assume that being prejudiced against the appearances of non-European is a European natural feeling toward the different other as objects of intentionality and as phenomena (see Chapter 3). However, the examples below show that Africans, like Europeans, also responded to European appearances (phenomena) as strange, and in some cases, scary. These are, mostly, non-discursive, phenomenological encounters. This is African seeing Europeans and themselves through their own eyes not through European, hegemonic eyes. The colonial and the slave regimes—the creators of these hegemonic eyes—would change this. While the ‘object of intentionality’—the African *body* or the European *body* remained the same—what the African would see, the *phenomenon*, would be dictated by the slave and the colonial regimes.

These examples show Europeans, as objects of intentionality, in African consciousness before colonialism and slavery sedimented hegemonic eyes in the African and European consciousness. Olaudah Equiano (1837), for instance, asked his fellow captives “if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red face, and long hair” (p. 44). Stevens also relates a Jieeng mythology she heard from missionaries in the town of Bor, South Sudan. This story, admittedly, is a culturally adulterated creation story. It is a self-exaltation cultural discourse. It was intended to explain Jieeng preference for the ‘black’ skin and why they only have cows and spears, and the English people have a lot of material things.

The story is about the first man and woman, Abuk (Abungdit) and Garang (Garangdit) and their first two twins. Abungdit gave birth to two twins when her husband was absent. One twin was ‘black’ and the other one ‘red’ so she decided to hide the ‘black’ one and gave the ‘red’ twin to the husband: “One was very beautiful, his skin being black, soft and glossy; the other was red

as raw meat or as the English; in fact, Abungdit thought him not to be compared in any way to her black offspring” (Stevens, 1912, p. 238). Because the ‘black’ twin was hidden from the father, he did not inherit anything, so he asked his mother why his brother had a lot, and he did not. She told him to go to his father, but the father was not pleased that he was deceived by Abungdit. He refused to give the ‘black’ twin anything but only one cow after sitting by his father’s hut for a long time. So, the mother’s deception in hiding her ‘beautiful’ and ‘black’ twin is the reason why, the story goes, Africans only had cows and Europeans, the ‘red’ and ‘ugly’ twin, had a lot of things.<sup>94</sup>

Just as Kingsley and Azurara believed that a skin that appeared like their own is the most beautiful phenomenon, the Jieeng also believed their skin was the most beautiful phenomenon compared to the Europeans’ skin. There is nothing European about preferring one’s own skin appearance, the phenomenon one is used to. The examples below further illustrate this point. Writing about the attitude of Rek, a section of Jieeng in Bahr El Ghazal, Titherington (1927) writes in a footnote that

To the Raik [sic] the look of a European (“Turk,” as they call him) is disgusting and frighten children. His skin is the colour of a man inflicted with leukoderma or leprosy, as has a fierce-looking vulture’s beak of a nose, and light-coloured cat’s eyes. He covers his shameful body with clothes, and rumour says it is scarcely less hairy than Nyamnyam’s or baboon’s. (p. 12)

This attitude was also experienced by Mungo Park (1799) in the West African kingdom of Bondou among the women in a palace of the king. The women, trying to make sense of how Park, as an *object* of intentionality, *appears* to them

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<sup>94</sup> I have also noted in chapter one (and this will also be discussed in chapter seven) that Jieeng use black color to symbolize bad things as in *Raan col pĩu* [black-hearted person] so this creation story is not about black as a colour in-itself but the familiarity of Jieeng skin appearance to Jieeng people.



[rallied] me with a good deal of gaiety on different subjects; particularly upon the whiteness of my skin, and the prominency of my nose. They insisted that both were artificial. The first, they said, was produced when I was an infant, by dipping me in milk; and they insisted that my nose had been pinched every day, till it had acquired its present unsightly and unnatural conformation. On my part, without disputing my own deformity, I paid them many compliments on African beauty. I praised the glossy jet of their skins, and the lovely depression of their noses; but they said that flattery, or (as they emphatically termed it) *honey-mouth*, was not esteemed in Bondou. (p. 56, original emphasis)

To emphasize for clarity, phenomenon, as explained in Chapter 3, is what appears to consciousness or what manifests itself when one encounters an object of intentionality (Heidegger, 1962; Sartre, 1943). Preferring a skin *appearance* [phenomenon] that looks like one's own is not unique to Europeans nor should the fact that Europeans showed dislike for the African skin presuppose an attitude unique to Europeans. It is a matter of what *appears*, what *manifests* itself, judged on a given moral or cultural horizon (see Taylor, 2001). David Livingstone (1858) has also argued that "The sight of a white man always infuses a tremor into their dark bosoms, and in every case of the kind they appeared immensely relieved when I had fairly passed without having sprung upon them." Livingstone added that he was "obliged to reprove the women for making *a hobgoblin of the white man*, and telling their children that they would send for him to bite them" (p. 502, my emphasis). But he has also argued that Africans believe fair skin is beautiful. What a person finds to be "a pleasing countenance" (Livingstone, 1857, p. 362) is what a person is used to or what someone can relate to.

### *Singularization and Compartmentalization of Colour Identities*

From the 16<sup>th</sup> century, however, the attitude toward dark-skinned Africans started to change, largely, in one trajectory, a negative one. Two historical processes buttressed this change: 1) The contact between Africans in the interior and Europeans enslavers and explorers; 2) The instrumentalization of power-knowledge nexus, first, for European Christian empires, and then, for economic interests. George Best (1578) not only acknowledged the presence of Moors and Ethiopians in England (p. 20), but he argued that “I my felfe have feeme an Ethiopian as blacke as a cole broughte into Englande, who taking a faire Englishe woman to wife, begatte a sonne in all respectes as blacke as the father was” (p. 29).<sup>95</sup> In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Northern Europeans were, somehow, acquainted with dark-skinned Africans. However, these Africans had adopted Christianity and European way of life. They may have not been as strange as native Africans.

That a dark-skinned African would marry an English woman and have children in 16<sup>th</sup>-century England is morally considerable. This would become illegal in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Anglo-America. Also, in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>-century England, this would be frowned upon even if the law did not explicitly prohibit it.<sup>96</sup> While marriage does not show the absence of prejudice against dark-skinned Africans, it does show that the natural aversion thesis (Sweet, 1997; Jordan, 1974; Sanders, 1969) or natural ‘horror’ responses (Burke, 1885) are scholarly prejudices embedded into identity discourse and then discursively read into the past. Kaufmann’s (2017), as already mentioned, has explored the presence and social station of Africans in Tudors’ England (1485 –

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<sup>95</sup> “I myself have seen an Ethiopian as black as a coal brought into England, who taking a faire English woman to a wife, begot a son in all respects as black as the father was.”

<sup>96</sup> See the story of Dido Elizabeth Belle, a ‘black’ aristocrat in 18<sup>th</sup>-century England. Dido had an aristocratic birth and was wealthier than her ‘white’ cousin, Lady Elizabeth Murray. But Dido faced hostility from family visitors, so she was forced to eat alone (Adams, 1984).

1603) and their seeming integration into English society without much natural hatred of their ‘blackness’.

However, the encounter of imperial and enslaving Europeans with Africans in their native land provided a new dimension, a phenomenologically different one. It was an immediate experience wildly different from the classical myths and speculative narratives. They found Africans whose appearances were diametrically opposed to European appearances and whose customs were not only different from others, but also not Christian. Some of these Africans also walked naked, lived in mud-huts with no centralized systems of government Europeans were used to. These earlier travel narratives would feed into classical stories about African cannibals and beast-like humans. George (1958, p. 65) quotes a letter from Antoine Malfante (1447), who describes Negroes whose geographical area he could not specify. These ‘negroes’, he writes, “are in carnal acts like the beasts, the father has knowledge of his daughter, the son of his sister.” The Africans who could also describe Europeans, as noted above, started to disappear. This was 400 years before the ‘African’ of the colonial anthropology would be produced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see Mbembe, 2001; Wallerstein, 2006).

While there was no unified, institutional consciousness against Africans in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the scary views on African appearance and customs were common. Leo Africanus (1896 [1600]) shows his disdain of ‘negroes’ when he described a ‘negro’ Ambassador of a Prince as he brought gifts to the King of Fez: “the princes ambassadeur was a Negro borne, being grosse and of a low stature, and for his speech and behaiour most barbarous” (p. 309). Africanus explained that the audience of the King of Fez covered their faces in amusement because of the ambassador’s letter to the king was “most absurdly and rudely penned” and that his “Oration which he made in the behalfe of his prince was well worse.” However, Africanus added that after the

presentation “the king caused him to be most honorablie entertained by the priest of the chiefe temple” (p. 309). The ‘negro’ was silently ridiculed, but his social status was respected by the king.

But the discovery of America, the search for gold riches (El Dorado), and the introduction of large-scale commercial plantations, would change the fortunes of Africans in Europe and on the continent. As Du Bois (2018 [1915]) has argued, “Between 1455 and 1492 little mention is made of slaves in the trade with Africa” (p. 90). However, the demands for African slaves increased and so did reaction to it and the responses of its proponents. Regardless of how dark-skinned Africans as objects of intentionality appeared to CADE and how their appearance [phenomenon] was rationalized (or even moralized) between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the treatment of Africans slaves in the Americas during that period remained fluid. Du Bois (2018 [1915]) argues that there were people with “Negro blood” among the crew that went to Hispaniola with Columbus (p. 99). According to Du Bois, there were debates about ‘Negroes’ being sent to the New World from as early as 1501. These were only debates; so, it is not clear if slaves were sent.

However, evidence shows that African slaves from Spain and Portugal came to the Americas between 1510 and 1530. Earlier slaves worked in the mines and constantly fled the mines and hid among the indigenous people. The first slave labour came from indigenous people and indentured Europeans. The demands for slaves were still low so the supply of slaves from the Iberian Peninsula, European indentured servants, and native Americans were enough. However, the introduction of sugar plantations in the colonies—and later tobacco and cotton—would call for more supply of labour than the previous labour supply could satisfy.

Between 1530s and 1680s, the treatment of European indentured servants and African slaves was not very much different. This is another argument against the natural aversion thesis. I have already shown that European servants were not only punished, but they were also punished

in the most horrible of ways (see Chapter 4). These included being denied proper food, being branded with iron when they ran away because of ill treatment and being forced to work for a year while having feet chained. Even as theories of race started to take shape and placed Europeans [‘whites’] in the same moral circle, European servants and African slaves faced the same horrifying treatment. Because European colonies in the Americas modelled themselves after their ‘mother countries’, there was an aristocratic attitude toward poor people and the socioeconomically disadvantaged such as European indentured servants and convict servants (see Isenberg, 2016, about the 400-year history of ‘White Trash’). These marginalized Europeans and European-Americans, as objects of intentionality, did not *appear* beautiful to aristocratic Europeans. They were also outside their moral circle.

Peyrol-Kleiber (2018) has argued that indentured servants were maltreated, and their contract manipulated by unscrupulous masters to extend the years of contract. Instead of the contractual four or seven years, masters would use sinister tactics to fault servants and double the length of indentureship. Unfortunately, servants could not complain because of physical abuse or manipulation of the justice system that ruled against them. Members of the jury and court officials were usually known to plantation owners, so they constantly ruled against the servants. In 1624 in Chesapeake, Virginia, a servant went to his master to ask for his dues, that is, the contractual promise after the end of indentureship. Instead of giving the servant his due as per the agreement, they exchanged words and the master “stroke [him] over the pate with his Trunchione, And he saith further that mutch did give other provokinge speeches” (cited in Peyrol-Kleiber, 2018, p. 1).<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> This unscrupulous manipulation of the judicial system against marginalized social groups appears in Mbembe (2001) in his analysis of the colonial and the postcolonial regimes (See Chapter 1 (*Commandment*)). We continue to see the unfairness of the judicial system against CADA in Canada (Maynard, 2017) and the USA (Alexander, 2013).

However, the Bacon Rebellion would change the way that servants and the slaves would be treated. Allen (1994) argues that plantation bourgeoisie were afraid that the poor underclass may form an unbreakable bond against plantation aristocracy. The Bacon Rebellion would confirm their fears. A socioeconomic discourse was created to put a wedge between African slaves (and free African-Americans) and European servants (and free poor Europeans and European-Americans). The incentivization of European servants started to form a class that was slightly before and higher than the slaves. Their new status would not only make them feel better than the slaves, but it would also make them feel better than free Africans regardless of their socioeconomic status. As already discussed, colonies started to pass laws to control slaves as an attempt to prevent slave rebellions and servant-slave alliance.

However, these laws would not be as effective because masters were more interested in their fortunes than the well-being of servants or any colour collegiality. I have already noted how King Charles II used his Royal African Company in the 1660s to start reducing the number of indentured servants in the Americas in the guise of caring for poor Europeans (Bassett, 1896). His interest was profit from the slave trade. Slaves became more as the number of servants in the colonies dwindled. Leaders in the colonies in North America had also started to discourage British authorities from sending convicts to the colonies (Bassett, 1896) as the colonies were trying to wiggle out of the shadow of their mother countries.

While the term ‘white’ has been used descriptively since antiquity (Tsri, 2016b), its collectivizing role would not become formal and institutionalized until the 1680s (Allen, 1994). Like ‘black’, ‘white’ transitioned from an adjective to a noun. Colour, instead of socioeconomic status, slowly became the marker of difference, of importance. Africans could not share in this ‘whiteness’, so their class would from that time become clearly delineated by ‘blackness’ outside

the moral circle. Poor Europeans who had recently been treated like slaves were no longer Irish, Scotch, English, Dutch, Welsh, but simply ‘white’. The place of ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’ as control mechanisms, as determinants of relations of power by the colonial regime, had begun. But the social imaginary that gave ‘whiteness’ and ‘blackness’ their utilities used the previous epochs as horizons (frameworks) through which they become instrument as new discourse (discontinuities) or as old ones (continuities). However, ‘whiteness’ would not find its most stringent usage until the Reconstruction period and the rise of ‘white supremacy’ and Jim Crowism (Du Bois, 1999 [1903]; Douglass, 1881). During this period, CADA started to speak about their human condition, about their *African-ness* as ‘organic intellectuals.’ They established ‘civil societies’, loosely understood, to challenge CADE hegemony (see Chapter 3 on these concepts).

### **Abolitionism and Africa-Centred Identity**

In the previous epochs as I have already explained, CADA were only objects of analysis by CADE intellectuals who spoke *for-CADA* and *for-CADE* (for the ‘European Man’ in the Husserlian sense, see Husserl, 1965) but codified their work as outside the interest of CADE as the dominant social group: “[traditional] intellectuals experience through an “*esprit de corps*” their uninterrupted historical continuity and their special qualification...thus put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 138). CADA, to CADE intellectuals, were the ‘body-thing’ (Mbembe 2001) or “the object of possible knowledge” (Foucault, 1995, p. 251).

This, however, started to change at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At this time, there emerged among former slaves or those born free a group of CADA intellectuals, who, in the Gramscian sense, I have called ‘organic intellectuals’ (also see Chapter 3). They started to make their ideas against slavery known as ‘intellectuals.’ However, they had to go against CADE’s

traditional intellectuals who had centuries of established intellectual traditions. This goes back to the monopoly the ecclesiastical intellectual exercised after the collapse of the Roman Empire and throughout the Middle Ages (Gramsci, 1999, p. 133). But challenging established CADE's intellectual hegemony is difficult. It, however, can be "made quicker and more efficacious the more the group in question succeeds in simultaneously elaborating its own *organic intellectuals*" (Gramsci, 1999, p. 142). This led to the "formation of a surprising number of negro intellectuals" (Gramsci, 1999, p. 158). The formation of 'negro intellectuals' and the elaboration of their ideas about themselves and against slavery would be supported by anti-slavery CADE intellectuals. The coalition of CADA-CADE anti-slavery started to make ideas about abolitionism and anti-slavery hegemonic.

### ***Slavery, Abolition and CADE [Traditional] Intellectuals***

Before I discuss that attempt at the elaboration of abolitionist ideas, I have to go back to the existence of anti-slavery ideas among some CADE traditional intellectuals before the emergence of 'negro intellectuals'. 'Negro intellectuals' did not start anti-slavery; they only gave it a phenomenological dimension as they experienced its brutality *in-time* (on the plantation) or through their exclusion from the moral circle. The moral repugnance against African slavery and slave-trade started from as early as the time the first African captives were taken to Portugal in 1441. Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Iberian jurists and religious leaders spoke up against the inhumanity of slavery and the unchristian nature of the trade (Russell-Wood, 1978). De Azurara expressed in Volume One of his *Chronicles* that he felt sorry for the poor Moorish captives because he felt they were fellow human beings whose pain he could feel. However, he still excused their poor treatment, their enslavement, for he believed their lives in Portugal would expose them



to the Christian faith; a way of life he believed outweighed any moral concerns about their abduction and enslavement.

The moral repugnance of slavery remained in Europe and the Americas between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries not only among anti-slavery groups but also among slave holders themselves. It was, however, constantly eclipsed by economic concerns as “an unfortunate necessity” (Du Bois, 1904 [1896], p. 40) or a “lamentable *necessity*” (Child, 1833, p. 34, original emphasis). As Lydia Child has argued, “Justice is subordinate to self-interest” (p. 103). Even though anti-slavery sentiments were overshadowed by self-interest, they did not disappear. Du Bois (1904 [1896]) shows that the campaign against the slave-trade started from as early as 1698 in Pennsylvania among a group of German immigrants in Germantown.

However, economic benefits trumped moral concerns and drowned out the voices of the anti-slavery movement. It would not be until the last years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the cause for the abolition of the slave trade would intensify. During the colonial era, American colonies blamed England for introducing a trade in human beings. However, after the revolutionary war and American independence, the attitude toward slavery and the slave-trade shifted. Even when the slave trade was officially abolished in 1807 and slavery abolished in 1833 in the British empire, Du Bois argues that the importation of Africans between Africa and the Americas continued until 1860s because laws were hardly implemented, a legal-political culture that would continue in the United States until the civil rights movement put it on trial.

Various European countries continued the slave trade clandestinely even when they had pledged to end it. England, which assumed the role of “the policeman of the seas” in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Dubois, 1904 [1896], p. 136) because of its naval supremacy, only received promises from European countries. Many, including the United States, refused to sign on to the “right to

search” ships that were illegally continuing the slave trade. Sierra Leone and Liberia became instrumental to the British and the Americans in their attempt to stop the slave trade on the west coast of Africa.<sup>98</sup> The slave trade was still too lucrative for some Europeans and Americans to abandon so ending it became too complicated for Liberian and Sierra Leonean officials. For instance, letters by Liberian officials among themselves show their concerns about various European powers illegally continuing the slave trade decades after 1807. Commodore Wilmot’s meeting with the king of Dahomey between December 1862 and January 1863 is one example of the British attempt to end the illegal slave trade (South Australian Register, 1863). The agreement between England and the Sultan of Zanzibar in 1871 is another example (Du Bois, 2007 [1930]). CADA was still “a productive body and a subjected body” (Foucault, 1995, p. 25) even though their intellectuals started to become vocal as subjects.

### ***Abolitionism and Earlier CADA Intellectuals***

But during this complex slavery and slave-trade discourse, CADE abolitionists, former slaves and freeborn Africans in the Americas challenged the moral contradictions of slavery (Chambers, 1861). The first serious abolitionists were freeborn and freed diaspora African men and women. These protest writings included Wheatley’s protest poems, the narratives of Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cugoana, letters of Charles Ignatius Sancho, among others. They were the

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<sup>98</sup>While the Americo-Liberian leaders were against the slave trade in principle and assisted the British government in combating trade in human beings, it is also important to note here that Liberian leaders treated indigenous Africans in the same way European-Americans treated African-Americans in the USA. They treated them like slaves (Wolters, 2006). They considered themselves part of the ‘civilizing mission.’ There was a sense of *us* (Americo-Liberians) versus *them* (Indigenous people) as President Warner said in 1866 (Stewart, 1886, p. 78). According to Stewart, “within the past ten years, the relation between the native and the Negro emigrant from America has been that of master and slave. The former American slave treated the African freeman as if he had no rights which were worthy of respect!” (1886, p. 77).

first CADE organic intellectuals. They were not only marginal, but they were also considered insignificant by the slave regime and the intellectual machinery supporting slavery.

A coherent, more intellectually organized anti-slavery movement, however, would not start until the beginning of the 19th century as CADA abolitionists became active and vocal against slavery and the slave trade. But Continental Europeans did not allow slavery on their soil, even though slavery flourished in their colonies (Williams, 1944). France and England, for instance, had wealthy planters with powerful connections with state officials in the ‘mother countries’ so their influence on anti-slavery legislations was extensive. They tested abolitionists’ determination.

### ***Pro-Slavery, Enlightenment Ideals and CADE Abolitionists***

However, pro-slavery groups used Enlightenment ideals that Europeans espoused to emphasize that Africans were either beasts (Carrol, 1900) or less human (Smith, 1905). As already noted earlier, 18<sup>th</sup>-century philosophers and scientists used empirical observations and studies to draw denigrating conclusions about Africans. They were not, in their view, intentional in their denigration. Their scholarship was based on the science of the day although contemporary race scholars characterize their then race science as ‘pseudoscience’ (Heng, 2018). It was not pseudoscience but science of their day because science as we know it today did not exist in the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (see Wallerstein, 2006; Foucault, 2002). There was time when the distinction between science and philosophy was not easy to establish. Kant’s writing on ‘race’, as I will discuss shortly, was considered a work of science. It was a rudimentary science with serious methodological and evidential limitations. Much of this science was a discourse based on travellers’ narratives. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, discourse on identity, especially African colour identity, was considered scientific (see Jenkins, 2020; Rush, 1799). But the narratives on which most of these ideas (scientific and philosophical) were not phenomenological in nature in the Husserlian

sense. European travellers were influenced by existing sentiments against Africans. They did not relate what they experienced first-hand; they confirmed preconceived ideas.

Following the rise of a fervent anti-slavery movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, denigrations became visceral and intentional. Enlightenment intellectuals such as Kant, Hume, Blumenbach, were drawing scientific or philosophical conclusions from what they considered ‘facts’. These Enlightenment intellectuals were not, necessarily, intentionally falsifying scientific and philosophical ideas. As Voltaire has argued, “[It] may be said that if [the ‘Negros’] understanding is not of a different nature from ours, it is at least greatly inferior” (Voltaire, in Freter, 2018, p. 238). Montesquieu ridiculed the enslavement of Africans and their assumed inferiority by arguing that “It is impoffible [impossible] for us to fuppofe thefe [suppose these] creatures to be men, becaufe [because], allowing them to be men, a fufpicion [suspicion] would follow, that we ourfelves [ourselves] are not Chriftians [Christians]” (cited in Rush, 1773, p. 5). Benjamin Rush countered this popular charge against CADA by arguing that travellers have noted African “ingenuity, humanity, and strong attachment to their parents, relations, friends and country, show us that they are *equal to the Europeans* (1773, p. 4, emphasis added). James Beattie’s (1805) criticism of David Hume’s denigration of CADA is also illustrative. Beattie criticized Hume by arguing that one would have to meet all CADA people personally to support the nature of the generalization Hume was making. He also argued that “Great Britain and France were as savage two thousand years ago” (p. 309). Hume modified his position from ‘negro’ to ‘negro nations.’

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century pro-slavery CADE intellectuals, because of their interest in the slave regime, however, became intentionally misleading. The more CADA was defended by sympathetic CADE and CADA abolitionists, morally or on intellectual principle, the more vilification became intense. Consequently, the responses to the abolitionist movement and the

prominence of former slaves in the abolitionist movement gave rise to intentional falsification of information about slaves and former slaves and CADA generally. It produced the vilification regime buttressed by intellectuals.

Discursive denigration of CADA, the animalistic treatment of slaves on plantations by masters and overseers, and the subhuman conditions on the slave-ships— the “floating hell” according to a former slave, John Jea (2001 [1811], p. 90)—fuelled the desire by the free people of African descent and their friends to intensify their anti-slavery discourse and campaign through newspapers and slave narratives. William Lloyd Garrison’s *The Liberator* and Frederick Douglass’s *The North Star* are two examples in the United States. Garrison helped with the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1832. On March 23, 1827, *Freedom’s Journal* published an article from *Christian Spectator* lamenting the evil of slavery against the “children of Africa”: “Every American ought to feel that slavery is an opprobrium of the name of liberty” (People of Color, 1827, p. 5). In the first issue of *The Liberator* on January 1, 1831, Garrison rejected his previous position on the ‘gradual’ abolition of slavery and argued that “the severity of language”, which some objected to, was necessary:

*I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm...The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, to hasten the resurrection of the dead.* (Garrison, 1831, p. 1, original emphasis)

In Canada, Reverend Michael Willis, Wilson Ruffin Abbott, Henry Bibb, Publisher George Brown, and Ontario Premier Oliver Mowat led the formation of the Canadian Anti-Slavery Society on February 26, 1851, in Toronto, Ontario (Baker, 2019; Landon, 1919). This society was formed in response to the *Fugitive Slave Act* passed in the USA Congress on September 18, 1850. It forced

many American slaves, through the Underground Railroad, to flee to Canada. In their first resolution, the society wrote that slavery was an “outrage on the laws or humanity... the Bible; and that the continued existence of the practice on this continent is just cause of grief, and demands our best exertions, by all lawful and practical means, for its extinction” (Canadian Anti-Slavery Society, 1852, p. 9). Dr. Alexander Hamilton Ross<sup>99</sup>, who masqueraded in the United States as an ornithologist to free slaves, was an abolitionist who not only discoursed on anti-slavery but practically helped slaves escape to Canada from the USA. He embodied what Canadian Anti-Slavery Society espoused. Reverend John Carrol praised Dr. Ross in the *Christian Guardian* (Toronto) that “Of course, all are now free to denounce the sin and injustice of Slavery; but it was quite another thing to denounce it, and to seek individually to release its victims in the country where it was upheld by law during its existence” (cited in Ross [in “Letters”] 1876, p. 10). Ross travelled the US helping slaves flee to Canada at the risk of his life.

### ***Africa-Centred Identities, Mulatto In-Betweenness, and Intra-CADA Colourism***

Like any human undertaking, the abolitionist movement was characterized by difference of opinion and the identity discourse informed by marginality and denigration. Because slaves were stripped of their language and culture and then denigrated for a socioeconomic and sociological condition in which they were placed (Blyden, 1887), they had to find cultural and identitarian anchorage somewhere. To friends and foes alike, they were not ‘Canadians’ or ‘Americans’. They were ‘negro’ or ‘coloured.’ Freedmen and women and freeborn CADA, however, understood that appellations like ‘negro’ or ‘coloured’ did not represent cultural and

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<sup>99</sup> US President, Abraham Lincoln, once described Dr. Ross as “a red-hot abolitionist from Canada” (Ross, 1876, p. 148).

geographical anchorage. Africa provided them with this anchorage whether they were born in Africa or in the Americas.

However, identifying as ‘Africans’ in the Americas created other moral issues. Mixed-race people of African and European descent did not see themselves as Africans, but their treatment by CADE was not very different from that of dark-skinned Africans, who had no European ancestry, so their attitude toward CADE and CADA was initially ambivalent. They were divided on approach to marginality between what Gramsci called ‘war of position’ as opposed to ‘war of manoeuvres’. War of position is a long-term struggle through cultural and intellectual methods to achieve hegemony over the controlling forces. Light-skinned CADA, especially in the Americas, did not see themselves as ‘negro’ as they were placed by CADE between ‘whites’ and ‘blacks.’ They therefore preferred war of position. Dark-skinned CADA like Edward Blyden and Marcus Garvey, who regarded themselves as of “purely African race” (Blyden, 1887, p. 86) were suspicious of ‘mulattoes’. They preferred a ‘war of manoeuvres’, a direct confrontation in their fight against colour prejudice, which they experienced from ‘whites’ and ‘mulattoes’. American novelist, Toni Morrison (2014 [1997]), in *Paradise*, reverses this colour dynamic. The town of Ruby in *Paradise* is a ‘blacks-only’ town that excludes ‘whites’ or people who are not ‘pure’, that is, ‘blacks’ with European blood.

But mixed-race people of African and European descent would be caught in Bhabha’s in-betweenness until CADE’s denigration during the years of the American civil war, Reconstruction and Jim Crow compelled them to join ‘negroes’. Their identity was at the margin of both groups: neither ‘black’ nor ‘white’. CADE’s insistence on the purity of the ‘white race’ would force mixed-race people out of their in-betweenness. They would involuntarily move to the ‘black’ side even when they did not consider themselves ‘black’. William Brown (1852) has argued that

ALTHOUGH the first slaves, introduced into the American Colonies from the coast of Africa, were negroes of a very dark complexion with woolly hair, and it was thought that slavery would be confined to the blacks, yet the present slave population of America is far from being black. (pp. 273-274)

While there were freeborn and freed ‘pure Africans’ in the Americas, most of the freedmen and freeborn descendants of slaves were mixed-race, then referred to as ‘people of colour’ or ‘coloured people’ or loosely, ‘mulattoes’ (Horowitz, 1973; Steward, 1904). Dark-skinned Africans or ‘pure Africans’ were the ones considered ‘negroes’ because mixed raced people were not considered (and did not consider themselves) ‘negroes’. As William G. Allen, a quadroon, once objected to an article in a newspaper about him, the author “describes me as the 'negro.' This is *preposterous and ridiculous*” (1853, p. 22, emphasis added). That a quadroon would be ‘negro’ or ‘black’ would be far from ‘preposterous and ridiculous’ during the colour line regime.

The United States, however, would shift to a bi-colour identity discourse [‘negro-white’; ‘coloured-white’; ‘black-white’] during the Jim Crow regime but other countries such as Brazil, Jamaica and South Africa remained with multi-colour divides. Mulattoes were ambivalently positioned because they were illegitimate children of slave masters, so their lighter skin was used by slave masters to give them limited privileges that gave them a false sense of superiority over ‘pure Africans’.<sup>100</sup>

William Brown has succinctly described the change in colour of African slaves in the Americas:

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<sup>100</sup> There were slave masters who refused to buy ‘white negroes’ because they believed these light-skinned slaves would be hard to control for their lighter skin would make them feel equal to their masters (Drew, 1856; Brown, 1852). It was also easy for ‘white negroes’ to run away and *pass* for ‘white’.



The change in colour, is attributable, solely to the unlimited power which the slave owner exercises over his victim. There being no lawful marriage amongst slaves, and no encouragement to slave women to be virtuous and chaste, there seems to be no limits to the system of amalgamation carried on between master and slave. This accounts for the fact, that most persons who go from Europe, or from the Free States, into Carolina or Virginia, are struck with the different shades of colour amongst the slaves. On a plantation employing fifty slaves, it is not uncommon to see one third of them mulattoes, and some of these nearly white. (1852, pp. 273-274)

Still, some CADE scholars considered ‘mulattoes’ inferior as theories of animal breeding were used to judge ‘mulattoes’ as degenerate or prone to degeneracy (Boas, 1940; Smith, 1905). While David Goodman Croly and George Wakeman (1864), the authors of *Miscegenation*, hailed race mixing as the future of America, John van Evrie the author of *Subgenation*, considered miscegenation ominous.<sup>101</sup>

[mixed] or mongrel people perish and are blotted from the face of the earth. The Egyptians, the Carthagenians [sic], and now the Mexicans, are historical examples of God's punishment upon those who dare to mar the works of His creation. (1864, p. 67)

van Evrie ominously added that:

The dome of the Capitol, therefore, with its mulatto statue, has the symbol of decay upon it, and it would seem to constantly point to the triumph of the Confederate or *White* Constitution in the place of the mongrelized one which the folly of the hour has deified (original emphasis).

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<sup>101</sup> Both pamphlets [*Miscegenation* and *Subgenation*] were originally published anonymously.

This kept the identity and the attitude toward mixed-race people fluid, contradictory and confusing. But the defining reality would be economics and social status. According to Delany (1852), while the socioeconomic condition of free ‘mulattoes’ was not different from that of slaves or free ‘negroes’, free ‘mulattoes’ had a closer association with the European side of their ancestry than their African side. This would make ‘coloured’ look down on dark-skinned people (‘negroes’) in Africa (Prah, 1998; Snail, 2008) and in the Americas (Bennet, 1969; Horowitz, 1973).

### ***Mulattoes as ‘Africans’***

But it was not all ‘people of colour’ who looked down on ‘pure Africans’ and shunned being called Africans. Some ‘people of colour’ and ‘pure Africans’ embraced their African identity even when African cultures, values and morality were under the assault of scientific and philosophical epistemology inspired by Enlightenment science and philosophy (Mbembe, 2017). Most mixed-race people did not consider themselves Africans because of their European ancestry; they were, nonetheless, considered ‘Africans’ by pro-slavery personalities, CADE abolitionists, and American political leaders. For instance, Hinton Helper (1867, 1868) and Flournoy (1833), and supporters of African colonization like President Jefferson and President Lincoln, did not differentiate between ‘pure Africans’ and mixed-raced African-Americans regardless of the percentage of their European ancestry. They wanted them all moved out of America.

Helper (1867) wanted all CADA exterminated, or as he put it, *fossilized*. This attitude was epitomized by the Zong Massacre of November 29, 1781. Originally a Dutch slave ship that was captured as a war ‘prize’ and sold by British privateers to the British slave traders (Krikler, 2007), Zong was a slave ship on its way to Jamaica from Ghana with 442 slaves. When the voyage was taking too long and the ship was running out of water and other supplies, Luke Collingwood, the captain of the Zong, ordered the crew to drown 133 slaves to save the rest of the slave and the crew

(BlackPast, 2011; History, 2022; Krikler, 2007). The massacre was also meant to, apparently, avoid slave insurrection on the ship (Burnard, 2019; Krikler, 2007). The captain argued that they resorted to that drastic measure to save the rest on the ship for they were running out of water and food. However, historians argue that the crew realized that they were losing slaves to disease and the only way they could get insurance was if the slave did not die of natural causes.

When the Zong arrived in Jamaica, James Gregson, the owner of the Zong, launched the insurance claim in the United Kingdom, but the loss of African lives was not part of the conversation to the Zong owners. They only wanted to recoup the money they had lost from the death of slaves. Olaudah Equiano heard the insurance case and brought it to the attention of British abolitionist, Granville Sharp, who would characterize it as a ‘massacre’ not an insurance claim (Burnard, 2019). Sharp would use the Zong case to rally the British public against slavery. The Zong massacre is an example of how much African lives meant to slave traders.

### ***African Identity, Coloured Identity and the Wilful Distortion of CADA Reality***

As the abolitionist discourse intensified at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, pro-slavery response also intensified. The response by pro-slavery camp was marked by the distortions of history and the caricaturing of CADA identity, values, and social mores. For pro-slavery CADE, telling the phenomenological reality of CADA was counterproductive to the maintenance of slavery. A discourse that would distort the humanity of slaves and present them as objects of slavery was scaled up.

Freedmen and women therefore countered social, cultural and identity distortions with the expression of their African-ness. While pro-slavery CADE scholars, writers, politicians, and slave owners projected Africans as ‘beasts’ or people with anti-civilization psychology through a distortion discourse, CADA started to speak up about their phenomenological reality. They wanted

to be understood through first-hand experiences, in the way they lived and behaved, not through discursive caricatures of the pro-slavery camp. Proud of their African heritage, they started to use ‘African’ to name their schools, churches, social organizations, and newspapers from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century: Free *African* Society of Philadelphia, the *African* School for the free instruction of the “black people”, *African* Methodist Episcopal Church, *African* Methodist magazine, *African* Methodist Meeting House (Steward, 1904, pp. 34-35), *African* Education and Benefit Society, *African* Observer, *African* Free School, etc. (The Freedom’s Journal, 1827). While it was mostly ‘pure Africans’ who embraced an *African identity* for their organizations, Steward argued that the appellation ‘African’ did not exclude ‘coloured people’/‘people of colour’.<sup>102</sup> These were some of the ‘civil societies’ that would fight slavery, the distortion discourse, and the colour line regime.

However, there were objections to the use of ‘African’ by some mixed-race populations. As one Mr. Loveridge of ‘Colored Schools of New York’ told *African Methodist Magazine* in 1843, “As to the name of your periodical, act as we did with the name of our schools—away with Africa. There are no Africans in your connection” (cited in Steward, 1904, p. 35). Mr. Loveridge advised the magazine to replace ‘African’ with ‘coloured’. This was due to the hegemony of the slave regime. It was controlling African-Americans with consent through violence and social action.

The editor of the magazine acknowledged they were not native Africans but still argued that “as the descendants of that race, how can we better manifest that respect due to our fathers who begat us, than by the adoption of the term in our institutions” (Steward, 1904, p. 36). While

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<sup>102</sup> The first freedmen and freeborn who wrote their narratives in the 18<sup>th</sup> century identified themselves as Africans. John Jea (1773), Olaudah Equiano (1789), Ignatius Sancho (1782), Quobna Ottobah Cugoana (1787) and George White (1810) all included ‘African’ in the titles of their narratives. Unlike the other three, White was born in Virginia but still identified as an African.

the editor's rationale was based on the colour identity and historical pride given the way Africa of the time was represented, Mr. Loveridge's point of view was based on their identity as Americans. For some, being 'African' was to have been born in Africa so those born in America could not possibly be Africans. By 1843, as Du Bois (1904 [1896]) shows, Africans were still being illegally 'imported' to the United States so there were indeed native-born Africans still coming to the United State three decades after the official abolition of the slave trade. It is also important to note that there were 'pure Africans' and American-born 'negroes' who had moved to Liberia and Sierra Leone, so the nature of an African identity was not easy to formalize in the Americas.

But it was not only the African identity that was under question. The appellation 'coloured' was also part of identity discourse at the time. In 1841, William Whipper of the *American Reform Society* challenged the free population through the *Colored American Magazine* by questioning the wisdom of using the word 'coloured' or 'people of colour' instead of an inclusive term 'American'. Whipper challenged what he referred to as the "complexional cast" (cited in Weems, 2002). According to Steward (1904, p. 39), the period between 1830 to 1860 was "a period of great mental activity on the part of the free colored." However, this 'great mental activity' was still constrained by CADE ideas about CADA humanity and identities, all of which CADE wanted to control. The discourse on 'African' or 'coloured' or 'American' identities were all conditioned by what CADE wanted CADA to be and where to live socially, politically, and economically. They still lived under CADE's hegemony. Even if other cultures have contributed to the process of shaping cultural hierarchies in the world, Gramsci argues that "they have had a universal value only in so far as they have become constituent elements of European culture, which is the only historically and concretely universal culture" (Gramsci, 1999, p. 765).

CADA intellectuals and their civil societies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century followed what they believed would make CADE respect what they described at the time as the “self-conscious manhood” (Du Bois, 1999 [1903], p. 215); however, CADE themselves were not sure of what to do with ‘Africans’ in the Americas. According to Alexander Crummell (1898), “[manhood] is the most majestic thing in God’s creation; and hence the demand for the very highest art in the shaping and moulding of human souls” (p. 4). Those who argued that CADA had been biblically and scientifically proven to be the quintessential universal slave (Smith, 1905; Flournoy, 1835; Cartwright, 1865; van Evrie, 1864) did not mind CADA staying in a subordinate position as an economic hand. CADA was welcome only as an inferior “perfectly contented with his lot” (People of Color, 1827, p. 13). This was the way in which American plantocrats rationalized slavery, but they did not want “to divest their families of a property [slave]” (Jefferson, 1918, p. 73).

### ***The Logic of CADA Exclusion and the Problematics of Co-Existence***

But the ‘increased mental activity’ Steward mentioned bothered CADE in the Americas for they believed peaceful coexistence between ‘African’ and ‘European’ races would not be possible.<sup>103</sup> According to President Jefferson, emancipating all slaves, old and young, and keeping them in the USA “is of those only who have not had the guide of experience and knowledge” (People of Color, 1827, p. 25). In the twilight years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Jefferson (1918) accepted that Africans were humans; but he still considered them inferior and different from ‘whites’. In *Notes of the State of Virginia*, Jefferson preferred Europeans coming to the USA as laborers to replace slaves after emancipation because he believed the prejudices by European-Americans, the

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<sup>103</sup> In the “Minutes of a National Security Council Meeting” on December 17, 1969, US Under Secretary Elliot Richardson told President Richard Nixon, about the relations between ‘blacks’ and ‘whites’ in Southern Africa, that “A white minority ruled by a black majority will not work and a black majority ruled by a white minority does not work. There must be a partition. The whites feel they have a right to be there, as we do in the US (Burton & Keefer, 2011, p. 59).

historical grievances by African-Americans, and “natural” physical differences, may lead to “the extermination of the one or the other race” (1832 [1787], p. 144).

But nearly a century later, the mutual colour-based extermination thesis was still being raised as the abolition of the institution of slavery divided America. President Lincoln, like Jefferson, believed that slavery was immoral, but he did not think European-Americans and African-Americans could live side by side as equals without violence (Du Bois, 1935). In a speech in Nebraska on October 16, 1854, President Lincoln argued that if he had the power then “My first impulse would be to free all the slaves, and send them to Liberia,—to their own native land.” But Lincoln argued that a sudden removal of freedmen and women to Liberia without adequate preparation means that the colonists “would all perish in the next ten days.” Lincoln then asks, “What next? Free them, and make them politically and socially, our equals? My own feelings will not admit of this; and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not.” Lincoln concludes that “We cannot, then, make them equals.” However, he accepted gradual emancipation, something abolitionists, Douglass and Garrison, considered unreasonable. As Garrison has argued,

Tell a man whose house is on fire to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen;—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. (Garrison, 1831, p. 1)

For Jefferson and Lincoln, freeing slaves meant the management of coexistence in the USA, which, as noted above, they could not envisage. The majority of the free African-American population were Americans by birth. They considered being sent to ‘their own native land’ [Africa] an exclusionary discourse they could not accept (Steward, 1904). But staunch proponents like

Flournoy (1835), argued that African-Americans, regardless of their European ancestry or place of birth, should face a “sudden practical expulsion... back to their own Africa” (p. 4). The United States, to use Charles Mills’ (1997) expression, was ‘a normed space’; *normed* as European.

### ***Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Abandoning of Africa-Centred Identities***

The discourse on abolition and the settling of African-American colonists in Africa intensified the discourse on identity, colour appellations, and their ethical consequences. If ‘negroes’ were ‘Africans’, then ‘deporting’ them to Africa seemed justified; it was ‘their own native land.’ This made some African-Americans wary of being associated with ‘Africa’. Identity terms and the Taylorian moral horizon under which they were to be accepted or rejected centred on ‘African identity’. According to Charles Taylor (2001, p. 341), our identities are important regarding where we position ourselves in a moral space to receive or be denied ‘life goods’. ‘Life goods’ in one’s moral horizon, for Taylor, are constructed around “self-responsible reason, the pursuit of happiness, and benevolence” (2001, p. 341).

CADA identities were, however, controlled by CADE, so their moral horizon was also shaped by CADE’s discourses. These discourses would shape power relations through knowledge, culture, economy, social norms, and religion. CADA seemed locked in the ‘natural attitude’. They had to self-identify through CADE’s discourses because CADE intellectuals were (and still are), to use Merleau-Ponty’s phrase, ‘the community of thinkers.’<sup>104</sup> ‘Africa’ became a Pandora box so between 1816 and the 1860s, some African-American organizations started to phase out the then popular ‘African’. On March 4, 1837, for instance, editors of *Colored American* argued that “We

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<sup>104</sup> These ‘community of thinkers’ are Gramsci’s *traditional intellectuals*, who shape consent in hegemonic situations: “[this] consent is ‘historically’ caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 145).



are written about, preached to, and prayed for, as *Negroes*, *Africans*, and *blacks*, all of which have been stereotyped, as names of reproach, and on that account, if no other, are unacceptable.” They added that “Let us and our friends unite, in baptizing the term “*Colored Americans*,” and henceforth let us be written of, preached of, and prayed for as such” (Colored American, cited in National Humanities Center, 2007 [1837], p. 3).

Nevertheless, the indignity of slavery and the inability of European-Americans and their political systems to be inclusive made some former African-Americans—‘pure’ or mixed—prefer being colonists in Africa not because it was their native land but because it was the only place where they believed they could settle without being subjugated or to solve the “Problem of Negro Independence” (Stewart, 1886, p. 13). For Britain and the United States, African colonies were a solution to an inconveniencing problem, or a perceived problem, of their own creation. They were essentially, “asylums” in the words of President Jefferson (Stewart, 1886, p. 14). As David George of Shelbourne has argued of the decision to move former slaves to Sierra Leon from Nova Scotia, “The white people of Nova Scotia were very unwilling that we should go, though they had been very cruel to us, and treated many of us as bad as though we had been slaves” (George, 1792).

Britain established a colony in Sierra Leone in 1787 to settle ‘poor whites’ and former slaves who helped imperial Britain in the American War of Independence. When Britain lost the war, slaves who were promised freedom were either sent to the West Indies or to Canada, but mostly to Nova Scotia, Canada (Cooper, 2010; Lockett, 1999). Maroons from Jamaica, after ending their second war (1795-1796) against imperial Britain through the second treaty, were also moved to Nova Scotia in 1796. But hostility against these former slaves based on the difference in the colour of the skin—the cruelty David George invokes in his narrative as quoted above—became insuperable to these newcomers. Benjamin Marston (1783) writes in his diary on May 26

about the riot in Shelburne: “Great Riot today. The disbanded soldiers have risen against the Free negroes to drive them out of Town, because they labour cheaper than they—the soldiers.” African-Canadians in Nova Scotia or African-Americans in Jefferson’s and Lincoln’s America were not understood as *they are...* for their *essence*, through *lived experienced*, as ‘pre-given identity’, but from the “production of an image of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 64). In Husserlian phenomenological parlance, CADA were not understood, or related to, through a *grounded judgement* of values, morality, or culture (Husserl, 1982).

In addition to colour hostilities, the new settlers were settled in areas that were not conducive to farming<sup>105</sup>, which most of them were used to when they were slaves on American plantations. Life became so hard that some started offering their children to indentureship or entering into indentureship themselves to make a living (Black Loyalists, n.d.). In Nova Scotia, Whitfield (2010) has argued that “At times, free blacks slipped back into a state of slavery or were simply re-enslaved as the court records in Shelburne make abundantly clear” (p. 26). Like the case of unscrupulous masters with European servants in the United States, some of these African Nova Scotians were duped by their masters. A one Lydia Jackson thought she was signing a one-year agreement only to realize later that she had signed a 39-year contract. The master then sold her to a merciless master who not only constantly beat Jackson while pregnant, but also attempted to sell her into slavery in the West Indies. There was no respite for former slaves in the US, the UK, West Indies, or Canada. According to Whitfield, “racial identity [‘blackness’] was more significant in deciding their place in society as opposed to whether they were free or not” (2010. p. 26).<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> European colonists in Africa also pushed indigenous Africans to barren lands. These lands were not conducive for farming (see Gewald, 2003)

<sup>106</sup> In the West Indies, slavery was replaced by a system of ‘apprenticeship’, which became “a more vicious and more destructive system” than slavery (Teall, 1897, p. 3).

The US would follow Britain in establishing its colony. A mixed-raced African-American, Paul Cuffee, had resettled “forty colored persons in his own vessel, at his own expense, from Boston to Sierra Leone” in 1815 (Stewart, 1886, p. 14). However, the real resettlement of African Americans in Africa would be the establishment of Liberia under President Monroe. The Establishment of Sierra Leone inspired the American Colonization Society (ACS), formed in 1816 by Reverend Robert Finley, Charles Fenton Mercer, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Bushrod Washington, Elias Caldwell, Francis Scott Key, and President Monroe, made the US think of their own colony in Africa.

Ironically, ACS was supported by proslavery and anti-slavery American bourgeois. To the pro-slavery group, it was their chance to get rid of free African-Americans they feared influenced slaves about freedom. Liberia and Sierra Leone embodied acceptance and rejection. Their establishment was the admission by CADE that CADA must be free to run their own affairs without colour-based molestation. But they also embodied the argument that CADA must be free; but not free here [Britain, Canada, USA, etc.]. The anti-slavery group thought it was the best way for free African-Americans to avoid colour-based degradation and find dignity in self-government (Costello, n.d.). Paul Cuffee (1812, p. 5) wrote glowingly in his lecture to Abolitionist Society of the United States after visiting Sierra Leone in 1811 “that encouragement may be given to all our brethren, who may come from the British colonists or from North America, in order to become farmers, or assist us in the cultivation of our land.” This encouraged abolitionists, who wanted African-Americans to have a place they could call ‘home’ and be free. But it also encouraged pro-slavery personalities to encourage African-Americans to go back to their ‘fatherland.’

On March 3, 1819, the US Congress passed the Slave Trade Act (Finney, 1949; Documents Relating to the United States and Liberia, 1910). The *Act* was meant to suppress the slave trade on the coast of West Africa and return illegally captured slaves to Africa. The Act was also used by ACS to lobby Congress about the establishment of a colony in West Africa to settle ‘free people of color’. In February of 1820, Samuel Bacon, acting as the US Agent, “started from New York City for the West Coast of Africa with eighty-eight persons of color, in the ship *Elizabeth*, which was chartered by the Government, and sailed under the flag of the United States” (Stewart, 1886, p. 16).

In addition to Sierra Leone and Liberia being ‘asylums’ for problems the United States and the United Kingdom did not want to deal with, the colonies also became instrumental in the fight against the slave trade that has been declared as a ‘piracy’ by England and other imperial powers (Du Bois, 2018 [1915]). The establishment of the above two colonies in Africa and the moral and martial assault on the slave trade, were British discourses meant for self-absolution. What the UK and the USA were getting rid of was not a moral problem but mainly a ‘colour problem’, an assumed problem. The USA and the UK wanted to create ideal European ‘nations’ whose languages, cultures and religions and social mores were the same. Poor ‘whites’, who were taken to Sierra Leone as colonists with diaspora ‘blacks’, did not exemplify the paragons of citizenship (understood as ‘whiteness’). I will address this in detail in Chapter 6.

## **From Slavery to Colonization and Colour-Based Segregation**

### ***The Reductive Perception of CADA in CADE’s Consciousness***

What became the major problem with CADA as a moral being, a rational being who lived according to acceptable principles of right or wrong, was CADE’s penchant to stop one problem about Africa only to start another problem. If the African proved phenomenologically, through

experience, to behave in ways with which CADE identified, then a new discourse had to be created. CADA-CADE equality compromised the usefulness of CADA to CADE. CADA as an object of intentionality to CADE, sometimes appears in its actual phenomenological being, as *it is*. But for CADA to be useful, this phenomenological reality, that it is true ‘CADA is our equal’, must be falsified for the sake of slavery. This denialist discourse would later be useful to colonialism and colour-based segregation. As Mbembe (2001) has argued, “thinking about African societies and their history is deprived of all legitimacy” (p. 6), making it difficult to understand “African economic and political facts” (p. 7). As it has already become clear at this state of the dissertation, CADE continued to harbour mixed feelings toward CADA. Just as the horror of the slave trade would take a long time to percolate into the conscience of the CADE world (Du Bois, 2018 [1915]), it would also take time for the indignities and atrocities meted out on Africans to affect CADE conscience. This may have been because the violence of the colonial and the slave regimes “had no compunction about expressing itself behind the ideological mask of benevolence and the tawdry cloak of humanism” (Mbembe, 2001, p. 31).

Africans were, apparently, enslaved and colonized, ‘for their own good.’ Initially, Africans ‘were not fit for civilization.’ They, however, could learn European philosophy, science, languages and way of life (The Freedom’s Journal, 1827, p. 38; Gregoire, 1800). The discourse therefore changed from African ‘inability to civilize’ to CADE’s duty to ‘civilize’ the “uncultivated children of nature” (Schweinfurth, 1878, p. 19). The Euro-African encounter after the abolition of slavery therefore changed from phylogenetic to sociogenic (Fanon, 2008 [1952]). Consequently, the moral horizon (Taylor, 2001) of Euro-African sociogenic encounters shaped CADA’s negative moral image and cultural identity on the continent and abroad (Vaughan, 2006). To be ‘black’ in this sociogenic discourse was not merely to *appear* a such; it was to be ‘ugly, ‘evil’, ‘immoral’,

‘uncivilized’ “before that personal disrespect and mockery, the ridicule and systematic humiliation, the distortion of facts and wanton license of fancy, the cynical ignoring of the better and boisterous welcoming of the worse” (Du Bois, 1999 [1903], p. 219).

But for CADA and their friends, the Diaspora African was morally degraded by slavery but the continental African had the dignity and virtuousness of their ancestors. The enslaved African, according to Steward (1904, p. 23) had lost “African spirit and character” by 1860s so what was left was a new servile, faithful, and incompetent slave existing in a “negative form.” With name, religion and culture obliterated to produce Foucauldian ‘docile bodies’ of the biopower regime, the enslaved African existed in what Patterson (1982) has described as a ‘social death’.

For CADE, Africans needed moral guidance so the argument that the continental African was morally better than the diaspora African did not save Continental Africans from oppressive indignities and colonial violence. These indignities include the distortion, elision and the invisibilization of CADA values, cultures, and identities. According to Mbembe (2017), CADA, as “a human whose name is disdained, whose power of descent and generation has been foiled, whose face is disfigured, and whose work is stolen...bears witness to a mutilated humanity, one deeply scarred by iron and alienation” (p. 36). It is in this context that ‘negro’ and ‘black’, already institutionalized in knowledge production by the 18<sup>th</sup> century science and philosophy, became further codified for economic, cultural, and political interests in CADE’s interest in Africa.

Generally, Iberians applied ‘negro’ to continental Africans in the 15<sup>th</sup> century before they use it to categorize African slaves in the new World from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. As I have already noted, some scholars argue that ‘the negro’ was the creation of the slave master. What Arabs and Moors of the Andalusia and North Africa referred to as *bilad el Sudan* (land of the ‘blacks’), is the area the Portuguese would later refer to as *terra de negros*. Because of inter-European intellectual,

economic, and cultural cooperation, explorers, merchants, slave traders, and colonialists would adopt ‘negro’ or some of its permutations in various European languages. What we now call ‘sub-Saharan Africa’ was ‘Negroland’ or ‘Nigritia’ (inspired by latin *niger* [black]). Unlike Continental Africans, Diaspora Africans were robbed of their identities, languages, cultures and religions by the slave regime.<sup>107</sup> These historical cultural impoverishments are the reason why postcolonial scholars ‘bracket’ colonial assumptions and distortions to understand CADE history, cultures and values in their ‘essences’ through “stock of things that are absolutely evident” (Husserl, 1992, p. 3). What would be ‘evident’ is not the discursive African (of the colonial anthropology) but the phenomenological African as studied, as experienced, by Africans themselves, in-time.

This would be a meditative process toward what Husserl (1992, p. 10) calls a “grounded judgement” by interrogating what the colonial and the slave regimes have already predicated as the CADA reality (‘negroness’ being an example). It is, essentially, to go beyond the naive understanding of the world (Zahavi, 2017), in this case, the colonial world. In this postcolonial ‘meditation’, Bhabha (1994) argues, “What is interrogated is not simply the image of the person, but the discursive and disciplinary place from which questions of identity are strategically and institutionally posed” (p. 68). I have, from Chapter 4, extended this ‘discursive and disciplinary place’ where ‘blackness’ or ‘negroness’ are interrogated to the classical world.

‘Negro’, however, was not applied to all continental Africans that are now collectivized by ‘black’ as ‘Black Africans’. An Ethiopian (then Abyssinian) high school student, Mesfin Binega, said in a 1957 panel discussion in the USA that “As an Ethiopian, I am prejudiced against both white people and Negroes” (Mental Health Treatment, 2020). Today, modern Ethiopians identify as ‘black’ with the rest of Sub-Saharan Africans. The Portuguese in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the rest

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<sup>107</sup> There are Diaspora Africans in the Americas (Cuba and Brazil, for instance) who either practice a version of Africanized Catholicism or reverted to Voodooism.

of Europe during the years of imperial colonialism in Africa, did not identify modern Ethiopians, then called Abyssinians, as ‘negro’. ‘Negro’, therefore applied only to Continental Africans who were *denigrated* as ‘woolly-haired’ with ‘flat noses’ (Williams, 1882). Straight-haired Continental Africans such as Ethiopians and Somalis were not considered ‘negroes’. They were therefore not ‘black’ Africans. But both ‘negro’ and ‘black’ had a broader, vague, if not confusing, application because they were also used as colour-based identities for non-African peoples in Asia and Oceania (Gordon, 2014b).<sup>108</sup> They are exogenous to those being identified so.

Given the above remarks, I will argue, ‘black’ and ‘negro’ have contributed to a reductive understanding of CADA identities through non-cultural horizons. Internal social, religious, cultural, and economic differences would become less important to European imperialists. As such, differences among Continental Africans would be hidden or expressed on sociogenic or economic grounds in the interest of colonialists, European colonists, and enslavers. This reductive approach, of treating continental Africans as a cultural and economic monolith, was instrumental to the colonial and slave regimes and CADE intellectuals. For instance, one reads such parochial generalizations: “[all] negro nations are dealers by nature” (Frobinus, 1913, p. 360); or Burton (1863, p. 224) describing an African [Jambo] as having “the true negro laugh, ending in a chuckle.”

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<sup>108</sup> In the United States, Native Americans were referred to as “blacks” in some legal documents (Forbes, 1983). It did not matter who others were culturally and what they called themselves. There was no courtesy or human respect exercised in appellations describing non-CADE. There was the CADE, the people that mattered, and the rest of the ‘coloured’ world. This colour-based compartmentalism still exists today as ‘people of color’ versus ‘white people.’ Still, CADA are still subjected to more colour-based prejudice than non-CADA by CADE. But the binary is still the case as is clear in Black Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) vs. ‘White.’



### ***CADE's Self-Consciousness: The 'Civilized' CADE and the 'Uncivilized' CADA***

However, CADE travellers in Africa were specific when they wanted to be but denigrating when they felt their 'superiority' was somehow undermined by 'inferior' Africans. I have already noted Kant's description of the carpenter as a 'scoundrel' after the carpenter described Europeans, through a logical deduction, as 'foolish'. Frobenius did not share in the argument that Africans had not developed an advanced civilization; however, he believed Africans lapsed back into barbarism and lost their 'high' culture, so Europeans had to collectively 'civilize' them through the exertion of authority of *the* superior. After witnessing an exchange between some Africans and Germans, he observed that "the black power is capable of achieving some great things"; however, he notes that "this very fact calls for redoubled intellectual application on the part of the wielders of power; that is to say, of the transmitters of European culture" (Frobenius, 1913, p. 40).

But that BP is capable of achieving some great things' is something Richard Burton (1863) ridiculed: "From humbly aspiring to be owned as a man, our black friend now boldly advances his claims to *égalité* and *fraternité*, as if there could be brotherhood between the crown and the clown!" (p. 175, original emphasis). Equality and fraternity between CADE and CADA were to Burton naturally impossible.<sup>109</sup> But the product of the BP Frobenius invoked (though paternalistically) and ridiculed by Burton as wishful thinking of 'clowns' was also described differently by Mungo Park. Dr. Park, like all European travellers on Africans, swung between denigration (surprise) and praise. He described the view of the Sego city, the capital of the West African kingdom of Bambarra as 'extensive' with "numerous canoes upon the river; the crowded population, and the cultivated state of the surrounding country, formed altogether a prospect of civilization and magnificence, which I little expected to find in the bosom of Africa" (Park, 1798,

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<sup>109</sup> van Evrie (1864) argued that civilization is threatened unless "every other being is also fitted in the place nature intended for him" (pp. 64-65).

p. 196). He ‘little expected to find [Sego] in the bosom of Africa’ because the European imaginary he had was of a discursive Africa understood as a savage singularity. But Dr. Park was looking at a *phenomenological* Africa without the mediation of discursive *eyes*. He was looking at the ‘thing itself’, as an object of intentionality, and then as a phenomenon.

Unlike earlier travellers to Africa like Park who were more descriptive than denigrating, Burton, like subsequent travellers and colonialists, would be denigrating and distorting (see Taiwo, 2010). The totalizing and negative attitude developed toward African-Americans between the 1850s and the 1950s would become the *modus operandi* in Africa. To CADE, they were ‘all negroes’ because, as Du Bois (1999 [1903]) has noted, “most Americans answer all queries regarding the Negro *a priori*” (p. 277, original emphasis). Fanon (1982 [1963]) has said something similar about colonialism and Continental Africans where colonialists “erect a framework around the people which follows *a priori* schedule” (p. 113, original emphasis). There was no, in most cases, a critical analysis of CADA history, values, ethics, and relations with others to achieve *grounded judgements*, which Du Bois (1999 [1903]) would describe as a “careful inquiry and patient openness to conviction” (p. 277).

### ***Segregation, The Colour Line Regime, and ‘Negro’ Identity***

While the Reconstruction period (1865-1877)—which would coincide with Morgan Stanley’s exploration of Africa (1874-1877) and the subsequent imperial scramble for Africa (1884-1885)—was initially hopeful to African-Americans, economic interest, discourse on power, and in-group bias would frustrate Reconstruction (see Du Bois, 1935). With slavery, social lines were clear. After the abolition of slavery, these lines risked becoming blurred. A new control discourse had to be created, and the colour line regime legalized violence and African-American denigration and oppression. As Lydia Child (1833) and Du Bois (1999 [1903]) have explained, the

former Confederate States had to ‘re-enslave’ African-Americans without slavery through Jim Crow political and social control.<sup>110</sup> After the American civil war, European-Americans in the South, and their apologists in the North (and in Europe) regarded African-Americans, and CADA generally, as the *Fundamental Other* about whom any treatment was justifiable.

However, African-Americans, like all continental Africans, were no longer Burtonian clowns. They had become intellectuals, *organic* intellectuals, and leaders of civil societies. They were writing books, writing stinging editorials in their newspapers about CADA ‘manhood’. While discourse on ‘manhood’ and intellectual elevation would intensify after the American civil war, it started at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as discussed earlier.<sup>111</sup> The intellectual resistance against the discourse-created CADA image, to replace it with a phenomenological image, continued.<sup>112</sup> In the postcolonial context, “The distinction is between the authentic experience of the ‘real’ world and the inauthentic experience of the unvalidated periphery” (Ashcroft et al., 2004, p. 87). As CADA pushed back; CADE countered this push back through intellectuals, legal and social norming of spaces, violence, and denigration. Being ‘African’, which CADA exalted with pride until the mid-19 century, became controversial, and in some cases, objectionable.

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<sup>110</sup> I have already noted how ‘apprenticeship’, a disguised form of slavery, replaced formal slavery in the West Indies.

<sup>111</sup> On December 3, 1847, *The North Star*, reporting on the ‘Colored Convention’ of October 6, 1847, in New York City, notes that “Intelligent men there assembled to enquire what shall be done to extirpate Slavery from the land and elevate the character of its oppressed. Here mind grappled with mind, plans were proposed and their merits discussed” (p. 1)

<sup>112</sup> CADA as capable of intellectual production acknowledged by CADE scholars can be traced to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. But CADA with a significant body of intellectuals with the ability to push back against CADE’s hegemony started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See Gregoire (1800), Rush (1798) and *Freedom’s Journal* of May 18, 1827, for the list of CADA personalities with proven intellectual abilities (From the Abolitionist Intelligencer, 1827, p. 37).

### *The Defence of 'Negro Identity' and Its Unifying Function*

By the 1860s, most African-Americans had abandoned 'African'. They abandoned it for fear of being considered un-American not because they had learned something naturally wrong with 'African' as their identity. Appellations that were less offensive to American potentate such as 'blacks', 'black people', 'negro', 'coloured people', and later 'Afro-American', became the preferred appellations. African-American intelligentsia and bourgeoisie first preferred 'coloured' or 'coloured people' because of their mixed African-European ancestry. They were the most educated of the CADA class and "whites were less physically uncomfortable with them" (Mills, 1997, p. 62). But 'negro' would be preferred and defended. Its use did not, however, replace 'coloured' or 'blacks' completely. They continued to be used interchangeably.

Williams (1882), for instance, defended<sup>113</sup> the use of 'negro': "It is not wise...for intelligent Negroes in America to seek to drop the word 'Negro.' It is a good, strong, and healthy word, and out to live. It should be covered with glory: Let Negroes do it" (p. 14).<sup>114</sup> W. E. B Du Bois, responding in 1928 to a high school student, Roland Barton, in which Barton lamented the use of 'negro' for Continental Africans, asks, "why seek to change the name? 'Negro' is a fine word. Etymologically and phonetically, it is much better and more logical than 'African' or 'colored'" (cited in Bennet, 1969, p. 406). In supporting the use of "Negro", Edward Blyden (1883, p. 11, note 12) wondered why Indian, Hindoo, Chinaman, Ashantee, Congo, and Mandingo were written with upper cases, but 'negro' was written with a lower case 'n'. Williams argued that pre-

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<sup>113</sup> Benjamin Rush (1799, p. 289) described 'negro' as an 'epithet', presupposing its foreign origin. No people can describe their identity, an object of pride, as an 'epithet'. John Foard (1904) apologized for using 'Negro': "The term 'Negro' is not used by the writer because of disrespect, but because the first brought here were from near the river Niger, called so as its waters are black, and the inhabitants are black" (p. 14). Foard's apology anticipated the BPM of the 1960s (see Ture & Hamilton, 2011[1967], p. 37).

<sup>114</sup> Note that 'coloured', like 'black' today, was defended in a similar way.

slave trade writers spelled “Negro” with an upper case “N” and that it was the slave trade that “degraded” the term. Williams (1882, p. 12) has also argued that Africans on the West Coast of Africa preferred to be called ‘Negroes’ long before the slave trade by referencing Samuel Purchas (1614) as his source. This is historically inaccurate.

Since ‘negro’ was introduced by the Portuguese, Williams does not make it clear how and why the term ‘negro’ could have been preferred by Africans who had their own indigenous names. Admittedly, ‘negro’ as a categorical appellation, may have predated the slave trade because the Portuguese established the socioeconomic condition that led to the transatlantic slave trade. By the time of Purchas’ *Pilgrimage*, Portugal had already established diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Kongo (Fredrickson, 2002), a kingdom Purchas referenced as he used Portuguese as authority sources. It may therefore be problematic to give the impression that continental Africans preferred the appellations ‘negro’ even if ‘negro’ may have predated the transatlantic slave trade. As discussed in the first section of this chapter, the transatlantic slave trade started nearly a century after the first encounter between captive Africans and the Portuguese voyagers. The language through which the word was introduced came after the first encounter. This, to use Foucault’s (2002) apt description, African-Americans were adopting “the reality that has been patterned from the very outset by the name” (p. 142). The reality of CADA would indeed be patterned by a ‘name’.

Before and during the American civil war when discourse on the morality of slavery and the humanity of CADA became contested, intentional denigration became moralized so seeing CADA in a substandard living condition as they were subjected to vile treatment raised no moral concerns in the consciousness of most CADE people. Wood (1970) notes how pro-slavery Southern bourgeois talked about ‘Africanization’ of the South. Proponents of the colour line regimes even asked President Lincoln to move to Africa. William Smith (1905) wrote of

“Africanization” argument as “the riot of Africanism in the South” (pp. 196-197). In the USA, according to Wood (1970) “the accomplishments of a few successful Negroes actually intensified prejudice against all of them” (p13).<sup>115</sup>

Following the failure of Reconstruction during President Andrew Johnson’s administration (Du Bois, 1935) and the rise of Jim Crow and Ku Klux Klan (KKK), the identity discourse and national inclusion became vicious and banal. The campaign to ensure that the newly freed slaves were meaningfully included in the American economic, political, and social systems was rationalized by the Americans south of Mason-Dixon line as mongrelization (van Evrie, 1964) or Africanization. The Mason-Dixon line, between Maryland and Pennsylvania, separated slave-holding states in the south and non-slave-holding states in the north before 1865 (Black & Arkles, 2016). The Jim Crow era (1877-1965) was a period following Reconstruction during which repressive colour-based laws that established a socio-political and socioeconomic system resembling a caste system were established in the United States (Notter & Logan, 2022). While Jim Crow laws were meant to keep African-Americans ‘in their place’, they also buttressed ‘white supremacy’, disenfranchisement, and oppression of African-Americans. Through the one-drop-rule discourse, the phenomenological realities of the Jim Crow would erase the then existent attitudinal differences between mixed-race African-Americans and African-Americans with no Europeans ancestry. Professor Allen (see Chapter 3), who resented being called a ‘negro’ in 1852, would have been forced by Jim Crow laws to be a ‘negro’ or ‘black’ through the one-drop-rule

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<sup>115</sup> This is perhaps why Burton (1865) in Sierra Leone, Frobenius (1913) in Nigeria, and Fothergill (1915) in Southern Sudan, decried how justice systems in British colonies treated Europeans and Africans as somehow equal under the law.

(Hickman, 1997). Anyone who had any African ancestry, however European they appeared, would be considered ‘coloured’, ‘negro’ or ‘black’ by Jim Crow laws.<sup>116</sup>

For European-Americans, inclusion portended ‘African’ or ‘Negro Supremacy’ at the expense of ‘White Supremacy.’ According to Smith (1905), the decade of 1870 to 1880 “saw white supremacy restored and the Blacks forcibly repressed” (p. 197). For African-Americans, however, inclusion discourse centred on survival in the face of colour-based discrimination, KKK terror, and state brutality so identity appellations became less important. What was dignity of cultural names if you were dead? To use Ralph Ellison’s (2009 [1948]) expression in the *Invisible Man*, African-Americans scholars and intelligentsia during reconstruction and Jim Crow years, were living with their heads “in the lion's mouth” (p. 68). However, the resurgence of the civil rights movement in the 1950s was a new period of ‘increased mental activity’ as Steward would say. I say ‘resurgence’ because the civil rights movement was started during the Reconstruction era before Jim Crow stifled it. The Civil Rights Act was in 1866 (Franklin, 1989).

### *The Linearity Thesis*

While ‘coloured’ and ‘negro’, ‘African’ and ‘Ethiopian’ were used interchangeably by the slave regime since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there is a thesis that periodizes the evolution of CADA identity in a neat, linear manner. Yet, ‘black’ did not officially become as popular as ‘negro’ and ‘coloured’ until the 1960s when Kwame Ture popularized it in his 1966 BP speech. Purchase (1614, p. 502),

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<sup>116</sup> Throughout the history of the United States, the protection of African-Americans human and civil rights was an interplay between hope promised and hope dashed (Du Bois, 1999 [1903]). This interplay also affected how African-Americans responded to European-American backlash such as their move away from ‘African’ identities in the mid-1800s as discussed earlier in the chapter. African-American control over their identities would not take formidable shape until the 1960s. By the 1960s, however, identity discourse re-emerged as cultural pride became part of the fight against colour prejudice and oppression. The intellectual and cultural intercourse with continental Africans combating cultural denigration, cultural obliteration, and physical displacement (Rodney, 2018 [1972]), made cultural pride quintessential in the fight against colour prejudice.

for instance, used ‘blacke people’ and ‘Negro.’ At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Benjamin Rush used ‘black people’ and ‘negroes’ in the same essay (1799) and ‘blacks’ and ‘Negroes’ in another work (1798). While Du Bois questioned Roland Barton in 1928 by asking, ‘why seek to change the name? “Negro” is a fine word’, ‘negro’ was not, however, used in the “National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909 nor did it appear on the title of his most read work, *The Souls of Black Folk*’ in 1904. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, nonetheless, Du Bois used ‘coloured’, ‘black’ and ‘negro’ interchangeably. This identity ambivalence also characterizes postcolonial identities (Bhabha, 1994; Ashcroft et al., 2004). I will revisit this linearity thesis shortly.

Du Bois was mixed-race, and like other mixed-race Americans, he had an elitist attitude of ‘mulattoes’ who did not consider themselves ‘black’ or ‘negro’ (Mills, 1997; James, 1963). Writing about American ‘mulattoes’ who were inspired by ‘mulatto’ immigrants from the West Indies in the 1830s, Du Bois argues that they consider themselves men “not as slaves; as ‘people of color’; *not* as ‘Negroes” (1999 [1903], p. 245, emphasis added). Of course, Du Bois did not reject being called ‘negro’ or ‘black’. His reaction to Garvey’s criticism, however, betrays his latent colour prejudice and elitism.<sup>117</sup> In an *ad hominem* polemic to Marcus Garvey, for instance, Du Bois referred to Garvey as a “A little, fat *black man*, *ugly*, but with intelligent eyes and big head”, “a poor *black boy*” who had taken his “Back to Africa” leadership with a “*monkey-shine*.”

The militant ‘Africa for Africans’ Marcus Garvey of Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) accused Du Bois and other anti-UNIA people of using ‘negro’ for the poor and uneducated and ‘coloured’ for the educated elite (Garvey, 2020 [1923]). Both Du Bois and Garvey were self-denigrating using appellations and discourses of the colonial and the slave

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<sup>117</sup> Cornel West (Gates & West, 1997) has discussed Du Bois’s elitism in *The Talented Tenth*.



regimes. The description of CADA in animalistic terms adopted by Du Bois against Garvey is the same discourse used by CADE for centuries to dissociate from CADA as a lesser humanity. But as Du Bois (1923) has argued, “After emancipation, color caste tended to arise again, but the darker group was quickly welded into one despite color by caste legislation, which applied to a white man with one negro great-grandfather as well as to a full-blooded Bantu” (p. 542)

Here, I revisit the linearity thesis I mentioned earlier. Even when George Williams and Du Bois defended the use of ‘negro’, they still used ‘coloured people’ and ‘black people’ interchangeably with ‘negro’ in their writings. For instance, Du Bois (1905) used ‘negro’ and ‘black man’ in the first paragraph of his Niagara Movement speech in Fort Erie, Ontario, four years before the formation of NAACP (Martin, 1991). In *Froudacity* (1890), the Trinidadian writer and linguist, John J. Thomas, used ‘Ethiopic element’, ‘African element’, ‘negro’ and ‘black’ interchangeably.<sup>118</sup>

These are just samples but the same applies to nearly all the books addressing ‘blackness’ and ‘race’ I have read for this dissertation. Of all the books I have read, there is not a single book, between the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the 1970s, that adopted one appellation without using others in the same work. The use of these appellations was, in most cases, arbitrary. While there were cases in which one appellation was preferred, there was no reason given why others were also used. What indeed happened from the 1960s is a complete disappearance of ‘coloured’ and ‘negro’. However, ‘black’ has always been there; it only became prominent because of the nature of the militancy of

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<sup>118</sup> Even in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when ‘African’ was still invoked as an identity, it was used with other appellations as in “*African School for the free instruction of the black people*” (Steward, 1904. p. 35, emphasis added). Other 19<sup>th</sup>-century examples include the following: Lydia Child (1833) used ‘African’, ‘blacks’, ‘people of colour’, ‘coloured people’ and ‘negro’ interchangeably. Blyden (1887) used ‘blacks’, ‘black people’, ‘Negro’ and ‘coloured people.’ Anna Julia Cooper (1892), used ‘blacks’, ‘black people’, ‘coloured people’, and ‘negro.’ This also applies to 20<sup>th</sup>-century writers. William Smith (1905) used ‘Negro’, ‘Blacks’, ‘Black man, and ‘coloured people.’ Marcus Garvey (2020 [1923]) used ‘Africans’, ‘Ethiopians’, ‘negroes’ and ‘black people’ as synonyms.

the political atmosphere and the refusal of African-Americans to accept ‘their place’ (Baldwin, 1993 [1962]; Burton, 1863) as defined by CADE. This is the concretization of ‘black’ subjectivity.

The linearity thesis— ‘coloured’ to ‘negro’ to ‘black’—is therefore not historical; it is discursive. To use Foucault’s (2002) language, this is a discursive embedding of linearity, of continuity, into a complex identity condition in which it did not exist. As Henry Pietersma (2002) has argued phenomenologically, this is an introduction of an external concept into a phenomenon under investigation and then analyzed as if it has always been an inherent character of the phenomena or the social situation. In Husserl’s formulation, this would be like introducing a phenomenon, what appears, into an object of intentionality as if it is what appears to consciousness.

*The influence of the US on Global CADA Identity and Globalization of ‘Negro.’*

I tend to focus a lot on American identity discourse because of its influence on CADA identity and epistemology globally. The global CADA discourse shifts with the shift in American identity discourse. For instance, the Black Power Movement (BPM) in Canada (Austin, 2007), the United Kingdom (Nayaran, 2019; Gilroy, 1991) and South Africa (Snail, 2008) looked to the United States for ideological and leadership inspiration. Continental African writers between 1900s and 1970s use ‘African Negro’ or ‘Negro Africa’. Those were abandoned in the same way and at the same time ‘negro’ was abandoned in the United States.

Today, Continental Africans use ‘black Africans’ and ‘black Africa’ after ‘black’ became popularized during the 1960s. The Civil Rights Movement in the US also coincided with the decolonization of Africa. Since Canada was entangled in the slavery and colonization process (and fugitive slaves) between the United States, the West Indies and Africa, identity categories used for people of African descent in Canada were adopted from identity discourses in the United States. The Underground Railroad, Jamaican Maroons in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone, for instance,

linked Canada to global CADA identity discourse.<sup>119</sup> There were no unique, Canada-specific CADA appellations. African-Canadians therefore adopted American colour identities: ‘coloured,’ ‘negro’ and ‘black.’ Although ‘coloured’ would not be applied to all Africans except mixed-race people in Southern Africa, ‘negro’ applied to African peoples in Africa and the Americas.

In 1872, Edward Blyden named his newspaper in Liberia, “Negro”, arguing that the newspaper “has been called the “Negro” ...because it is intended to represent and defend the interest of that peculiar humanity known as the Negro with all its affiliated and collected branches whether on this continent or elsewhere” (Blyden, as cited in Frenkel, 1974, p. 285). This peculiarity is either in how loose non-cultural identity constructions are, or in how these constructions overgeneralize people for CADE’s convenience. Blyden’s use of a phrase ‘peculiar humanity’ shows CADE speaking through him. It makes no sense to me that Blyden would describe his own people as ‘peculiar’. This is epistemological hegemony par excellence that I have discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 as *epistemological trap*. Fanon (2008 [1952]) would call this the ‘image in the third person’ and Henry (2006) has described it as a ‘second sight.’ Like Blyden, Garvey’s UNIA newspaper was called “World Negro” in the same attempt to unite the “Universal Negro.” Admittedly, as Stephen Graham (1920) has argued, “All tribes of the Negroes became one in a community of suffering” (p. 14).

In adopting ‘negro’, however, CADA were conceding to CADE what they have been told they are, something Ralph Ellison has illustrated in the *Invisible Man*. The Invisible Man is articulate, knows his community very well and what is wrong in his community and in America. However, the cognitive power behind him, the ‘brotherhood’, only wanted him to *speak*, not *think*.

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<sup>119</sup> This is not to say that the African-Canadian identity was/is only about the three historical occasions listed above. I am only using these examples to show that Canada, unlike the United States, did not develop a unique African-Canadian identity based on colour that is different from the one in the US or the West Indies.

He was taught what to say and how to say it by the Brotherhood through ‘Brother Hambro’. Crummell (1898, p. 10) has described this as to “stamp out the brains of the negro!” And this stumping out of the ‘negro’ brain—or emptying the brain of the native as Fanon (1982 [1963]) would say—was performed in the Americas through the Bible (X & Haley, 1964), the slave master whip (Graham, 1920), and the noose and the fire of the lynch mob (Du Bois, 1999 [1903]; Wells-Barnett, 1895).

*The Colour Line Regime, and Africa-Centred Pride and the ‘Civilizing’ Mission*

Between 1900 and the 1960s, CADE’s intentional (and unintentional) denigrating writings about Africa became ubiquitous because colonization (and colonialism) in Africa and Jim Crow laws in the USA were being challenged by CADA writers. Still, pride in African cultures and way of life that was started by Olaudah, Sanchos and Cugoano in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and continued by Crummell, Blyden and Delany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, found a resurgence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Continental African who grew up cultured in their villages were now speaking for Africa. And Du Bois admitted: “once I thought of you Africans as children, whom we educated Afro-Americans would lead to liberty. I was wrong” (Du Bois, as cited in Gates, 2007, p. xviii, Introduction to Du Bois’s *The World and Africa*).

On this account, Césaire (2000) defended traditional African societies as democratic, courteous, fraternal, and cooperative. It is Césaire’s discovery of ancient African civilizations that left Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 109) “speechless”, arguing that “I was not a primitive or subhuman; I belonged to a race that had already been working silver and gold 2,000 years ago.” But the former slave master was intent on making sure the enslavement of Africans was maintained in new forms (Du Bois, 1999 [1903], 1935). The slave trade was replaced by European colonization of Africa and the institution of slavery was replaced by the ‘colour line’ or the ‘colour bar’. It was CADE’s

self-preservation through what Ayn Rand (1964) would describe as ‘objectivist morality’ that considers selfishness a ‘virtue.’ The abolition of slave trade was not in the interest of European imperial powers and their economies (see Williams, 1944). As I mentioned earlier, slavery and the slave trade were not, necessarily, ended because CADE had acknowledged their moral repugnance. They ended because of the condition they could not avoid. But self-preservation would lead European powers to open up Africa for another economic adventure from the 1880s. While Europeans shifted from slavery to colonialism (Fanon, 1982 [1963]), they moralized the colonial discourse as a ‘civilizing mission.’ But colonialism was selfishness through its exploitative capital accumulation where the civilizing mission regime would compartmentalize Africans and Europeans by colour in the colonies (Fanon, 1982 [1963]; Lugard, 1922).

Even the American Colonization Society philanthropists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century believed that differences between free African-Americans and European-Americans by account of colour were naturally unbridgeable and that the two peoples could not live side by side. Du Bois (1999 [1903], p. 217) has described this as “the disorganization of industry, and the contradictory advice of friends and foes.” And this colour-based difference, Smith (1905) has argued, must be maintained “at all times, at all hazards, and at all sacrifices [as] an impassable social chasm between Black and White” (p. 7). It is, ironically, a ‘natural’ chasm that could not self-perpetuate ‘naturally’ so it had to be ‘forcibly’ facilitated *unnaturally* with all its hazardous sacrifices. It was a language-naturalized ‘artificiality’ whose place of existence was in the discourse.

To European-Americans, mitigating prejudice in the consciousness of European-Americans was impossible so ‘deporting’ ‘The Negro’ was the best solution. That they could (or should) change their attitude toward African-Americans and CADA generally was considered ridiculous. For Smith (1905), nature has chiselled centuries worth of “chasm” so it is “infinitely

preposterous to suppose [we] can close [this chasm] in a generation with the filmy webs of common culture and social equality and civil rights and partisan legislation and caricatured religion and the political spoils of the country post-office” (p. 110). Helper (1867) sums up this ‘preposterous’ call for CADE’s change of attitude, this naturalized attitude toward Africans:

[like] hyenas, jackals, wolves, skunks, rats, snakes, scorpions, spiders, centipedes, locusts, chinchies, fleas, lice, and other noxious creatures, the negroes are not upon the earth to be loved and preserved, but, under the unobstructed and salutary operations of the laws of nature, to be permitted to decay and die, and then to disappear, at once and forever, down, down, deep down, in the vortex of oblivion. (p. 105)

Like Helper’s unhinged denigration above, here are other sample CADE’s discourses from which Du Bois drew his polemical depiction of Marcus Garvey. And CADA is not a being to love because, as Richard Burton (1863) argued in the case of West Africa, of his “flat nose, the high cheek-bones, the yellow eyes, the chalky-white teeth pointed like the shark’s, the muzzle projecting as that of a dog-monkey, combine to form an unusual amount of ugliness” (pp. 288-289). In Southern Sudan, Georg Schweinfurth (1878) portrays this denigration against the local people: “The first sight of a throng of savages suddenly presenting themselves in their native nudity, is one from which no amount of familiarity can remove the strange impression” (p. 10). That segregationist attitude informed colonialism and colour-based separatism.

Even after more than two centuries of direct social and economic intercourse, Europeans in the New World attained ‘no amount of familiarity’ with Africans in the New World. With this attitude, it is understandable why abolitionists preferred sending free Africans in the New World to Africa where they could build a new life, a place where they could sing of “De Nigger Legislatur” of

a darkie parliament,  
 An' darkie code of law,  
 An darkie judges on de bench,  
 Darkie barristers and and aw'!  
 ....  
 Fine darkie maids for milliners,  
 An black policemen too;  
 An darkie men to make de hats,  
 De coats, de boots an shoe.  
 Wid black horse-guards, oh, what a shine  
 Would de noble fellow make.

(Buckley et al., 1853, p. 33, No. II)<sup>120</sup>

### *The Discursive Structure and Its Lasting Moral and Social Effects*

Like the 17<sup>th</sup>-century and the 18<sup>th</sup>-century thinkers of the ‘natural history’ variety, the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>-century CADE writers constructed an epistemological structure that determined the *character* of its constituting elements rather than studying the nature of the phenomena under investigation to draw characters that can be used to build the *structure*. It was a rigid structure, a fixism as Foucault would describe it, from which CADA found it difficult to wiggle out. The Buckleys sang dreams of ‘darkie’ land of “darkie” self-determination, of freedom in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; and Robin Kelly (2002) would still write in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of “Freedom Dreams” not of “the old past... [of] glorious, peaceful, or communal [life]” but a place—“many times better than what we found when we got to the Americas.” Today, CADA continue to search for something better, something better than mere survival (Love, 2019; Jean-Pierre & James, 2022). The discursive structure, however, is still there.

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<sup>120</sup> The Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin, whose father was African, prided in his African/‘Ethiopian’ heritage because of the feeling of marginality he experienced in Russia even as a member of the Russian aristocracy. He based this attachment to his ‘Ethiopianness’ on his appearance and heritage (through his father). He was unquestionably part of the ruling aristocracy in Russia. He did not, however, make a distinction between ‘negro’, darker or lighter, as he called them “my brothers the Negroes [*arap/negr/malat* in Russian]” (Shaw, 2006, p. 80).

What Africans found in the Americas was a Foucauldian fixism, a discursively rigid discourse of denigration, thingification, and eternal exclusion that, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, would give President Trump the moral and epistemological licence to refer to CADA countries as “shit holes” (Kendi, 2019). Trump did not create this *attitude* as the quotes earlier show. It is the same attitude that makes Kant call an African carpenter a ‘scoundrel.’ In a conversation on September 28, 1971, President Richard Nixon told Henry Kissinger, then the President’s Assistant, to ignore “what I said to that OAU<sup>121</sup> fellow...I was being nice to them...you see those poor, child-like Africans. God almighty, you think what the world, you know?...And these other Savages” (Burton & Keefer, 2011, pp. 143-144). Perhaps *desegregation* and *decolonization* were about CADE ‘being nice.’

The image of Africans and CADA people generally, through CADE’s control over colonial anthropology, modern ‘African Studies’, the publication regime (Cohen & Cohen, 2018) and the media, is Africa being explained to Africans (Mudimbe, 1988). Between the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the mid-1960s, Africans were being told who they were because of their epistemological, economic, and political dependence. Decolonization, as Fanon (1982 [1963]) has argued, was the colonized’s attempt to wiggle out of what he described as “The immobility to which the native is condemned” (p. 51). This ensured that Africa and Africans serviced CADE in the way they did during slavery, colonialism, and the postcolonial era. As Nkrumah (1965) put it, “The change in the economic relationship between the new sovereign states and the erstwhile masters is only one of form. Colonialism has achieved a new guise. It has become neo-colonialism, the last stage of imperialism” (p. 31).

Neo-liberalism from the 1970s, and its economic cognate, globalization, now burdens Africa with debt and economic dependence as another form of colonial control (Mbembe, 2017).

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<sup>121</sup> The Organization of African Unity, now African Union (AU).



This has fixed CADA at, to use the 18<sup>th</sup> century language, the bottom of the ‘great chain of being’. And here Trump was echoing Helper because the ‘shit hole’ CADA live in now may be the ‘down, down, deep down... the vortex of oblivion’ into which Helper wanted CADA to disappear.<sup>122</sup>

The socio-structural appearance differential—the skin colour discourse—believed by anti-slavery philanthropists of the American Colonization Society of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as being fixed naturally and unchangeable, still informs the colour-based consciousness of leaders like Trump and residents of Orania, South Africa. But this is an epistemic and moral limitation that makes CADE unable to think beyond their moral and epistemic cosmos. As Kant (2016) has succinctly argued, “It is...difficult for any individual to work himself out of immaturity that has almost become second nature to him” (p. 18). There is no universal moral standard and culture-neutral episteme CADE fails. They set the standard through which they perceived and judge the world; a world where selfishness (Rand, 1964), in the interest of those inside the moral circle, is a virtue.

#### *Subtle But Efficient Effects of Discursive Power: Changing Without Changing*

But this ‘selfishness’ as a relation of power, is exercised in a subtle, disguised processes. It allows changes that are not revolutionary; that is, changes that do not destabilize the established framework of power and hierarchy (see Goldberg, 2002). In this context, power is not exercised negatively as repressive or presenting ‘no’ on subjects of power; it becomes productive (Foucault, 1980). It makes selfishness, as we see in the classical ‘invisible hand’ capitalism—and the neoliberal regime—normative even if it negatively affects proletarianized others. It is this fixism, in its normative, disguised form, that had the 27-year-old Nayara Justino dethroned as the

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<sup>122</sup> On April 18, 1827, *The Freedom’s Journal* reported the death of a “young man of colour who was thrown from the driver’s seat of one of the stages of the steamboat line” between New York City and Philadelphia. On March 6, 2019, two ‘White’ South African men were convicted of the death of “15-year-old Matlhomola Mosweu in April 2017” (Reuters, 2019). These men, the prosecutor argued, threw Mosweu to death from a moving vehicle.

*Globeleza*, the Brazilian carnival queen, shortly after being crowned in 2013 because she was “too black”: “People came on my Facebook page, calling me ‘monkey’ and ‘darkie’” (Anthony, 2016). So much for Freyrean ‘racial democracy’ in Brazil (Guimarães, 2003; Andrews, 1996; Monk, Jr, 2016)! And here echoes The Buckleys one hundred and sixty years later as Justino and Kelley dream of a “darkie code of law/ oh, what a shine/ Would de noble fellow make” (Buckleys et al., 1853, p. 33, No. II). It is easy to consider Justino’s example to be different from the historical use of ‘blackness’ because of the normalization of the effects of power: the Nixonian ‘being nice’. The colour line is, apparently, a thing of the past. But this is a morally troubling perspective. Colonial power, like neo-colonialism, disguises itself. As Foucault has argued, “What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse” (p. 119).

It is a similar epistemic and moral fixism, a limitation, that still makes Europeans in South Africa in the town of Orania in Northern Cape exclude native Africans from their colourist utopia. As Kelley (2002) dreams of an inclusive world, European Africans in Orania dream of an exclusive utopia of *pure* Europeanism, of Hitleresque Aryanism. This rigid colour differentiation was too important for Europeans in the new world to ignore just as modern CADE find it difficult to find ‘familiarity’ with CADA appearances. CADE in Brazil considered Justino ‘too black’ in 2016. When Georg Schweinfurth (1878) saw some indigenous people of the then Southern Sudan “in their native nudity”, he argued that “no amount of familiarity can remove the strange impression” (p. 10). But to Schweinfurth, it was not just ‘nudity’; it was also about the assault of the African skin on his sight. It is, I argue, the refusal to get used to CADA as human beings and as cultural beings beyond appearance. Why in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, would human beings want to live in a town,

in Africa, that is purely European? Today, this lack of ‘familiarity’ is presented in more complex ways that obscures its presence. This is how discourse, as power and knowledge, changes without changing.

### *The Trickle-Down Effects of the Colour Regime Attitude Today*

As I explained in chapter one, CADA appearance is still an obstacle in CADE-CADA relationship today. There continues to be uneasiness even after centuries of direct contact, of phenomenological interactions. To reiterate what the Chief Commissioner of Canadian Human Rights Commission, Marie-Claude Landry, said, “Many people of African descent in Canada feel threatened or unsafe every day because of the colour of their skin” (CHRC, 2020). The colour of the skin still matters more than values and one’s ethical station even today. While police brutality and unfair sentences in USA (Alexander, 2013) and Canada (Maynard, 2017) against CADA are well recorded, studies also show that there is a difference in how dark-skinned and light-skinned CADA are treated (Hinton et al., 2018). Police brutality tends to be more severe on dark-skinned CADA. As it was with the slave and the colonial regimes as discussed earlier, CADE tended to see light-skinned, mixed-race CADA, more familiar, more physically appealing to their eyes. Juries also tend to be biased against dark-skinned people. According to Elizabeth Hinton (2018),

A 2015 study of men facing first-time felony charges found that darker-skinned black men received sentences that were, on average, 400 days longer than their white counterparts, while medium-skinned black men received sentences about 200 days longer than their white counterparts. (p. 9)

This brings me back to Nayara Justino’s example in Brazil and the question of appearance, visual familiarity. The Brazil with its ‘racial democracy’ found Justino appearance unacceptable. Nayara Justino was replaced “by a woman with much lighter skin for unknown reasons.” It was

not ‘for unknown reasons’ because Schweinfurth (1878, p. 10) gave us a reason 135 years earlier: “no amount of familiarity can remove the strange impression” Europeans in Brazil saw on Justino. No Nixonian ‘being nice.’ And Justino hears the structure-informed voice of the boy in the grocery store telling eight-year-old Henwood: “There’s no niggers allowed here” (Hill, 2001, p. 29). “There’s no niggers allowed” as *Globeleza*. It is like the past-in-the-present as the examples below show.

Like Justino and Henwood, Fredrick Douglass faced a similar situation as he relates in his January 1, 1846, letter to his fellow abolitionist, William L. Garrison (cited in Williams, 1882, p. 430). When he tried to attend a menagerie in Boston in 1844, the doorkeeper told him, “*We don’t allow niggers in here!*” When he tried to get a seat at a revival meeting venue at Rev. Henry Jackson’s house in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Mr. Douglass was told by a deacon that “*We don’t allow niggers in here!*” On his way to Boston from New York on a cold day on December 9, 1843, Douglass tried to enter a cabin to warm himself, but he was told, “*We don’t allow niggers in here!*” This is the power of discourse, of empowered, empowering, and disempowering words.

In Spanish America (Diggs, 1953) and the West Indies (Horowitz, 1973), just as it was the case in apartheid South Africa, an elaborate three-tier hierarchical, ‘chromatocratic’ structure for social control was, and still is in place: ‘whites’ on top, ‘mulattoes’ in the middle and the ‘negroes’/blacks/Africans at the bottom (Allen, 1994). This structural power of colour discourse was the case in the past (Diggs, 1953; Horowitz, 1973) as it is the case in the Americas of today (Harriott et al., 2013; Altink, 2020).

In the United States and Canada, however, any known trace of ‘negro’ or African blood, the one-drop-rule (Hickman, 1997) made a person ‘black’ or ‘negro’ during the colour line regime. I am repeating what I have discussed earlier about skin colour gradations and their associative

appellations for explanatory purposes in relation to the one-drop-rule. I give more context here. While the three-tier colour structure was instrumentalized for control and protective purposes by the slave regime, the colour discourse would morph into a binary colour structure: ‘white-black’, ‘white-coloured’ or ‘white-negro’ in North America (Horowitz, 1973; Allen, 1994). This is an ethically exclusionary one-drop rule, a chromatocratic ethic of identity Hickman (1997) described as ‘evil’ because of the use to which it would be made of against CADA in the interest of CADE.

The one-drop-rule discourse of exclusion justified the establishment of Sierra Leone in 1792 and Liberia in 1820 in the self-serving, Euro-solipsistic guise of sending ‘them to their native land.’ Even within a two-tier chromatocracy, nonetheless, a light-skinned diaspora African was still preferred to a dark-skinned one within the structure of colour discourse and regimes (Horowitz, 1973; Jordan, 1962; Mills, 1997). A light-skinned CADA had a Schweinfurthian familiarity so CADE’s preference for them makes sense given the dictates of the morality and epistemes available to them. Some dark-skinned CADA still appear strange to some modern CADE in a similar way Southern Sudanese appeared to Georg Schweinfurth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They could not, and still cannot, think beyond the limitations imposed on them by their morality and epistemes as that would amount to being omniscient. They thought and operated within epistemes they have been exposed to, or the epistemes for which they have reason to use. This, admittedly, may be a matter of a culture-imposed Machiavellianism so CADE “can’t be talked out of behaving in a way that has worked well for him for so long” (Machiavelli, 2017 [1532], p. 53).

### *Capitalist Self-Interest in CADA Debasement*

However, the moral and epistemic limitations of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries were not always the guiding structure because economic necessity and Euro-solipsism at times necessitated blatant falsehood or dishonesty discourse to safe-guard the interest of CADE. The slave and the colonial

regime serve as examples. For instance, when pro-slavery European-Americans were challenged as a matter of conscience and ethics, they argued *à la* Rand that “religion and humanity had nothing to do with the question, that it was a matter of “interest alone” (Du Bois, 1904 [1896], p. 55). Most, in fact the majority (Wood, 1970; Du Bois, 1904 [1896]), understood and accepted that the slave trade was wrong, but it was a wrong necessitated by self-preservation. This was the case with Jim Crow’s colour line.<sup>123</sup>

William B. Smith (1905, p. 160), for instance, admitted that African-Americans can be educated, but he argues that education is “extraorganic” and that European-Americans have an organic nature that makes them achieve greater things African-Americans cannot attain regardless of the education they achieve. Smith here falls between falsehood and the comedy of self-preservation. He also argues that the problem is not about the difference between “savage” and “civilized” but of “mental gap” (p. 101) that cannot be closed by any extraorganic processes: “[every] attempt to blur these boundaries, to wipe out natural distinctions, to mix immiscibles, must always issue in confusion, discord, failure, reciprocal injury, and final ruin” (Smith, 1905, p. 172).

Unlike 18<sup>th</sup>-century CADE scholars whose scientific and philosophical errors may be attributed to the nature of their epistemology, episteme and morality, European-American scholars like Hinton Helper and William Smith had adopted a Gramscian ‘war of position’ aimed at defending a discursive fixism. Their Randian virtue of selfishness, their ‘war of position’ made them adopt defensive comedic positions whose nakedness could hardly be covered by the veneer of scholarliness and scientific make-believe. For instance, Carrol’s (1900) and Helper’s (1867,

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<sup>123</sup> Against the quest for social justice and human equality, Jordan Peterson (2012) uses lobsters and other animals to argue in a Neo-Darwinist manner that hierarchy and inequality are natural, permanent features of our natural environment so, apparently, social justice discourses are either ill-advised or ‘unnatural.’

1868) comedic positions discursively transformed CADA into a ‘beast’ but Smith (1905) and Jefferson (1832 [1787]) attributed some level of intelligence to CADA but arrested it several levels below CADE intelligence. Jefferson was gagged by epistemic and evidentiary limitations, but Smith was selective in his evidentiary support of CADA inferiority and CADE superiority.

So, where is this tragic comedy? Historical proofs give comedy to Carrol and Helper as Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 109) would tell Helper and Carrol, [do not even talk of me being a beast because] “I belonged to a race that had already been working silver and gold 2,000 years ago.” Smith comedy freezes time and argues that CADA cannot go beyond his natural ability: ‘Here she arrives and no more beyond this point.’ The Jeffersonian comedy is in his claim for the scientific proof of CADA inferiority only to end up admitting that his conclusions were speculative. This tragic comedy, this Randian self-interest, the self-preservation discourse, followed CADA from slave regime to the colonial regime.

The period between the 1860s and 1880s coincided with social and economic reorientation in Europe and North America. At this time, the virtue of selfishness would be normatively reconfigured with Euro-solipsistic paradigm as CADE helping a ‘brother’ left behind arrive at civilization (Smith, 1905). This Kiplingian ‘white man’s burden’ (Jordan, 1974) was first, the ‘salvation’ of the African soul through enslavement and Christianization, and second, the ‘salvation’ of the African from ancestral barbarism through colonization and Christianization. This Euro-solipsistic discourse, this salvation, would also become a tragic comedy.

CADE hailed slavery as good for the African only to abandon it and deemed it immoral as “an outrageous violation of one of the most essential rights of human nature” (“Virginia Petition” in 1794, as cited in Du Bois 1904 [1896], p. 80). But 69 years later, Virginia would secede from the United States on April 17, 1861, and criticized abolition as “an outrageous violation of one of

the most essential rights of human nature.” On the African continent, ‘the white man’s burden’ in the form of civilization and Christianization led, for instance, to the extermination of over 80 percent of Herero in the present Southwest Africa (now Namibia) between 1904 and 1908 under Germany’s General Lotha von Trotha through his ‘extermination order’. This ‘burden’—Rand’s objectivist ethics—also led to the extermination of over six million Congolese under the paradoxically named, ‘Congo Free State’ (Morel, 1920; Hochschild. 1999).

### ***Scramble for Africa: Colonialism, Capitalism, and European Colonial Morality***

The CADE’s shift from slavery to social control—colour-based segregation in North America and colonization in Africa—was about self-preservation. After the end of the official slavery in the Americas and the first Industrial Revolution and the period of the Great Depression or Long Depression [1873-1896] (Musson, 1959; Fels, 1949), this shift would later provide the imperial horizon for the fateful and transformative scramble for Africa (Hochschild, 1999). Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Europe’s African dominions traded in material and human cargoes at coastal forts they called ‘factories’ (Bourne, 1901). Before Leo Africanus, the African interior was still a matter of fantastical discourse even after more than a hundred years of abducting and selling Africans. When the slave trade flourished and African nations summarily destroyed by slave raids, the interior was still controlled by African kings and chiefs so there was still some control over ethic of identity, dignity, and moral narratives. This would change from the 1870s. European empires competed for control over African peoples, their lands, and their economies (Lugard, 1922).

### ***The Scramble for Africa and the ‘White Man’s Burden’***

What led to the scramble for Africa was not ‘the white man’s burden’. It was inter-European competition. The world was up for grabs and Africa was the new frontier. CADE travellers in Africa wrote about potentials for the spread of their version of the Christian faith, or



the potential for trade and new markets (Burton, 1963; Frobenius, 1913; Morel, 1920; Lugard, 1922). This search for new markets, for materials, led to unspeakable atrocities that Morel (1920) would describe as 'the black man's burden'.

In his global search for markets, materials and spheres of influence, CADE threatened, advertently or inadvertently, the very existence of CADA.

But what the partial occupation of his soil by the white man has failed to do; what the mapping out of European political "spheres of influence " has failed to do; what the maxim and the rifle, the slave gang, labour in the bowels of the earth and the lash, have failed to do; what imported measles, smallpox and syphilis have failed to do; what even the oversea slave trade failed to do, the power of modern capitalistic exploitation, assisted by modern engines of destruction, may yet succeed in accomplishing. (Morel, 1920, p. 7)

While Morel put emphasis on the 'power of modern capitalistic exploitation [and] modern engine of destruction' as the final destruction of Africans and their way of life during the colonial rule of Africa, violent technologies, destruction, and capitalist exploitation have been part of African-European encounters since the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It was a violent, piratic kidnapping and destruction of villages by Portuguese. Spain, the Netherlands, France, England, and other imperial Europeans initiated their encounters with Africans through violence and the slaves' ships. According to Mbembe (2001), the violence of the colonial potentate was an imaginary copied by imperial European from the mindset of the Middle Ages (see Thomas R. Bugeaud quote below.).

Regardless of one's preferred school of thought as to why European imperial powers scrambled to divide Africa among themselves from the 1880s (Mudimbe, 1988) instead of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the colonial impact on culture, economy and politics would become considerably destructive within a period of 70 years. Writing in 1905 about the French Congo, Pierre de Brazza

argued that “I have found an impossible situation, the continuous destruction of the population—purely and simply” (de Brazza, as cited in Morel, 1920, p. 136). For Thomas Robert Bugeaud, “We must have a great invasion of Africa, like the invasions of Franks and the Goths” (Bugeaud, as cited in Césaire, 2000, p. 40). Essentially, the ‘white man’s burden’ was something CADE imposed on themselves as a self-glorifying solipsism; however, the ‘black man’s burden’ was imposed by CADE on CADA whether in Canada (Maynard, 2017), the United States (Holtzclaw, 1915), or Africa (Morel, 1920; Burger, 1944). Holtzclaw has shown this ‘black man’s burden’ when he walked to school barefoot in the snow without quitting:

My feet would crack and bleed freely, but when I reached home Mother would have a tub full of hot water ready to plunge me into and thaw me out. Although this caused my feet and legs to swell, it usually got me into shape for school the next. (1915, p. 29)

Holtzclaw is not alone. As H. T Johnson (1899) argued in a speech delivered on August 21st, 1899, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, “The Black Man has a burden wherever you find him” (p. 5). Even well-meaning European-Americans believed America, genocidally stolen from the Indigenous People, is “a white man's country and Africa the black man's” (Foard, 1904, p. 5).

However, Diaspora Africans did not perceive Africa as ‘their native land’ because it was; they saw it as their ‘native land’ because of social rejection, economic exploitation, and legal oppression in the Americas. As Dr. St. Clair Clarke noted in 1968, negroes “weren’t citizens; they weren’t part of this country: they called themselves ‘Africans’. They would have probably continued to do that if until around 1812, if the colonization society hadn’t started” (Hezakya Newz & Films, 2021). Consistently applied discourses create new structuring consciousnesses through what Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) have called the power of repetition. As such, some Diaspora Africans would see Africa, not just as the homeland from which they were stolen and sold into

slavery, but as their ‘fatherland’. They therefore believed that their study of African cultures and history was a way to counter slavery-enforced social death. As Amilcar Cabral (2013 [1994]) has noted, the importance of culture as a tool of “resistance to foreign domination lies in the fact that culture is the vigorous manifestation on the ideological or idealist plane of the physical and historical reality of the society that is dominated or to be dominated” (p. 54). The continuity of cultural Africanness in the Americas was disrupted and remained dormant for more than a hundred years. It re-emerged in the late 1800s and concretized in the 1960s. This Africa-centred historiography and historicity would intensify as Continental African intellectuals joined Diaspora African intellectuals in the anti-colonial discourse on identity on the cultural battleground (Said, 1993; Bhabha, 1994).

#### *Pan-Africanism and CADA Global, Experience-Based Solidarity*

Starting with the formation of African Association (later called Pan-African Association) by Trinidadian lawyer and writer, Henry S. Williams, in 1897 and its convening of the 1900 Pan-African meeting in London, CADA leaders and intellectuals from the continent, the Caribbean, United States and Europe met to discuss their common history of oppression, colonial exploitation in Africa and America and the imperial colour bar. This is a period of, to use Steward’s words, ‘great mental activity.’ The aim of this ‘great mental activity’ that held CADA together “in common was their ache to come into the world as” human beings (Baldwin, 1993 [1954], p. 29). This Africa-centred initiative, the conceptualization of ‘cultural identity’ as stable and unchanging, despite its necessary evolution in history, is the “common historical experiences and shared cultural codes” (Hall, 2013, p. 393). They provided the cultural and intellectual horizon for movements such as Marcus Garvey’s UNIA, the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa, the Negritude of CADA exiles in France and the New Negro Movement and the Civil

Rights Movement in the United States (Snail, 2008).<sup>124</sup> As Hall (1994) has argued, “Such a conception of cultural identity played a critical role in all post-colonial struggles which have so profoundly reshaped our world” (p. 393).

It is important to note that Diaspora Africans, the ‘Negro Intellectuals’ of Gramsci (see Chapter 3), have been speaking up on behalf of Continental African even though their work was not societally elaborated. They were ambivalent about Africa though. Blyden (1887), for example, initially celebrated the ‘scramble for Africa’ as a “a noble purpose, a magnificent aim, to build up a civilisation in Africa by free labour” (p. 395). While the official colonialism in Africa started with the infamous Berlin Conference (1884-85) under the auspices of German Chancellor, Otto Von Bismarck at the urging of King Leopold the II of Belgium, Europeans already had in mind their African dominions (or possible dominions) areas since the 16<sup>th</sup> century. That Africans needed to be civilized was a common ideal among CADE and CADA intellectuals. I have already quoted Du Bois earlier. Blyden (1887) believed that “the instrument of regeneration of this continent are the millions of Africans in Western hemisphere, where, after nigh three hundred years of residence, they are still considered strangers” (p. 396). About forty years later, Gramsci believed, this ‘millions of Africans in the Western hemisphere’, among them “a surprising number of ...intellectuals”, would influence “backward masses in Africa” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 158). ‘Negro intellectuals’, however, would not be used by colonial potentates because colonialism was, as I discuss below, “designed to alter the moral behaviour of the colonized” (Mbembe, 2001, p. 31). The exaltation of African cultures one finds in the works of Alexander Crummell, for example, would have been inimical to the colonial discourse: “I venture the assertion that any one walking

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<sup>124</sup> “It lay at the centre of the vision of the poets of ‘Negritude’, like Aime Cesaire and Leopold Senghor, and of the Pan-African political project, earlier in the century” (see Hall, 2013, p. 393).

through Pall Mall, London, or Broadway, New York, for a week, would see more indecency in look and act than he could discover in an African town in a dozen years” (1883, p. 5).

*The Violence and Deculturation of the ‘Civilizing Mission’*

The colonial regime, like the slave regime, was primarily hegemonic. It was a violent domination through deculturation (Del Pilar & Udasco, 2004). As such, colonialism in Africa was not undertaken to learn anything from African cultures, religions, or moral values. It was, however, to use Mbembe’s expression, a domination project wrapped in ‘the tawdry cloak of humanism.’ Colonizing Africa was in the words of Otto von Bismarck, “the realization of noble aspirations” (Bismarck, as cited in Hochschild, 1999, p. 86). That is the ‘white man’s burden’ expressed differently. For King Leopold, African colonization was “To open to civilization the only part of our globe which it has not yet penetrated, to pierce the darkness which hangs over entire peoples, is, I dare say, a crusade worthy of this century of progress” (Leopold, as cited in Hochschild, 1999, p. 44). They were just ‘being nice.’

In a letter to King Leopold in 1890, African-American historian George Williams argued that “Your Majesty’s Government has never spent one franc for educational purposes, nor instituted any practical system of industrialism...unpractical measures have been adopted against the natives in nearly every respect” (Black Past, 2009). Williams added that in areas where native Congolese were not employed, “recruits are transported under circumstances more cruel than cattle in European countries.” But King Leopold was not interested in bringing civilization to Africans. In his 1883 letter to missionaries working in the Congo, he advised: “Your essential role is to facilitate the task of administrators and industrials, which means you will go to interpret the gospel in the way it will be the best to protect your interests in that part of the world (African Globe, 2013). Williams, who had a historical and sentimental connection with the native of the Congo in

a way King Leopold did not, was writing to a man whose mental frame was informed by fixism and Randian virtue of selfishness dressed up in religious ‘noble aspirations’.

It may have been because of this fixism or the less value placed on Africa and Africans that it took 112 years for another Belgian leader to “express my deepest regrets for those wounds of the past” (Dwyer, 2020) and for the country’s parliament to approve a commission that will perhaps “look at Belgium’s entire colonial past” (Hope, 2020). This revisiting of the colonial past is the project postcolonial scholars have been undertaking since the 1960s to upend Euro-solipsism and comedic tragedies that produced the colonial “anthropology, the most compromised of disciplines in the exploitation of Africa” (Mudimbe, 1990, p. 93). According to Mudimbe (1988), “ethnographic commentaries on African peoples are arranged according to the prospect of their possible conversion; on the other hand, specific socio-cultural symbols designate the passage from primitiveness to civilization” (p. 65). This ‘passage from primitive to civilization’ was the fixing of these ‘signs’ and ‘symbols’ in a linear manner that it reminds us of the Foucauldian *structure* that gave *character* to CADA body as an object of power only meant to “tremble, kneel, despair and behave like flunkys” (Césaire, 2000, p. 43). This was how cultural imperialism was “*making things mean*” what one wants them to mean rather than an objective representation (Hall, as cited in Tsri, 2016a, p. 125, original emphasis).

The anthropological structure, a pre-determined edifice informed the character given to Africa and Africans. According to the great British anthropologist, E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1971), “There is sort of ethnographic grapevine along which passes what someone has asserted until it becomes accepted as an established truth and repeated as such” (p. 133). This is how discourse produces structure divorced from its initial truth, from the need to verify, to ‘go to things themselves’ and established a grounded judgement. This is also how discourse produces

Gramscian hegemony and elaborate it ‘until it becomes accepted as an established truth and repeated as such’.

It is not surprising that Evans-Pritchard was so disenchanted with some of his fellow European intellectuals (even his own teacher, C. G. Seligmann) that he described Samuel Baker in an unscholarly language as “the disagreeable and *stupid* of them” (p. 134, emphasis added). Evans-Pritchard had become aware of the necessary project the former colonized would later undertake as a matter of historical necessity informed by European solipsistic discourse. He foresaw Said’s *Orientalism* and Mudimbe’s *The Idea of Africa* and *The Invention of Africa*; a scholarly period in which the empire wrote back (Ashcroft et al., 2004) to contest the cultural terrain (Said, 1993; Bhabha, 1994) previously the exclusive, incontestable intellectual province of CADE.

The interpretive framework of African reality was standardized in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But it continued to get shaped. By the time Europeans scrambled to divide Africa among themselves, the colonial discourse had already placed CADA into the character-producing structure of the 18<sup>th</sup> century science and philosophy as uncivilized, child-like or almost animals (Mbembe, 2017; Mudimbe, 1988). According to Burton (1863), the “European has ever treated him [CADA] like a child” (p. 175). For Schweinfurth (1878), Africans were “uncultivated children of nature” (p. 19).

However, an African, whether enslaved or colonized, resisted cultural changes (James, 2012) to his/her way of life so violence was used to help save the African from his/her own savagery. This cultural resistance is tragically illustrated by Chinua Achebe in *Things Fall Apart*. Okonkwo, distressed by the cultural changes and the disrespect to his people shown by the colonial administrator, killed a messenger and then committed suicide. Suicide was a cultural abomination that makes great men of Umuofia like Okonkwo get “buried like dogs” so Okonkwo’s suicide is illustrative of his intense hatred of the new order as ‘things fell apart’. When ‘things fell apart’ in

German Southwest Africa after General von Trotha resorted to the ‘extermination order’ against the Herero people, Chief Henrik Witbooi acted like Okonkwo by urging his people to “die fighting rather than die as a result of maltreatment, imprisonment or some other calamity” (Witbooi, as cited in Gewald, 1999, p. 294). This intense resistive attitude therefore made colonial violence a necessity in the consciousness of European imperialists. Violence became justifiable and moral.

On March 31, 1897, Joseph Chamberlain, then the British Secretary of State, argued that “you cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs” (Chamberlain, as cited in Bourne, 1901, p. 5). Chamberlain’s Euro-Solipsism, cultural and epistemic limitations could not allow him to ask: ‘who were the eggs, who is the breaker and who got to eat the omelettes?’ One does not break eggs, prepare the omelettes, and give it away. But then Chamberlain was using the metaphor to compare human interests and chicken interests. This analogy works in inter-European discourse and competition but not between Africans and Europeans. The African was both the hen and the eggs whose eggs was being broken yet she was expected to understand that her eggs were being broken for her own interest. Chamberlain’s European counterpart in France, Joseph Renan, justified this violence in 1871 that “The regeneration of the inferior or degenerate races by the superior race is part of the providential order of things for humanity” (Renan, as cited in Césaire, 2000, p. 38). But this providential order was violence exercised on peaceful people like Herero and Matabele. In a letter to the Queen, Chief Lobengula, king of the Ndebele people (1836-1894), wrote with respect and honour “that I am still keeping your advice laid before me some time ago, i.e., that if any trouble happens in my country between me and the white men I must let you know” (as cited in Morel, 1920, p. 43). According to Morel (1920, p. 43), “The High Commissioner’s dispatches to Dr. Jameson show that he himself was persuaded of the sincerity of the Matabele ruler.” But this



acknowledgement of Lobengula's sincerity did not prevent British colonialism to launch the war against Lobengula to massacre the Matabele people.

This contrast between the initially peaceful African nations and violent European colonialists and colonists was the case in German Southwest Africa, now Namibia. General Lothar von Trotha believed "that the Negro does not respect treaties but only brute force" (Gewald, 1999, p. 284). This is the generalization 'to all negroes' I have already spoken about. He therefore argued that "every Herero with or without a gun, with or without cattle, will be shot. I will no longer accept women and children [...] I will let them be shot at" (von Trotha, as cited in Gewald, 1999, p. 283). Chief Lobengula told British colonial officers that he thought the British had come to dig for gold and then the colonial actions had made him aware that the British came to "rope me of my people and my country as well" (Lobengula, as cited in Morel, 1920, p. 43).

While theories of 'blackness' and their ethical applications have been in use since the Middle Ages as already discussed, their use for social control at a time when CADA started to show a level of intellectual resistance, cultural expression, and political organization became forcefully brutal. It was no longer just omelette that the colonialists were making as Joseph Chamberlain had argued, but chicken soup. For omelette, it is the egg that is used, and the chicken left to produce more. But in the colonial ideology, both the chicken and the egg would be destroyed for the benefit of the colonial system.

David Hughes (2010) has noted that 'white' Zimbabweans, who can no longer kill indigenous Africans with impunity as they did during colonization, "In their minds, turned away from the native, African people and focused instead on the African landscape" (p. xii). This is killing without killing. The benefit of the colonial system was not meant for the benefit of the colonized but for the benefit of the colonialist (colonial administrators) and colonists (settlers).

Ideas from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period found efficacy in appropriated classical and Enlightenment theories. There were both continuities and discontinuities in ideals used by the colonial system to control and denigrate Africans, their cultures, and appearances.

### *Historical Continuities by the Imperial Regimes*

Below are some continuities from the Middle Ages and Enlightenment that would be used by the colonial potentate. I revisit these concepts here to emphasize how ideas of previous epochs, as Mbembe (2001) has noted about the medieval violence featured in the colonial violence, were instrumental to the colonial regime. These ideas were also used by the slave regime to make Africans ‘docile bodies.’ In this continuity, the ‘blackness’ of the African skin was considered abnormal, as a deviation from the real human skin, the European skin (Lively, 1998). Its deviation, which was considered a degeneration, necessitated explanation. Some of these theories were scientific and others religious. The medieval theories instrumentalized by colonialism included cause (science) or the origin (religion) of ‘blackness’ as being burnt by the sun (Isaac, 2004) and the curse of Ham’s progeny by Noah (Hrabovsky, 2013; Sanders 1969). These theories buttressed the colonial ideology in justifying the ‘civilizing mission’ and keeping Africans in separate (Lugard, 1922) and rundown towns (Fanon, 1982 [1963]).

Enlightenment theories included African skins being a result of leprosy. According to Benjamin Rush (1799), “The original connection of the black color of the negroes with the leprosy is further fuggeted [suggested] by the following facts taken from Bougainville's voyage round the world” (p. 291).<sup>125</sup> Another scientific origin of the darkness of the African skin was ‘phlogiston’,

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<sup>125</sup> “He tells us that on an island in the Pacific Ocean which he visited, the inhabitants were composed of negroes and mulattoes. They had thick lips, woolly hair, and were sometimes of a yellowish color. They were short, ugly, ill proportioned, and most of them infected with the leprosy, a circumstance from which he called the island they inhabit, the Isle of Leper” (Rush, 1799, p. 292).

a material that was believed to cause flammability in materials leading to rusting or darkening. The African skin, this thesis suggests, contained more phlogiston, which when released, left the skin 'black'. Priestly experiments, according to van Gorkom (2020, p. 16), "found that blood turns black when charged with phlogiston." 18<sup>th</sup>-century scientists like Johann Gottlieb Steeb concluded that the skin of the African is 'black' because phlogiston accumulates underneath the skin (van Gorkom, 2020, p. 16).

The colonized Africans were being squeezed into an *a priori* ideological structures (tables) of the previous eras. The psychological effect of these earlier ideas to the colonialists and the colonists helped them keep the colonized Africans as far as possible from them. But as Foucault has argued, the power-knowledge nexus disguises its effects. Discourses of power can "say in silence something other than what they actually say" (Foucault, 2010, p. 8). The Nixonian 'being nice'. The negative effects of the colonial power are codified to appear normal. Bruce Gilley (2018) has recently made the case for the return of colonialism: "Colonialism can return (either as a governance style or as an extension of Western authority) only with the consent of the colonized" (p. 168).<sup>126</sup> Lord Lugard (1922, pp. 149-150), for instance, argued that the reason for keeping the native African in the separate areas of towns than colonists was not prejudice. He argued that it was because Africans and Europeans are exposed to different diseases so the European had to be protected from Africans who were more vulnerable to communicable diseases. Lugard codified

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<sup>126</sup> So, Bruce Gilley (2018, p. 168) has proposed a de-stigmatization of colonialism: "The notion that colonialism is always and everywhere a bad thing needs to be rethought in light of the grave human toll of a century of anti-colonial regimes and policies." For him, "Western and non-Western countries should reclaim the colonial toolkit and language as part of their commitment to effective governance and international order" to bring about "the civilizing mission without scare quotes." Some scholars, contrary to Gilley, argue that colonialism has never been abandoned; it was only reconfigured (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Serunkuma, 2022; Hickel, 2020; Negedu & Ahiokhai, 2022).

the colonial colour line as a health issue and Gilley codifies colonialism as a governance issue in postcolonial states.

By this time in this dissertation, one does not have to wonder a lot about what motivated the unbridled violence of colonialism, such as the one against Herero by Germany and Ndebele by Britain as I discussed earlier. I will, however, provide some examples. Some 19<sup>th</sup>-century intellectuals, inspired by Enlightenment ideals, also contributed to the framework. There were, for instance, extreme cases by polygenic theories inspired by Voltaire, who argued that Africans and Europeans were not from the same human species, and that it was not possible to classify them as having come from the same Adamic genealogy (Flournoy, 1835). While the ‘racial’ discourse between polygenists and monogenists did not lead to an agreement, Lyons has argued that “Western racial commentators generally agreed that Blacks were inferior to whites in moral fiber, cultural attainment, and mental ability; the African was, to many eyes, the child in the family of man, modern man in embryo” (Lyons, cited in Mudimbe, 1988, p. 120).

Whatever the colonized Africans believed and said about themselves and for themselves was “wilfully distorted” (Baldwin, 1993 [1954], p. 50) because Africans were ‘objects’ to be studied not ‘subjects’ through which African cultures could be understood (Mbembe, 2017). But when their subjectivity was conceded, it was considered inferior, so they had to be forced to see the world through the colonizer’s eyes (Bhabha, 1994), the ‘second sight’ (Henry, 2006). But as Césaire once argued, “Any political and social regimes which destroys the self-determination of a people also destroys the creative power of that people” (Césaire, as cited in Baldwin, 1993 [1954], p. 33). The destruction of the colonized self-determination results in what Foucault (1980) has called “subjugated knowledge...or naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity” (p. 82).

Unfortunately, that Africans, or CADA generally, had the capacity for self-determination was considered ludicrous. Colonial administrators, as Taiwo (2010) has argued, did not give educated and capable Africans the chance to lead the colonies. They only used the chiefs they could control for colonial convenience through what became known as the ‘indirect rule’. For Taiwo, if African self-determination had been recognized, the colonial administration could have considered them as the “best judges of what is good for them, even when they are wrong in their judgment” (2010, p. 87). But Burton (1863) has mocked this: “we—in these days — read such nonsense pure and simple as “Africa for the Africans” (p. 175). King Leopold, in the letter to missionaries quoted earlier, wanted gospel interpreted *for-Europe* not *for-Africa*.

#### *Colonial Traps and CADE Hegemonies in CADA Identitarian Projects*

While ethic of identity changed after 1970s because of the Civil Rights Movement and decolonization, the change was deceptive because colonial control was morphed from violent imposition to epistemological and cultural hegemony. But this hegemony hides its microphysical power effects by ethically determining CADA being-in-the-world without seeming to do so. Even when the African scholars use philosophy “to *define* themselves and their peoples, in the face of Europe, without allowing anybody else to do it for them, to *fix* and *petrify* them at leisure” (Hountondji, 1996, p. 38), they still use colonial identities to self-define (original emphasis).

In fact, coloniality engendered a deceptive change to maintain control by maintaining the African in the second sight, the natural attitude (see Chapter 3). In other words, the change was not operationalized by CADA through first-hand experience but through what CADE had already established as CADA’s reality. CADA therefore took some cultural, social, and epistemic issues for granted. Colonial discourses changed protractedly only to remain the same. Goldberg (2002) has argued that ‘whiteness’, when challenged, changes only to remain the same and controlling.

For Fanon (2008 [1952]), Americans replaced lynching with discrimination. Du Bois (1999 [1903]) has argued that the American ‘negro’ ceased to be slave but became ‘croppers’ or metayers’, a change only in name but not the labour condition. I have already noted how slavery in the West Indies was replaced by ‘apprenticeship’. This supposed change is a concession offered by the West in order to remain in control and on top (Baldwin, 1993 [1962]).

I will discuss this issue in detail in Chapter 6, but it is important to emphasize this identity connection here. The post-colonial and post-Civil Rights Movement use of ‘black’ as a decolonial identity, falls into this change without changing framework. Still, CADA was authored, not the author (Appiah, 2005). When Ture and Hamilton (2011 [1967], p. 37) advised in the 1960s the adoption of ‘black’ against ‘Negro’ because “this term is an invention of our oppressor”, they were only replacing one invention of the oppressor for another invention of the oppressor. They remained within CADE’s discursive control, inside the Foucauldian structure. And this is perhaps why Burton (1863) mocked CADA self-determination: “When the black expels the grey rat, then the negro shall hold his own against the white man” (pp. 175-176). When CADE lost the natural inferiority argument, they projected the African as a child behind Europeans civilization by about a millennium (Blyden, 1887; Helper, 1867). But instead of helping the African catch up, CADE used state power (Goldberg, 2002) or scholarship (Freter, 2018) to keep CADA down then blame them for their inability to catch up (Blyden, 1887).

## **Conclusion**

What has become clear in this chapter is CADE’s historical obsession with being on top and accumulating power and resources as if the rest of the world only exists to serve them. This is what I have called Euro-Solipsism. But this obsession with power and control, which has its roots in the social imaginaries of the Middle Ages such as the use of violence as a strategic power of the

state, and the use of the intellectuals to buttress the power of the potentate, is codified in a language that makes its negative effects appear normal. But this, I argue, is a human quality. However, CADE presented themselves as an exceptional humanity when their actions were within what it means to be human, neither inferior nor superior. They projected themselves as superior, but their actions only show that they were as human as the people they considered inferior. In this discursive projection, the African was ‘uncivilized’ and ‘savage’ and the European ‘civilized’ and ‘modern’ (George, 1958). However, slavery and colonialism only showed that both Europeans and Africans acted in ways that showed equality. In some cases, as Lydia Child (1833) has argued, it was the European who acted with savagery toward Africans. But for the slave and the colonized to be controlled, CADE had to downplay what makes them human and equal to the rest of humanity. It was a necessary strategy for power and control.

While they acted as human beings, with weaknesses and strengths like other human beings, they adopted a superhuman attitude. Van Evrie (1868) believed that what was done to Africans was not slavery because slavery can only exist between equals. What was done to Africans, he argues, was the natural state of things between the inferior and the superior. It was a disastrous combination. It prevented CADE from seeing the existence of CADA as a being with values. This combination was the discrimination between a civilized attitude and acting contrary to that attitude. Fanon (1982 [1963]) has argued that all the elements needed to make the world better for human existed in Europe. However, Europeans did not use them to create a better world. This historical inability to look at non-Europeans as co-residents of the world is Euro-solipsism *par excellence*. The rest of the world did exist; but it existed first *for-Europe* and then *for-CADE*. However, the attitude toward CADA was a mitigation of an attitude in Europe only to transplant it outside

Europe.<sup>127</sup> The world became the peasant of Europe. Through this attitude, Europeans made Africans the quintessential *hand* of capitalism, so discourses had to be created to justify CADA perpetually *being-a-tool* when they realized that the African was far more useful than their first life among the Iberians had shown. Africans were not despised because of any natural aversion to their appearance. Despising Africans was good for business: slavery and colonialism. And it was an attitude that existed in Europe before the African-European encounter. The Greeks described the Romans as barbarians; the Romans described the Germanic and Gallic tribes as barbarians; and the English referred to the Irish as uncivilized and animalistic. But as Alexander Falconbridge (1788) argued about the brutality of the slave trade when he was a doctor on slave ship, CADE, who considered themselves “more civilized people, more humanity might naturally be expected” (p. 19). The expected ‘more humanity’ was overshadowed by the violence of slavery and colonialism. CADE’s attitude toward Africans was mere appropriation, not invention. It was all about control, power, and capital accumulation that fell short of the discursive moral standard CADE adopted. It is this framework that shaped the social imaginary that shaped ‘blackness’.

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<sup>127</sup> For instance, the ideals of the French Revolution would not include non-European citizens of Saint Domingo, free or enslaved. The French people freed themselves from the despotism of the Church and the monarchy. But they would exercise that despotism on the colonized in Africa. While slavery was not allowed within Britain, it was allowed in the colonies until 1833. Europeans talked of ‘freedom’, equality, and democracy in Europe, but they massacred Africans and other colonized peoples through their dictatorial potentates in their colonies.



## **CHAPTER SIX: Ethical Problematics, Epistemological Hegemony and Colonial Entrapments**

### **Introduction**

An identity is a way in which members of a given social group define themselves or are defined by others when they attach themselves or are attached to distinct differentiations or anchors such as histories, traditions, cultures, geographies, etc. As I discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 from the Middle Ages through the eras of official colonialism and slavery, CADA identity was the preserve of CADE. Their identities were either created by CADE's intellectuals or they were CADA's responses to CADE's social control conditions. According to Mudimbe (1988), the colonial anthropologist, who provided the epistemic and epistemological resources for the colonial structure of domination, used the works of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century CADE's 'organic intellectuals.' I have already noted, through Mbembe (2001), that colonial violence in Africa benefited from social, cultural, and political resources of the Middle Ages. The writings of these CADE intellectuals buttressed slavery, colonialism, and colour-based segregation in the interest of Europeans. European thinkers, however, considered themselves 'traditional intellectuals' who had no social group affiliations. As Mudimbe (1988) has argued,

The exotic text dominates in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, it complements Enlightenment classifications of peoples and civilization. In the nineteenth century, an ideology of conquest appears in explorers' sagas, anthropologists' theories, and the implementation of colonial policy. (p. 82)

These 'exotic texts' started the hegemonic economic, political, and epistemological climate in which CADA live today (Ogar et al., 2019; Mbembe, 2017). They have trapped CADA in what Bhabha (1994) has described as "the unequal and universal forces of cultural representation" (p.

171). CADA identities as functions of CADE intellectual hegemony in the previous epochs, in continuity or discontinuity, as discussed in the last three chapters, cannot be understood outside this framework. Social work, as I noted in Chapter 5 through Foucault for instance, emerged from the 19<sup>th</sup> century regimes of power in the context of knowledge production, control, and utility.

### **Identity Frameworks and Evolution: Internal and External Conditions**

Before I discuss ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’ in detail in this chapter, I will first explain what identity is. As I will discuss in Chapter 7 about the importance of epistemological freedom, identity is important in social work practice, and in social justice and human rights generally. What I have discussed in the previous chapters was the history that provided the horizon, or the framework, through which both CADE and CADA understood and conceptualized ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’. As two important signifiers of how social goods were distributed in a Eurocentric world—or an ‘Anti-Black world’ as Calvin Warren (2018) would say—‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’ formed the outside and inside of the European moral circle. The mentioned framework, as already discussed, gave Burmeister the epistemological resources to write that “I have never seen anything uglier than a negro foot in a white stocking and shoe; it is quite insufferable” (1853, p. 7). This framework, which made CADA phobogenic, made a European-American girl refuse a card from young W. E. B. Du Bois (1999 [1903]). It is the same framework that gave the teacher the categorical confidence to tell the narrator of the *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, who did not know he was not ‘white’, to sit down when the “white scholars” were told to stand up. He was then advised to stand up with the rest (Johnson, 1999 [1912], p. 400). For the slave regime, African children were not children like European children as Frederick Douglass (1892) has noted. Mrs. Auld, Douglass’s Mistress, first treated him as “a child, like any other” (p. 94) until Mr. Auld indoctrinated his wife about the “true philosophy of the slave system.” The nine-year-old Douglass

ceased to be a child; he became a chattel. Today, that legacy exists in Canadian institutions (schools, law enforcement, child welfare) as the African child in Canada is still not valued in the same way the European child is valued (Maynard, 2017).

The above framework, which created and shaped the modern identity of CADA, create both voluntary and involuntary identity attachments. I will show in this section that ‘blackness’, for instance, is no longer imposed. According to Stuart Hall (1994, p. 225), identities are *names* we give to various social, political, and ethical ways in how we positioned ourselves, and the way we position ourselves, “within narratives of the past.” Attachments to these identity anchors may be externally conditioned as it was the case with Sylvester William and Cindy Henwood above (see p. 35). They may be internally constructed and operationalized voluntarily as the adoption of ‘African-American’ from the 1950s shows (Bennett, 1969).

### ***Identity External and Internal Conditions***

But most of these ‘narratives of the past’, as I detailed in Chapters 4 and 5, were external discourses. Starting with the Greco-Roman world, the identities African peoples have assumed overtime, especially the colour-based ones, tended to have external origins. These discourses, from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, became powerful epistemological tools used in creating structures that would place CADA at the bottom of humanity during slavery and imperial colonialism. CADA were not studied to be understood; they were studied to be fit within a defined pre-determined structure. As Foucault (2002) has explained in the *Order of Things*, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century’s scientists who classified animals and human beings tended to use pre-determined structures to create characteristics of objects rather than studying the natural world to classify things. It was the structure that created characteristics instead of the characteristics creating structures and tables. These characteristics

were not created from first-hand experience, as phenomena that *appeared* to European travellers and explorers.

In addition to external-internal nature of attachment conditions, the anchors to which people create identities may be discursively (or mythically) created or fashioned from material [totemic] or social truths to which people can identify. African ethnic identities on the African continent, for example, have their origins in internally generated tribal myths passed down through generations “since time out of mind” (Taylor, 2004, p. 94). While there is still some discursive logic to these tribal identities (Boas, 1940), the underlying logic is undergirded by cultural mythologies, religious myths, tribal totems, and cultural narratives that transcend the discursivity characteristic of colonial power in linguistic control and manipulation. Slavery and colonialism would undermine these internally-generated identities as they presupposed that Africans did not have something to respect, or something valuable to global civilization and culture. As I discussed in Chapter 5, respecting Africans would have been counterproductive to the slave master and the colonialist. Discursive identities created by the colonial discourse became instrumental to the slave masters and the colonialists.

An example of a discursive identity *par excellence* is ‘black identity’ whose genealogical bases is the appearance of the African skin. There are no internally generated tribal myths, totems and ancestral narratives associated with ‘black identity’ and its historical correlates [negro, negress color, nigger, nigritians, Negroland, etc] by the people identified as ‘black’. The genealogy of the ‘black identity’ and its associated original narratives have external origins we can trace to the interaction of continental Africans with Arabs and Europeans prior to, or after, Portuguese piratical adventures to the West coast of Africa in the 15th century (Mbembe, 2017; Cooper, 2010). Appearance based identities such as Ethiopia (by Greeks and Romans), Guinea (by Berbers) and

Sudan (by Arabs) were descriptive appellations for Africans South of the Sahara long before Portuguese would create virtual designations like ‘negro’ and operationalize them for religious, economic, and then political reasons. Colour-based identities pre-determine and exaggerate human difference. They create obstacles to people understanding themselves beyond appearance.

### ***Identity Evolution: Denotative verses Connotative Meanings***

But it is important to note here that identities, whether discursive or cultural, change how they are understood or operationalized over time. Identity names may not change but their substantial contents, what they mean, may change. Saul Kripke (1980), in *Naming and Necessity*, has explored how names do not always signify the meaning they embodied when they were first constructed. Through an example from John Stuart Mill, Kripke illustrates how names acquire connotative or denotative meanings. For instance, a town of Dartmouth in England was so named because it was at the mouth of river Dart. However, the town continued to be called Dartmouth even when the river changed its course and Dartmouth is no longer at the mouth of Dart. Dartmouth only has connotative meanings but not denotative meaning. So, ‘black identity’ for instance, transitioned from its origin on the African skin to become a political identity (as Gomes’s example given in chapter one shows) and an experiential social condition of CADA people (Taylor, 2010).

‘Blackness’ in the ‘black identity’ is no longer what Europeans and Arabs believed they saw as the somatic appearance (Foster, 2002) of CADA skin but what one now witnesses in their economic, social, and political life. In Brazil, ‘blackness’ symbolizes poverty or the lower socioeconomic conditions in the *favelas*. In his travel in Europe, Central America, South America and North America, Marcus Garvey observed that CADA people indeed signified the lowest rung in society (Hart, 1967; Lewis, 1987). ‘Black identity’ or ‘blackness’ itself has become an economic condition Mbembe (2017) now calls the ‘blackening’ of the world through capitalist exploitation

of the world. Historical capitalist exploitation of CADA (a humanity which CADE ‘blackened’ from the 15<sup>th</sup> century according to Mbembe), is now the contemporary exploitation (the ‘blackening’— ‘proletarianization’) of the world by neoliberal capitalism. One can therefore argue that identities are contingent. Owing to this contingency one may conclude that identity anchors [colours, geographies, cultures] are socio-historical constructs (Cerulo, 1997) that are subject to constant negotiations or change (Hall, 2013; Bhabha, 1994). Today, as Fleischmann et al. (2022) have argued, “Blackness is a political identification, not an epidermal designation” (p. 237).

Having discussed the historical context of CADA identity and its change over time in Chapters 4 and 5, in this chapter, I look at ‘blackness’, ‘whiteness’, how they are understood today, and their ethical implications. Our identities, as Charles Taylor (2001) has argued, determined how we take stands regarding issues in society. Henry Louis Gates (1997), for instance, relates how his students responded to the 1995 acquittal of former NFL quarter back, O. J. Simpson. Simpson was accused in 1994 of killing his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend, Ronald Goldman. According to Gates, most African-American students supported the verdict while most European-American students opposed the verdict.

In the following section, I continue with identity and how it is used in social control by powers that be. This is followed by a discussion of how identity constrains or enables our moral choices and stations in society. The next section looks at ‘blackness’ as a social construct. Following this section, I discuss ‘whiteness’ as understood today as a social construct meant for the distribution of privilege and power. I then return to ‘blackness’ in its postcolonial, post-civil-rights context. This was the period in which ‘blackness’ was no longer ugly or signifying immorality and evil.

## **Identity in Social Control**

Identities, as noted in the previous section, are used by social groups to determine who to include or exclude from the moral circle or in the distribution of social goods. They, as also noted above, are not static; they change overtime. Consequently, there is nothing especially unique about the constructionist nature of identities or that identities are subject to constant negotiation because identities are the interplay of claims to sameness and/or difference with attendant material or social interests. Appiah (1992) has argued that “Every human identity is constructed, historical” and it is also characterized by some levels of errors and inaccuracies that lead to “invented histories, invented biologies [and] invented cultural affinities” (p. 174).

What may be unique and of special interest may be the social, political, or historical conditions which facilitate attachments to identity anchors or engender identity change or negotiations. I have already discussed the historical conditions that facilitated these affiliative or disaffiliative conditions. When these conditions relate to power and control, identity constructions, negotiations, or impositions, become ethically problematic. Herbert Blumer (1958) has explained how these affiliative and disaffiliative registers, in the context of social group positions such as the colour line regimes in apartheid South Africa and Jim Crow America, can be used by dominant groups to improve their conditions at the expense of the dominated group. As Bhabha (1994) has argued, postcolonial identities are claimed “either from a position of marginality or in an attempt at gaining the centre” (p. 254). There is therefore a moral functionality to identity ascription or adoption. Cindy Henwood, Booker T. Washington, and Frederick Douglass found out how constructed identities can affect lives when imposed and then used for exclusionary purposes. On entering a grocery store, the eight-year-old Henwood found her way blocked by a European Canadian boy: “There’s no niggers allowed here” (Hill, 2001, p. 29). As Bhabha (1994) has argued

in terms of the colonial regimes and their imposed identities, “The question of the representation of difference is also always about authority” (p. 89): who has the power to create and impose identity.

Consequently, the identity *itself* may not even be the main object of interest in people’s operationalization of their identities. What plays a central role in the operationalization of identities are the conditions that necessitate attachments, change, or the negotiations of identities. What makes these conditions more important than the identities themselves is the role they play in making identities important ethical phenomena in society. For instance, Mrs. Auld knew that Douglass (1892) was a *slave* and a ‘negro’, but she treated him just like any normal child until she was indoctrinated by her husband about the “peculiar rules necessary in the nature of the case to be observed in the management of human chattels” (p. 94). What changed was her knowledge about the relations of power. It is these relations of power regarding identities that afforded the boy a social condition in which he is allowed to not only exclude Henwood from the store but to also call her a ‘nigger’. As Charles Taylor (2001) has argued, identity provides moral subjects with frameworks or horizons through which “to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose” (p. 27). Identity horizons emerge clearly in Antiquity as customs and environment, in the Middle Ages as religion, in the Enlightenment period as slavery and capitalism, and today as the legacy of the latter two.

Appearance-identities with their moniker ‘colour bar’ or ‘colour line’ in Canada, US, South Africa, Brazil, etc., provide the identity horizon and/or the power to decide who benefits and who does not, who is excluded and who is included in societal socioeconomics.<sup>128</sup> Identity horizon

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<sup>128</sup> See the class action lawsuit by African-Canadian federal workers about losing on “opportunities and benefits afforded to others based on their race” (Major, 2022). This is the Canadian historical *colour bar*. Within the context of the framework I discussed in this chapter, Monica Agard, an African-Canadian federal employee, recently said that a colleague, who would go on to become her direct supervisor, joked



therefore gives the boy the power, the moral authority to tell Henwood, ‘There’s no niggers allowed in here.’ Identity horizon, or the social group position in Blumerian terms (see Blumer, 1958), also gives Gomes as a moral subject to decide that he is no longer *pardo* but *preto*. Gomes, in Brazilian coloured dynamics, is *pardo*, meaning mixed-race. To define oneself, according to Blumer (1958) is to define who is the *other*. Gomes therefore self-defined as *preto* [black]. Preto, which has previously been an outgroup (the other) to Gomes, is now his ingroup. *Prado*, his previous ingroup, is now an outgroup.

Michel Foucault would call this a ‘subject position’. According to Jukka Törrönen (2001), “The subject positions give us guidelines for deciding what one should consider in the situation or cultural environment where one acts as sanctioned, normal and desirable as distinct from prohibited, deviant and repulsive” (p. 316). What is very important, as mentioned above and which will be discussed in due course, is the nature of this Taylorian horizon or framework. Since our culture and society tells us what we see and how we see it as Painter (2010) tells us, the frameworks or horizons that determine the identities we choose or identities that are conditioned on us, will be worth a critical analysis. Some of the social and economic conditions that provide the Taylorian horizon of CADA ‘black identity’ will be discussed below.

Identities are therefore important not for what they are *per se*, but for what they allow or prevent people from doing. John Griffin (2006 [1960]), who injected himself with a chemical to experience what it means to be ‘black’ in Jim Crow America, lived through the disempowering-

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about “the good old days when we had slaves” (Naser, 2021). On December 25, 2022, 18-year-old Kgokong Nakedi and his 13-year-old cousin, were prevented from using a swimming pool by a violent ‘white’ parent. The pool was apparently a ‘white-only’ pool in Bloemfontein, South Africa (Sands & Parker, 2022). Nakedi said the incident started with a verbal harassment and then escalated to an assault and an attempted murder. It is important to emphasize here that this was a violent interaction between adults (‘white’) and children (‘black’). What infuriated the ‘white’ parents was not character or behaviour, but the colour of the ‘black’ children’s skin.

empowering dichotomy of appearance identities in the United States. When Griffin entered the store as a ‘white man’ he was received with cordiality and smiles; but when he came back on another day to cash a traveller’s check as a ‘negro’, “smiles turned to grimaces” (p. 46). It was the same Griffin only that he came back with a different “skin color.” Griffin wondered if he might have done something to offend the woman in the store but then he realized he had not done anything wrong: “My color offended her” (2006 [1960, p. 48]). It is not, I must note, the colour *per se*—or Griffin’s transformation into a ‘negro’ that created this moral condition—but the cultural framework, the social horizon through which ‘colour’ was understood.

How identities are constructed and the reason for which they are constructed is more important than knowing about identities in themselves. Mrs. Auld treated Douglass like a slave only after the reason for which Douglass was a slave were spelled out to her. Admittedly, discussing the meaning of ‘blackness’ and its temporal changes as I have done in the previous two chapters helped provide the background information, the identity horizon, to the discussion of its ethical problematic. ‘Blackness’ as an instrument in the marriages between slavery and capitalism, on the one hand, and colonialism and capitalism, on the other, has shed some light on the historical and contemporary utility of ‘blackness’ as an important identity to slave plantocracies (Mbembe, 2017), colonial regimes (Bhabha, 1994), and the postcolonial regimes (Mbembe, 2017, 2001). The plantocracies and the colonial regimes, according to Mbembe (2017, p. 4), created the capitalist hysteria and delirium that would transform the African from a cultured human being to a useful *human-thing* for the social, religious, and economic end of CADE capital.

It is this human-thing logic of African as a capitalist or merchant instrument that makes Joseph Conrad’s Marlow (2007, p. 68), describe a helmsman that was killed by an indigenous African’s arrows as “a help—an instrument.” Like Socrates’ slave boy, the African was “merely

an instrument at the service of those who are part of the conversation” (Morera, 2014, p. 7). They were virtual objects not intellectually productive subjects. The capitalist logic and economic interest were therefore pivotal to appearance-based identities, discrimination, and segregation on slave plantations and in the colonies. The African body “becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body” (Foucault, 1995, p. 26). In the Americas, if they could not be slaves and exist productively *for-CADE*, then they had to be repatriated to Africa (their ‘fatherland’) or be segregated like social untouchables in the Americas (Mbembe, 2017). In South Africa, if they could not work as cheap labour for European industries, they had to go back to ‘Native Reserves’ (Mphahlele, 1960). Be useful *for us* or be gone.

I have discussed this in Chapter 5, but I think it is worth revisiting here by giving evidence from primary sources. Douglass (1881), Du Bois (2007 [1930]) and Williams (1944) have argued that capitalist interest led to African slavery and ‘racism’ and it was at the heart of African colonization and colour-based segregation. As Douglass sums it up, “Out of the depths of slavery has come this prejudice and this color line” (1881, p. 573). This is how discourse produced the slave ‘subject’ as an economic tool. As Foucault (1982) has argued, “while the human subject is placed in relations of production and of signification, he is equally placed in power relations which are very complex” (p. 778). In Jim Crow’s ‘relations of power’, for instance, Maya Angelo (2008, p. 13) relates how teenage girls—“poor white trash” as she calls them—who lived on the land owned by her grandmother (Momma), and who shopped in her grandmother’s store, did not have respect for her. The girls referred to Momma by her first name, ‘Annie’, not Miss Henderson, even when she called the girls ‘Miss’ out of respect. The girls would make faces at Momma, imitated her singing, danced provokingly and rudely in front of her. Momma never paid attention to the

girls. She continued to sing until the girls got tired and left: ‘Bye Annie!’ Angelo would fume after the girls have left, not understanding why Momma allowed the girls to disrespect her that way:

I burst. How could Momma call them Miss? The mean nasty things. Why couldn’t she have come inside the sweet, cool store when we saw them coming over the hill? What did she prove? And then, if they were dirty, mean, and impudent, why did Momma have to call them Miss? (2008, p. 16)

It is this slavery-inspired complex ‘power relations’—where, uncultured and imprudent ‘poor white trash’ teenage girls had more social power than a propertied, well-mannered businesswoman. This was not a natural aversion. These girls learned it. It was a social consciousness borne out of slavery. As Douglass (1892) has succinctly put it, “slavery could change a saint into a sinner, and an angel into a demon” (p. 92). The legacy of slavery made innocent girls into ‘The mean nasty things.’

In this context, I agree with Williams, Du Bois and Douglass regarding the causal direction between colour prejudice and slavery on the one hand, and capitalist exploitation on the other. The colour-based hatred that would develop against Africans in the Americas and the mythical place that would be designed for them from the 19<sup>th</sup> century were not natural, congenital emotions in the consciousness of CADE people as Jordan (1968) seems to suggest in *White Over Black*. Jordan argues that prejudice against Africans predates the establishment of Jamestown, Virginia in 1607; however, documents show that earlier African slaves and European indentured servants in Canada (Cooper, 2010) and USA (Allen, 1994) did not portray the seemingly natural aversion to African appearance. Additionally, authorities and wealthy colonists treated European indentured servants and African slaves in a similar manner. ‘Subscribers’ placed advertisements in newspapers about runaway African slaves and European servants they wanted captured and returned with pay.

For instance, on June 15, *Maryland Gazette* (1748) ran a notice from a certain Benjamin Duval [the subscriber] asking the public to help him with the return of “a Scotch Servant Man named Daniel McKeddie, about 18 Years of Age” and “a Negro Man, named Swilli, an outlandish Fellow, between 30 and 40 Years of Age.” What is noticeable with the runaway British servants, whether they were Scottish, Irish or English, was that the adverts mentioned that they had branding marks just like slaves did (Encyclopedia Virginia, n.d.). Branding of runaway servants and slaves was a legal practice sanctioned by Virginia’s General Assembly (1643): Servants “shall be branded in the cheek with the letter R.” In addition to the branding, servants were also punished to “work with a shackle on his leg for one whole year, and longer if said master shall see cause and after his full time of service.”

On August 5, the *Virginia Gazette* (1737a) ran an advert about a runaway Welsh servant girl from a Mr. William Pierce: “A Convict Servant Woman, named Winnifred Thomas. She is a Welsh Woman, short black Hair'd, and young; *mark'd on the Inside of her Right Arm, with Gun-powder, W.T. and the Date of the Year underneath*” (emphasis added). Since the punishment meted out on both Africans and Europeans bonded to master service was the same, it is reasonable to argue that there was no natural aversion to Africans that would have made them the object of slavery and racism. The vile, inhumane treatment of the poor and lower classes was not invented when Europeans first encountered dark Africans. African slaves were incorporated into an already structured and hierarchized system (Nkrumah, 1970; Marx & Engel, 1847; Burns, 2011 [1978]) with social aversion to all the stigmatized regardless of their appearance (Goffman, 1963). Europeans, as already discussed in Chapter 5, were ‘self-civilizing’; they were not a ‘finished product.’ I have discussed in Chapter 5 how Africans had their own aversions to European

appearance<sup>129</sup> so these kinds of colour aversion to what one is not used to is not quintessentially European. It is human. This is why British abolitionist, Wilberforce, argued that these aversions are based on “relations of parties to each other—and from the effects of these relations, not from any original disparity (For *The Freedom’s Journal*: Wilberforce’s Letter, 1827, p. 102).

The natural aversion thesis is therefore a historical construct based on CADE’s needs. An important historical example is the *Bacon Rebellion* in 1676, which Allen (1994) argues gave the elites in the US a reason to apply the colour line between European servants and African slaves to prevent them from joining forces against plantation aristocrats. My interpretation of these findings is supported in a different geographical space at the same period by Miranda Kaufmann’s (2017) recent book where she argued that Africans lived in Tudor England not as slaves but as free people with no society-wide, legalized prejudice we would witness in Jim Crow America, Apartheid South Africa, and colonial Africa (1884-1960s). This legalized prejudice would intensify because of economic factors, emerging CADE self-understanding, and self-preservation supported by the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries’ ethnological sciences and philosophy.

Long before the landmark ruling by Lord Chief Justice Mansfield freeing James Somerset from his master’s service in England in 1772, the treatment of Africans was not uniformly negative as it would be in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Kaufmann has argued, archival documents show that Africans testified in litigation cases, something that would not be possible if Africans were despised in Tudor England as a matter of natural aversion. Because England was a fanatically religious society at the time, Africans would not be allowed to testify against English people if they were not Christians or their words were not considered to be legally respectable or binding. I am not arguing

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<sup>129</sup> On September 27, 1827, *The Freedom’s Journal* published a story by abolitionist, William Wilberforce, about an African woman who reacted with “horror” when she was offered for marriage to a European traveller. This “*black woman, rejected with expressions of horror, at his colour, and at indignation at his imprudence*” (For *The Freedom’s Journal*: Wilberforce’s Letter, p. 102, original emphasis).

that prejudice did not exist in Tudor England. As a hierarchical and aristocratic society, England nurtured prejudice as a cultural and social ideal. My point is that the natural aversion thesis was a production of CADE interest, especially economic. To be socially embedded and productive, however, the economic interests needed other dimensions (religion, culture, politics, education, science, etc.) of power to strengthen its social anchorage.

### **Identity and Ethics**

While I agree with Williams, Du Bois and Douglass that slavery and colour prejudice were consequences of capitalism, I think it is important to note that colour prejudice and hatred developed a life of their own after the abolition of slavery. Colour prejudice and hatred became self-sustaining and even economically deterministic, making it what Douglass (1881, p. 572) referred to as “a moral disease from an infected country.” Once constructed, identities therefore anchor people and determine their moral life depending on the social and power relations of the society in which the constructed identities are operationalized. Identity dynamics therefore mediate or proscribe people’s interactions with other sociocultural groups (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995) and their responses to issues involving identity difference (Hall, 1996d; Gates, 1997). How identities are constructed and operationalized, as in Jim Crow and apartheid moral circles, prefigure inclusion-exclusion dynamics in an appearance stratified and delineated socio-moral landscape.

### ***Identity and Good/Bad Life***

Morality will be understood here in two ways. First, as Kwame Nkrumah (1970) defines it: “a network of principles and rules for the guidance and appraisal of conduct” (p. 58). The second understanding is offered by Appiah (2005) and Taylor (2001) as the determinant of the good or bad life we live as proscribed by the above rules and principles. For African-Americans, for

instance, Smith (1992) argues that identities were structured in a way “which strictly controlled Blacks and sought to shape and regulate Black status and consciousness” (p. 496). During the Haitian (Saint Domingo at the time) revolution (1791-1804), the island’s social, political, and economic realities were structured and controlled through colour-coded identities: ‘whites’, ‘mulattoes’ and ‘negros’ (‘blacks’)—a condition James (1963) has described as an aristocracy of the skin. The historical analysis I have presented in this dissertation shaped how these moral ideals were operationalized and how their legacies continue to affect CADA and CADE lives today.

Shaping and regulating the status and the consciousness of CADA—whether in Africa, Haiti, Canada, or the United States—by controlling their identity realities safeguarded the material and social interests of plantation aristocracies and the discursively sublimated value of European humanity. CADA had to make peace with where their identities allowed them to be and do what their identities enabled them to do (see Chapter 1 for Ruth’s example in Dresden and Du Bois’s at Harvard).<sup>130</sup> While the lived experiences of CADA were different in different geographical spaces, the ‘norming of spaces’, to use Mills’ (1997) term, was meant to achieve the same result: maintaining of hierarchy for the interest of European peoples and to uphold European superiority.

In his speech on May 20, 1959, in Cape Town, South Africa, Henrik Verwoerd (1959)<sup>131</sup> feared that social and political equality and the blurring of identity borders established by their colour regime (apartheid) would lead to “Bantu domination”. Verwoerd’s fear of ‘Bantu domination’ through the military, air force, ministerial posts, civil services, is similar to what Americans before and after the civil war called “military despotism and negro supremacy” (Wood,

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<sup>130</sup> Also see Sudan’s *Southern Policy* regarding how the British colonial government used identity to keep Arabs and Africans apart administratively (Mayo, 1994). Also see the “Hottentot Code” that established the master-servant, slave-master, colonialist-colonized relationship, between ‘white’ settlers and the indigenous Khoi people in South Africa (Dooling, 2005).

<sup>131</sup> Verwoerd was the Minister of Native Affairs (October 19, 1950 – September 3, 1958) and then South Africa’s Prime Minister (September 2, 1958 – September 6, 1966).



1970, p. 124). For Jim Crow as for Apartheid, it was all-or-nothing. Social equality for CADA meant domination of CADE.

For enslaved Africans, this relation of power engendered the kind of moral life they lived as field hands or as house helps. As Taylor (2001) has argued in the context of identity and its moral importance in the distribution of social goods, societies “restrict the class of beneficiaries to members of the tribe or race and exclude outsiders, who are fair game, or even condemn the evil to a definitive loss of this status” (p. 4). Malcolm X (1963), in a speech at the University of Michigan on November 10, 1963, referred to the ‘field hand’ as ‘field Negro’ and the ‘house help’ as ‘house Negro’. According to X, the ‘house negro’ identified with the master so much so that he did not see any difference between his interest and the interest of the master.

They loved the master more than the master loved himself. They would give their life to save the master's house -- quicker than the master would. If the master said, "We got a good house here," the house Negro would say, "Yeah, we got a good house here." Whenever the master said "we," he said "we." That's how you can tell a house Negro. (X, 1963)

But the ‘field Negro’, X argues, hated his master. Malcolm X’s discourse is of course propagandistic for a reason. He was fighting a repressive system. While ‘House Negroes’ lived relatively better lives than the ‘field hands’, most ‘house Negroes’ also hated the masters for they hated slavery generally. William Brown (1849), who worked mostly as a ‘House Negro’ and had a relatively easier life than the average slave, still despised slavery, and his masters. This visceral hatred of slavery was also the case in the slave narratives documented by Benjamin Drew (1856) where former slaves, whether house hands or field hands, whether blonde and blue-eyed or dark and ‘nappy haired’, expressed their intense loathing of the slave regime. Brown (1852) has also

presented a narrative of a certain George Green who joined the Nat Turner Slave Rebellion in 1831 even when he [Green] could not be distinguished from ‘whites’.

However, X’s assertion does explain an important social condition and mindscape (Taiwo, 2010) on slave plantations in the Americas. Most slave rebellions failed because of betrayals by slaves, who leaked conspiracies to the masters (Williams, 1882; James, 2012; Brown, 1849). While X may have exaggerated the attitudes of the ‘house negro’ and the ‘field negro’, slave narratives indeed show that slaves lived *for-others* (masters and mistresses). For instance, during the American civil war, some slaves joined the confederate army. Others protected their masters’ properties and families even though the South went to war to maintain slavery (Williams, 1882).

### ***Intra-CADA Colourism and Good/Bad Life***

What X does not add in the above quote is the difference in appearance gradation and social valuation among slaves. This is colourism or shadism today (Estrada, 2019). ‘House Negroes’ were, mostly, light-skinned children of slave masters (fathers or sons) and slave women, some of these women being their own relatives (sisters or daughters). Some ‘house negroes’ were children of other slave masters. They were sent to other plantation ‘big houses’ to escape the indignities and hardships of field toil. Only kind masters cared about where their slave children lived and worked.

This arrangement created a situation in which field hands were mostly dark-skinned [‘negroes’] while the house helps were light-skinned [mulattoes or people of colour] (children of African and European ancestry).<sup>132</sup> In most slave societies, ‘mulattoes’ or people of colour gained their freedom more frequently than ‘negroes’ because of their European parentage. This ‘mulatto-

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<sup>132</sup> Forbes (1983) has shown that a ‘mulatto’ in the early years of slavery was not limited to mixed-race children between Europeans and Africans. A child of a European-Native mixture was also called a ‘mulatto.’

negro' divide caused intense feelings of hatred between the two groups and allowed slavocrats to keep them divided to safe-guard slavery.

James (1963) argues that "Black slave and Mulattoes hated each other" (p. 43). Edward Blyden (US. Virgin Islands) and Alexander Crummell (USA) who moved to Liberia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century considered themselves *pure* 'negros' and did not want mixed raced diaspora Africans to move to Africa. Marcus Garvey, who once insulted a colleague as 'white' and referred to Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass as 'bastards', experienced the indignities of the colour line in Jamaica and how 'mulattoes' occupied the second tier in Jamaican appearance valuation (Du Bois, 1923). This internal divide is a hegemonic social condition created by CADE to control CADA with their consent (Hall, 1996c). 'Black slaves and Mulattoes hated each other' as a "direction imposed on [their] social reality by the dominant fundamental group" (Gramsci, 1999, p. 103).

However, this hatred between 'mulattoes' and 'negroes' applied even when the 'negro' was free as this would play out after the Haitian revolution. Whereas appearance divided 'negroes' and 'mulattoes', class (or interest) sometimes transcended the colour line. In Haiti (James, 1963) and Jamaica (Lewis, 1987), for example, wealthy 'negroes' allied with wealthy mulattoes and Europeans (creole or continental). In the early 1920s at the pinnacle of his 'black' advancement movement, Marcus Garvey allied with KKK and other 'white' nationalists because their interests in colour-based separatism and 'purity' had converged. They pledged to financially support Garvey's 'Back to Africa' because they did not want the 'Africanization' of America. Garvey, like Buckley, wanted 'negroes' to live in a place free of colour prejudice; a place normed with 'a *darkie* parliament/...*darkie* code of law/...*darkie* judges.../Darkie barristers...!'

### ***Slave Hatred of Slave Life***

While the nature of the life lived by slaves on the plantations cannot be generalized because of the complex nature of slave-master relations in the Americas (see Edgeworth, 1865), slave narratives show that even the slaves who said they were treated well by their slave masters preferred freedom to slavery (Drew, 1856). During the Haitian revolution in the town of Le Cap, slaves on the plantation of Gallifet were considered well treated but they were the ones who led the revolution for slave freedom (James, 1963, p. 87). It is therefore reasonable to argue that slave identities did not engender a life full of pleasure, self-esteem, and self-respect (Dillon, 1997). Harriett Beecher Stowe has illustrated this in a scene in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* when St. Clare asked Uncle Tom why he wanted to be a free man when his standard of living, his work and his clothes would not be things he could get on his own if he freed him. Uncle Tom replied that "Mas'r, I'd rather have poor clothes, poor house, poor everything, and have 'em *mine*, than have the best, and have 'em any man's else" (1853, p. 309). Slaves preferred freedom to the best slave life.

### ***The Colonies and the Bad/Good Life***

On the African continent, the colonists, and the colonialists operationalized identities for social and imperial control. In the consciousness of the colonists and the colonialists in British East Africa, "Africans were 'just off the trees'" (Perham, 1961, p. 4) so their cultural and moral value as inherent members of (and contributors to) civilization was virtually non-existent. In South Africa, Augustus Theodore Wirgman (1990, p. 596) argues that the Boers characterized the native African as "'zwart schepsel', 'a black creature', whose purpose was to hew woods and draw water for the 'white master'".

But like the plantation slave master in the Americas, the Boer farmer also denied the native labourer who worked for him the opportunity to read and write. For the Boer farmer, the 'schepsel'

was not worthy of owning a land, reading and writing or taking part in officiated Christian rituals. David Livingstone (1858) has also argued that a group of Boers in Southern Africa objected to his opening a school and teaching the natives how to read and write.

The skin, the ‘epidermal schema’ as Fanon (2008 [1952]) would call it, became the pivot of the African identity and how the European related to CADA. In colonial Africa, Europeans, both colonialists and colonists, were separated by a rigid ‘colour bar’ from indigenous Africans. The colonial world was divided into compartments that were like “two different species” (Fanon, 1982 [1963], p. 40). In the colony of the Gold Coast, for example, Europeans did not use public transportation that was used by the masses of natives (Yearley, 2002). In Jamaica, for example, ‘mulatto’ women were employed as secretaries in offices where dark skin women considered ‘negroes’ or ‘black’ were not accepted in similar jobs (Henriques, 1951).

### ***‘Blackness’ and Good/Bad Life in North America***

A few more examples will help illustrate how proscription of identities had (and still have) ethical consequences. For example, an Ohio court in 1846 ruled in *Joseph Jordan v. Nancy Smith* that a man may be an infidel, a Turk, a Jew, or a Muslim and “let him be of good character or bad; even let him be sunk to the lowest depths of degradation; he may be a witness in our courts if he is *not black*” (Supreme Court of Ohio, 1873, p. 201, emphasis added). Nancy Smith, a ‘mulatto’, the defendant in the case, was not considered by the Ohio legal system at the time as a competent witness against a ‘white’ man, Joseph Jordan, the plaintiff. Nancy Smith’s identity was not merely a categorizing or an identifying schema, it justified how low she was to be considered in the American society. Because of her skin appearance, she was not only ruled unfit to be a witness, but she was also considered the ‘lowest depths of [all] degradation’.

A former slave, Mr. Henry Johnson, who moved to Buxton, Ontario in the 1850s also explained the exclusionary skin appearance discursive structure that characterized the *Jordan vs. Smith* case. Before fleeing to Canada, Johnson left his native Pennsylvania to Ohio where his children were enrolled in school. According to Johnson, his children, especially his daughter, were doing well before they were ordered out of the school by the school trustees. When Johnson, who said the teachers and the students liked his daughter and wanted her to remain in school went to the trustees, he was told that “nothing was the matter only she *was black*” (Drew, 1856, p. 137, emphasis added). Values and intelligence did not matter in this appearance discursive structure.

### ***The Problematics of Black-White Continuum***

However, the exclusionary nature of skin appearance was not always an uncomplicated moral discourse as it was also operationalized in a way that created what Adrienne Davis (1996, p. 717) has referred to as a “categorical confusion”. Booker T. Washington exemplified this ‘categorical confusion’ when he wondered where ‘white’ identity ends, and ‘black’ identity begins. Mr. Williamson Pease, a fugitive African-American former slave Drew (1856, p. 123) identified as “A white man with blue eyes” epitomizes this categorical confusion. Before he moved to Hamilton, Ontario, in the 1850s, Pease said he passed for a European-American among strangers. So, many slave owners were shocked that he was a slave. In one instance a slave owner told him, “You a slave! you're as white as my daughter there [...] your hair is as straight as mine, and you've got as good a forehead as mine” (cited in Drew, 1856, p. 128). Hence, when Pease’s owner tried to sell him, a slave buyer refused to buy him because “I was too white for them [...] know too much, and might prove too smart for him” (p. 129). Pease was European in appearance but African in American race identity realities. His visible Europeanness [‘whiteness’] afforded him some favourable treatment, but his invisible, discursive Africanness [‘blackness’] kept him enslaved.

Yet, this Fanonian epidermal schema—'blackness' and 'whiteness'—have survived slave and colonial regimes. They are still used to compartmentalize contemporary capitalist societies and their multicultural variances. As a result, 'blackness' and 'whiteness' still create similar, if not the same, control and denigrating roles.

### **'Blackness' as a Social Construct**

From what has been discussed so far, it may be argued phenomenologically that 'black' is what Europeans saw to be the colour of the African skin on the first European-African encounter because two subjects may be given an 'intentional object' (see Chapter 3) but end up with different phenomena. That is, how the object appears to one subject may not be the same way it appears to the other. Descartes and Husserl, as already noted, understood that our experience, especially our vision, may mislead us. However, it has already been noted that 'black' is not necessarily the phenomenon that appears to Africans and Europeans when their visions were directed toward CADA body because they also seemed to see the CADA skin to be yellow, brown, swarthy, nearly 'black', reddish brown, bluish, etc. When CADA and CADE saw CADA body through first-hand experience, that is, through a phenomenological attitude rather than the natural attitude, they did not see 'black.' The natural attitude as discussed in Chapter 3, is our experience of the world through our culture, social knowledge, education, science, upbringing, etc. This is the world as we take it for *granted* without any critical analysis to gain first-hand experience.

In Glenelg's (1889) *Broken Shackles*, one encounters African-Americans, who are supposed to be 'negro' or 'black' described as follows: "tall yellow woman" (p. 236); "a yellow man" (p. 98), "a gray-headed man, nearly full black", "a brown-skinned girl" (p. 152). In Benjamin Drew's (1853) *Narratives*, William Pease was a 'negro' but he was still "A white man with blue eyes" (p. 123). Benjamin Griffin also wrote of "[a] yellow girl with a child" (Drew, 1853, p. 284).

While Davis (1996) writes of the “fixity of American Blackness” (p. 699), Jessie Fauset (1925, p. 167) argues that the African-American community has a “chameleon adaptability [that] we are able to offer white colored men and women for *Hamlet*, *The Doll’s House* and *the Second Mrs. Tanqueray*; brown men for *Othello*; yellow girls for *Madam Butterfly*; black men for *The Emperor Jones*.” And Rudolph Fisher (1925) writes that “Negroes at every turn; up and down Lenox Avenue, up and down One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Street; big, lanky Negroes, short, squat Negroes; black ones, brown ones, yellow ones” (p. 57). These are phenomenological descriptions not as dictated by culture and education but as experienced first-hand by the observing subject.

‘Black’ is therefore a discursive reality, a social construct created and maintained by CADE’s social grammar. Davis (1996) relates how her ‘blackness’ disappeared when she visited Nicaragua. Her ‘blackness’ reappeared when she entered the United States. While ‘blackness’s’ utility as a system of discursivity (Foucault, 2010) functions differently in the USA and Nicaragua, it still functions as a social control tool in both countries. In the rest of this section, I present some scholarly views on the constructionist nature of ‘blackness’.

### ***‘Blackness’ as a Product of CADE’s Power Discourse***

There is therefore a consensus among scholars who study ‘blackness’ that ‘blackness’ as a signifier of CADA skin appearance is a construct used for social stratification and control of CADA by CADE. This social control function was more morally significant and explicit during slave and colonial regimes. Today, however, this control is exercised by CADE on CADA through Gramscian hegemony. The ideological war of position continues through economic neo-colonialism (Bhabha, 1994; Stiglitz, 2003) and epistemological coloniality (Cohen et al., 2018). The acceptance of ‘blackness’ by CADA through consent can also be theoretically illustrated



through what Herman and Chomsky (1988) have described as the *manufacturing of consent* by mass media, its corporate owners, and governments.<sup>133</sup>

While one continues to find contradictions within this consensus of ‘blackness’ being a social construct, the consensus is considerable. ‘Black’, “On a phenomenological level,” argues Mbembe (2017), “designates not a significant reality but a field—or better yet, a coating of nonsense and fantasies of the West” (p. 38). Consequently, ‘blackness’ was not necessarily what appeared to Europeans when they first encountered Africans as descriptive examples already given suggest. ‘Blackness’ was therefore imagined and placed onto the African skin based on what Europeans saw as a radical difference of appearance and its virtual effect on Europeans.

According to Jordan, the suddenness of the contact between the dark-skinned and the light-skinned people made Europeans exaggerate the appearance of Africans, so they described them as ‘black.’ For Forbes, “The automatic association of ‘negro’ with ‘black’ color cannot be assumed since may [sic] “Black” Africans are actually of medium or dark brown color” (1984, p. 13). Because of European epistemological power, ‘black’ was an error that would be repeated for centuries. Its popular adoption became common sense knowledge; or to use a Gramscian language, it became elaborated into the popular and scholarly consciousness. It would be taken for granted that CADA are ‘black’ without any need to, as Husserl would say, seek a grounded judgement. As a natural attitude dictated by the social discourse of knowledge and power, ‘blackness’ was not the phenomenological reality that ‘appeared’ in the European and Euro-American consciousness. The shock of appearance differential, for instance, makes Walter Raleigh (1848) describe the indigenous Arora people of Guyana to be “as blacke as Negros” (p. 70).

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<sup>133</sup> See p. 120, footnote #60, of this dissertation, for explanatory notes regarding how Herman’s and Chomsky’s theory of *consent* differs from Gramsci’s.

And here, scholars are explicit about the discursive nature of ‘blackness’. For Cornel West (2017 [1995], p. 25), “blackness has no meaning outside...a system of race-conscious people and practices.” Therefore, in social situations where colour differential has no important societal function, ‘blackness’ (or even ‘whiteness’) makes no sense to invoke or to invent as a social category. In colonial ideology, Prah (1998, p. 1) argues in a similar vein by saying that “black consciousness” develops in “areas where blacks live, with white in control of political power.” Before Europeans met people with radically different skin appearances, ‘whiteness’ did not mean much to Europeans as a social reality.

Emphasizing the constructionist nature of “blackness”, Jennifer Kelly (1998, p. 9) argues that “black” and “white” are “not based on biology” but are created and given meaning by social interactions and interpretations within society.” While CADA current episteme and epistemology gives the impression that CADA has given ‘blackness’ a meaning that is outside CADE colonial control and contemporary hegemony, it is important to note that the meaning ‘blackness’ has and its current role were dictated by CADE. The moral and historical frameworks or horizons that shaped and continue to shape the social utility of ‘blackness’ as a positive political reality has not escaped CADE hegemony. ‘Blackness’ as a solidaristic identity is adopted *against-CADE*.

Arguing along a similar line, Foster (2002, p. 23), says that “People are not naturally White or Black...but because of how they are first constructed epistemologically and then ethically as White or Black in their society.” Mbembe captures this ethical and moral dimension of identity construction and logic by colonial regimes: “The fierce colonial desire to divide and classify, to create hierarchies and produce difference, leaves behind wounds and scars” (2017, p. 7). For Henry (2006, p. 10), the creation of identity difference by colour, produced “human tragedies of major

proportions.” The inhumane treatment, these ‘human tragedies’, meted out on slaves and the colonized as I have explained throughout this dissertation exemplified these ‘wounds and scars.’

It is important to note that it was not always ‘the colonial desire’ that created this intense obsession with dividing and classification. It was a reality that was associated with science and the new way of understanding nature in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as discussed in chapter four. The classification of human beings we have already discussed, was part of the wider desire to understand nature and human beings were merely part of it. Foucault (2002) has helpfully discussed this in the *Order of Things*. Everything had to fit into a certain scientific language: tables, series, continuities, structures, order, etc. CADE became obsessed with dividing and classifying the newly discovered people (Cooper, 2010; Wynter, 2003) because classification and division became important for the economic and colonial projects in the expansion of capitalism from the 16<sup>th</sup> century as described by Marx. Gramsci (Gramsci, 1999, p. 158) has noted this hegemonic reality regarding ‘negro intellectuals’, “that American *expansionism* should use American negroes as its *agents* in the conquest of the African *market* and the extension of American civilisation” (emphasis added).

The constructionist nature of ‘blackness’ and its ethical challenges make Baldwin (1993 [1963]) argue that “Color is not a human reality; it is a political reality. But this is a distinction so extremely hard to make that the West has not been able to make it yet” (p. 104). These ethical challenges, which I have discussed through examples, include the use of ‘black-white’ divide for the distribution of social goods and the inclusion-exclusion dynamic of Jim Crow and apartheid. Although ‘blackness’ has morally benefited CADE, it created ethical problems after the abolition of slavery. These ethical problems are part of the reason, as already discussed, for the establishment of Liberia and Sierra Leone. CADE socially constructed a problem for which they had no solution

except segregation, expulsion, or genocide. It is important to note that it is not the case that the west finds it hard to make the distinction as Baldwin has argued. The west has no reason to make this distinction. We have already found that CADE scholars do indeed make this distinction, but it is of no economic, social, cultural value to them. They could use CADE with or without this distinction.

For Hall (1996a, p. 443), “black is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category, which cannot be grounded in a set of fixed trans-cultural or transcendental racial categories and which therefore has no guarantees in nature.” The classical scholars located the cause of ‘blackness’ in the heat of the African sun; some Middle Ages exegetes located this cause in the divine curse; and the Enlightenment scientists and philosophers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century located it in phlogiston, leprosy, and colour-based degeneracy. Their naturalization of ‘blackness’ as I have already discussed, was a result of the epistemic and cultural narratives that were available to them. They could not think beyond their cultural horizons and epistemic and epistemological limitations.

The consequences of this limitations were a Euro-Solipsism through which they constructed CADE-regarding discourses, naturalized them, and then imposed them on others. CADE was, to use Foucault’s (1982) expression, “trapped in our own history” (p. 780). According to Tsri (2016a, p. 5), “black” and “white” were constructed and imposed “rather than facts of nature.” The slave and the colonial regimes had good reason to ‘impose’ them. They made segregation and social control easier. In the United States during the Reconstruction and Jim Crow periods, ‘white’ and ‘black’ became more important as social control tools for the subjugation of African-Americans.

After the abolition of slavery, freedom for the slaves risked blurring identity lines so imposing ‘blackness’ and ‘whiteness’ redefined power and identity borders in the post-slavery era. In Africa following the scramble for Africa, ‘whiteness’ and ‘blackness’ became important in creating what Fanon (1982 [1963]) has called colonial compartments. Colonialism and segregation were discourse of distortion. But this distortion was undertaken by respected CADE scholars. Helper (1868), Carrol (1900) and van Evrie (1868) believed CADA were beasts, sub-humans, and natural criminals lacking intelligence. In Africa, the colonial anthropologist had to project native Africans as ‘savage’, ‘uncivilized’ and ‘violent’ (Mudimbe, 1988). These denigrating qualities were supposedly embedded on ‘blackness’, on the African skin. These were the effects of power and knowledge that led to “deformation, and mystifying representations imposed on people” (Foucault, 1982, p. 781).

In another place, Hall (1996b, p. 472) cautioned against this embedding of ‘blackness’ on CADA skin: “The moment the signifier ‘black’ is torn from its historical, cultural and political embedding and lodged into a biologically constituted racial category, we valorize, by inversion, the very ground of racism we are trying to deconstruct.” Given the above consensus on the constructionist nature of ‘blackness’, Hall’s reminder is an important aspect of contemporary fight against colour prejudice (see Kgokong Nakedi’s example given earlier). Despite Hall’s reminder, some scholarly interpretation risk naturalizing ‘blackness’ as discussed below.

### ***Blackness and Bad Faith***

While scholars accept ‘blackness’ as a social construct with no biological basis as presented above, its social and scholarly use still applies as if it is a natural reality. Scholars also acknowledge its moral complications yet still have no problem normalizing it. This is bad faith—the flight from

responsibility—as being-for-others. As Sartre (1943, p. 49) has asserted, “the one who practices bad faith is hiding a displeasing truth or presenting as truth a pleasing untruth.”

When some CADA scholars, for instance, Hountondji (1996), Ture and Hamilton (2011 [1967]), Mbembe (2017), and Henry (2006), argue that CADA should rethink their identity and define themselves by not allowing CADE to define them, one would expect no detour back to CADE’s historical and colonial names within the colonial discourse. As Mbembe has argued, “There are some names carried as perpetual insults, others as a habit. The name “Black” is both” (2017, p. 152).

Foster (2002) argues that “blackness... fails to capture the fullness of the object that it seeks to explain” and that CADE “regard objects with Black skins as both morally and culturally Black” (p. 24). However, Foster still believes that there is a positive aspect to ‘blackness’: “examination of the body predicated on the recognition that Blackness will be the outcome of a phenomenological search—an ideal to which Canadians may aspire, even if they do not achieve it” (p. 63). Foster is not only here risking naturalizing ‘blackness’ onto CADA skin because he speaks of ‘Black skin’, a naturalization he has already rejected as noted earlier; but he is also circling helplessly within CADE’s colonial and epistemological trap. He critiques ‘blackness’ as a moral indictment of CADA only to fall back into endorsing ‘blackness’ as a morally important social condition to which all Canadians ‘may aspire’. This is a Sartrean bad faith, *par excellence*.

According to Flynn (2006, p. 73), “bad faith...allows another subject to determine the ‘identity’ to which we try to conform.” And like Foster, Mbembe, whose critique of ‘blackness’ is penetratingly important, first criticized ‘blackness’ of the ‘Black Man’ as a Césairian ‘thingification’ of CADA through which he became the object-tool of plantation slavery, the object-specimen of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century science and the agency-less object-being of the colonial

brutality machinery we witness in Southern Africa with Herero and Matabele, East Africa with Kikuyu and West Africa with Ashanti.

However, Mbembe (2017, p. 173) moved riskily toward a colonial and epistemological trap when he wondered if it may not be advisable to embrace ‘black’ as a signifier not to find solace in it but “as a way of clouding the term in order to gain a distance from it.” Mbembe then added: “We must conjure with the term in order to reaffirm the innate dignity of every human being, and of the very idea of a human community, a same humanity, an essential human resemblance and proximity.” While Mbembe’s moral object here, like Foster’s, are ethical calls I agree with, I am not really sure why they believe this must be done through ambivalent relations with ‘blackness’. Given what we have already learned about ‘blackness’, my only explanation for this almost mythical recourse to ‘blackness’, something we will revisit later in detail, is ‘bad faith’.

This is not only what Appiah has called ‘intellectual outsourcing’, but it is also the general impression that there can be no CADA dignity, of CADA-CADE equality, unless we use ‘blackness’. Even when CADE scholars are no longer explicitly controlling CADA identities like they did in the past, CADA scholars seem to have a mythical respect and adherence to CADE-generated identities. Although he concedes that ‘black’ is utilized as both a habit and an ‘insult’, Mbembe still circles back to this ‘insult’ to find a path toward CADA dignity and equal humanity only through CADE’s ideas and identity discourses.

### **‘Whiteness’: Construct, Privilege and Power**

The fairness of the European skin may have existed as an aesthetic ideal of beauty before Europeans meaningfully encountered people whose appearances were different. Beauty in the world was considered the prerogative of aristocrats in society. The poor, the underclass and the

undistinguished did not always feature as sharing in the ideal of *the beautiful*. This is not something natural to Europeans.

### ***Beauty As a Prerogative of The Aristocracy and the Powerful***

In Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo is not only strong and brave, but he is also handsome, an object of admiration by women. He is also a personality of envy by men of Umuofia. We also see this in Thomas Mofolo's (1931) *Chaka*. Chaka is not only a brave warrior and a son of the chief, but he also has the handsomeness and the bravery his peers envy and admire. This does not of course mean that the underclass or the less powerful are not considered beautiful or handsome. This only means that the powerful associate *the beautiful* with their appearance, as beauty personified through their power. The weak have no voice to make their beauty glorified.

However, European aristocrats would take this idea to new discursive heights with the concept of fairness. Nietzsche's discussion of the genealogy of the concept of *Good* as originating from what aristocrats value is an important heuristic. This aristocracy-centeredness of fairness and beauty is illustrated by Shakespeare in *Othello*. When Emelia asked, 'How if fair and foolish?', Iago responded: 'She never yet was foolish that was fair.' Fairness, which today is 'whiteness', was not only the mark of physical beauty, but it also had an exculpatory moral value for she who was fair could not really be foolish. Because of European cultural hegemony, fairness (whiteness), even today, means 'beautiful'. What is admired and standardized by the powerful, apparently, percolates into the consciousness of the culturally dominated. The European skin appearance that indigenous Africans considered 'ugly' and 'horrifying' on first encounter is no longer so in a world dominated by European ideals.



### ***The 'White' Woman Beauty as Power and Vulnerability Personified***

CADA men today, apparently, prefer 'light skin' women. In 2013, there were reports in Ghana that the Senegalese-born American rapper, Akon, and Nigerian singer, Wizkid, asked for 'light skin' girls for their music video (Bella Naija, 2013). Dark skin girls, the report said, were turned away. Shadism is also a major cultural and social problem in Hollywood where dark skin African-American actresses lose roles to light skin African-American women even when the historical figures to be played were dark skin in real life (Blay, 2021). The African-American man, for instance, idolizes and idealizes the beauty of the European-American woman as satirized by Eldridge Cleaver in *Soul on Ice*. This is not just beauty; it is power: emotive and psychological.

Ain't no such thing as an ugly white woman. A white woman is beautiful even if she's bald-headed and only has one tooth .... It's not just the fact that she's a woman that I love; I love her skin, her soft, smooth, white skin. I like to just lick her white skin as if sweet, fresh honey flows from her pores, and just to touch her long, soft, silky hair. There's a softness about a white woman, something delicate and soft inside her (1991 [1968], p. 187).<sup>134</sup>

The moral problematic in this quote is what it implies more than what it articulates. It has an element of truth, but its pontifical boldness (or honesty) makes it overly unrealistic, servile, and a single-minded admiration tone that nullifies its existential truth. I call Cleaver's pontification in the quote above a satire because I do not believe Cleaver thought a bald 'white woman' with no teeth is truly more beautiful than the most beautiful CADA women. I remain incredulous as to

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<sup>134</sup> I know Cleaver's unsavory past, and his rape and sexual assault indictment, subsequent arrest, and imprisonment, may make my use of his book, *Soul on Ice*, as a source on African-American relationship with the European-American woman questionable. However, I noticed that Cleaver noted in *Soul on Ice* the immorality of his actions. My use of *Soul on Ice* in the quote above is in its rawness. He reflected the world as he saw it. That was important in my analysis of 'whiteness' and 'blackness'. The nuances of academic disciplines and scholarly standards sometimes obfuscate important lived realities for one to adhere to academic standards. In the process, the severity of issue risks becoming blunted.

whether Cleaver would defend, without irony, that ‘Ain’t no such thing as an ugly white woman.’ This may be a satire in my estimation, but it tragically sounds like Thomas Jefferson’s (1832 [1787]) myth-laden argument in *The Notes of the State of Virginia* about ‘negro’ men lusting after ‘white’ women the way orangutan lust after ‘negro women’. This is also the beauty of the European women van Evrie glorifies in mythological terms in *Subjensation*. Helper (1867) exemplifies this: “[her] rosy Cheeks, her Daisy Dimples, her Cherry Lips.... her Snow Neck, her Alabaster Shoulders, her Lilly Hands” (p. 358). The point to note here is the valorization of the ‘white woman’ beauty more than what it naturally is by both CADE and CADA. This is social control.

This is the mythological framework in which European would apply ‘whiteness’ to themselves and against the world following its lucrative and instrumental usage during the transatlantic slave trade. The European womanhood exemplified power, yet its very fragility also symbolized the fragility on behalf of which CADE would commit unspeakable atrocities to protect. The protection of the European womanhood was the European man’s metaphorization of his power. This is, as I will discuss shortly, how ‘whiteness’ became associated with Europeaness and power from Enlightenment to the present (Arnesen, 2001; Andrews, 2016).

#### *The ‘Caucasian’ and the Georgian Slave Girl’s Beauty as Quintessence of ‘Whiteness [Beauty]*

The European became ‘Caucasian’ and ‘white’ as a human ‘variety’ from the woman’s beauty, the Georgian slave woman of Blumenbach’s skulls. Unlike previous classifiers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century who used subjective ideas and cultural prejudices to classify human beings, Blumenbach based his conclusions on measurements of the skull. While he believed all human beings are equal, he still placed human beings on a hierarchy. To him, the ‘Caucasian variety’ was the original, beautiful one from which the rest of human beings degenerated (Painter, 2010). Blumenbach

(1865) used the term ‘Caucasian’ because he believed the people who lived around Mount Caucas and its slopes, “produces the most beautiful race of men, I mean the Georgian” (p. 296). The skull Blumenbach used as the quintessential representation of beauty was the skull of a Georgian girl who was enslaved by the Turks where she died. About the girl, he writes, “My beautiful typical head is a Georgian female always of itself attracts every eye, however little observant” (1865, p. 300).

The European woman in North America became pivotal to segregationist *colour bar* and *colour line* even when she had no say in the segregation laws she inspired. Powerful and powerless; weak and powerful. For the enslaved African male in the Americas, sex with the ‘white’ woman was a matter of life and death that it came to symbolize freedom. Here is how Cleaver (1991 [1968]) satirizes the power of the ‘white’ woman: “Every time I embrace a black woman I’m embracing slavery, and when I put my arms around a white woman, well, I’m hugging freedom” (p. 188). This was the power of ‘whiteness’ discourse.

### ***‘Whiteness’ as Pan-Europeanness and the Othering of ‘Non-Whites’***

Like ‘blackness’ original association with skin appearance literally, ‘whiteness’ was first associated with the colour of human skin before it morphed into the discursive realm to become the signifier of power, privilege, and beauty. But as with ‘blackness’, whiteness is not a *phenomenon*, something a subject ‘sees’ on the human skin; it is a social construct (Kelly, 1998; Foster, 2002) that makes sense only in social and political spaces where colour differentials and their socio-political and socioeconomic utility become important (West, [2017] 1995; Prah, 1998).

While European encounters with other dark skin people like Asians intensified European sense of aesthetic self, it would be their encounter with continental Africans that would give them a near-angelic conceptualization of themselves. This encounter would not only give Europeans a

sense of radical difference, but it would also help reconceptualized themselves in a fundamental way that would endure to the present as unquestionable self-love universalized as the global standard of beauty (Cleaver, 1991 [1968]). With the Enlightenment science, philosophy and capitalistic conquest of the world, Europe only created a perfect version of what it means to be human, but it was also a version of themselves that either existed in discourse or in their minds in a Euro-solipsistic framework. This standard of beauty, to be complicated as to make it a preserve of Europeans in a way that could not be found in other races, had to also be accompanied by lofty, discursive realities that could not be attained. Perfect images such as Apolloscque sculpture became what it means to be Europeans, to be beautiful and to be ‘white’ (Painter, 2010).

While continental European scientists and philosophers conceptualized Europeanness, signified by ‘whiteness’ as a standard of beauty as we witness in the works of Blumenbach and Meiners, it would be in the Americas during slavery that the image of Europeans and the quintessential picture of what is desirable would take shape. With Blumenbach using the Georgian woman as the representative sample of the perfect human beauty, he would use the term that characterizes the Caucasus as the appellation of a race. Caucasian was not originally synonymous with ‘whiteness’ as it included those who cannot be considered ‘white’ today.<sup>135</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, North America became more *Eurocentric*, was proud of its Europeanness than Europe itself yet it did not want to be European *per se*. Continental Europeans did not have to show they were European; they only had to show that they were better than the rest of the world.

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<sup>135</sup> The case of the *United States vs. Bhagat Singh Thind* is one example. Using Blumenbach’s colour-based classification of human beings in the 18<sup>th</sup> century that categorized Indians as “Caucasian”, Thind, “a high-caste Hindu”, according to the petition, believed he should have been classified ‘white’ within the dictates of the American colour regime. According to Blumenbach’s ‘science’ of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Singh was ‘Caucasian’, and therefore ‘white.’ (Smith, 2015; Legal Information Institute, n.d.)

However, North Americans of European descent had to show that they were Europeans to share in that special humanity, in *Caucasianness*. But for Europeans in North America, the developing European identity was insecure because America was established from Enlightenment ideals (Wolff, 2005) that were only talked about in Europe without a firm practical establishment. Hinton Helper not only believed in the beauty of the European skin because of its discursive ‘whiteness’—the ‘whiteness’ with which Johann Blumenbach was smitten in his creation of the ‘Caucasian race’—he also praised the literal whiteness against blackness. He refers to ‘white’ as a color of health, joy and beauty. He even quotes Theodor Waitz in *Anthropology of Primitive Peoples*: “Among the Madingo, in the region of Sierra Leone, white is a symbol of peace. Among the Ashantee and other negroes, white is a color of joy; they paint themselves white on their birthday” (Waitz, as cited in Helper, 1867, p. 104). That whiteness is a preferred colour has little to do with the discursive ‘whiteness’ of the European skin. For instance, the Jieeng of South Sudan also use white as a symbol of morality, of desirability. In his song, *Majöṇḍi*, South Sudanese singer, Chol Atem Agutyar (2020) says: “yæer de piöndu yen ayin nyin tüt ë baai” (The *whiteness* of your heart is the reason you are vigilant and helpful to the country).

### ***Whiteness’ as a Collective Identity and its Moral Function***

However, the global operationalization of ‘whiteness’ as the collective identity of Europeans and their descendants in America did not begin until America made Africans the quintessential source of labour for the plantation economies. I have already discussed that aristocratic attitudes made masters treat European indentured servant like slaves or even worse, before ‘whiteness’ inducted them, somehow, into the moral circle of the colour regime. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before the Europeanization of the colour regime, the ‘white trash’ was outside the European moral circle. Additionally, between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, European burgeoning

powers were in competition, so a common European identity was either taken for granted or unnecessary. Even by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Burton (1863, p. 51) still expressed disdain for other Europeans and Americans: “We cannot expect our cousins, the irritable Yankees, or the poor devil Germans, to love the rich head of the house of John Bull.” Burton added that “We cannot expect rivals, who have striven with us and failed, Spain, Portugal, and Holland—once first rate now third rate powers—to bear our greatness without a look askance.”

The Portuguese started the raids of African villages on the coast of Guinea and started selling African slaves to other European states including the papal state (de Azurrara, 1899). But when the trade became lucrative and imperial ambition seductive, competition became fierce. Nationalistic pride prevented the development of a unified, emotional pan-European identity. Europeanness had not become a meaningful ‘race’ for race was still used to divide Europe into races: Celtic race, Anglo-Saxon race, English race, Gallic race, etc. While descriptive categories used ‘white’ in the classical antiquity, it would not be until the 16<sup>th</sup> (Africanus, 1896 [1600]) and the early 17<sup>th</sup> century travel writings (Purchas, 1614) that its use became relatively frequent. In the classical antiquity, *Ablus* and *leukos* were used for ‘white’ both categorically and descriptively (Tsri, 2016a).

However, it would not be until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that ‘whiteness’ as a collectivizing social identity became embraced beyond its descriptive parameters. It became an identity. By this time, according to Allen (1994), ‘white people’ were created for social control to divide poor European’s servants and African slaves. This would be the development of a collective European consciousness using appearances. Europeans who were previously part of the lower classes found what Du Bois would describe as ‘psychological wage’ (Arnesen, 2001; Du Bois, 1935). ‘Whiteness’ became instrumental (and protective) on the plantation economies of the

Americas as an important instrument of the slave regimes' political economies. 'Whiteness' also became the determinant for inclusion in the social goods and the collectivizing parameters as the former confederate states—"the Dixicratic dinosaurs" as Cleaver (1968 [1991], p. 141) called them—fought to regain the glory of the slavery-based plantocracy.

It became the fount of the supremacist sentiment that became known as 'white supremacy' during and after the Reconstruction period. The hypodescent, the one-drop-rule (Jordan, 2014; Hickman, 1997; Hollinger, 2005) would become central to the exclusionary nature of 'whiteness' exemplified by the *Plessy versus Ferguson* ruling of 1892. It was a moral determinant—which Hickman (1997) described as 'evil'—of who was to be excluded, hated, denied economic and political rights, or even killed. The moral exclusionary nature of 'whiteness' desensitized European-Americans towards African-Americans.

When Malcolm X was assassinated, Eldridge Cleaver argued that "From most of the whites there was a leer and a hint of a smile in the eyes" (1968 [1991], p. 75). Maya Angelou also notes this moral desensitization towards African-Americans from what her brother, Bailey, noted after a dead African-American man was pulled from a lake. As Bailey and other African-Americans around moved back and looked away, "the white man stood there, looking down, and grinned" (2008, p. 65). This moral desensitization enabled European-American families to find pleasure in unsightly lynching orgies, ritualized public hanging and burnings of African-Americans (Wells-Barnett, 1895). Nina Simone (Awkadan, 2014 [1965]) and Billie Holiday (ReelinInTheYears66, 2018 [1954]) have immortalized this moral desensitization in *Strange Fruit*: "Strange fruits hangin'/From the poplar trees/Pastoral scene/Of the gallant south." Perhaps the scenes of "strange fruit"—which Frederick Douglass (1895) described as "persistent infliction of outrage and crime

against colored people”—may have hardened American “moral sensibility” (p. 5). This is the continuous search for the illusive America’s (and CADE’s) moral identity (Baldwin, 1993 [1954]).

As Africans became the quintessential menial hands before and after slavery in the Americas, they also became synonymous with menial labour in European African colonies. As ‘whiteness’ became the colour of Europeans and the descendants of Europeans in the world, it also became a symbol of power, privilege, intelligence, and morality. Europeanness in the Americas became a status symbol. In European colonies in Africa, Europeanness was a symbol of power.

What is interesting with ‘whiteness’ was that it created a pan-Europeanness that was European but at the same time not European. Europeans in the Americas were trying to shape the nature of their ‘nations’ that was different from the Old-World realities. However, they still must take pride in their European heritages against ‘inferior’ peoples in the Americas or ‘subject races’ in the colonies. From the end of the American Civil War, ‘whiteness’ became a symbol of status and power, so CADA scholars critiqued it for its oppressive utility. But ‘whiteness’ was not embraced as a matter of identity; it was a functional collegiality assumed against the othered *Other*. It was not merely a proud-identity-for-me but a power-identity-against-others.

The prejudice of Europeans and European-Americans also became linked with ‘whiteness’ in the consciousness of CADA intelligentsia. And for a long time, CADE scholars either ignored what CADA scholars wrote, or they dismissed them as nonsensical. And CADA philosophers who study ‘whiteness’ and ‘blackness’ as existential signifiers of power and subjection are not taken as real philosophers (Yancy, 2011; Hountondji, 1996; Makumba, 2007). As Bernasconi has argued in their edited volume on race and ‘racism’ in European continental philosophy, CADE philosophers have always rationalized the “task of judging positions on the basis of arguments:



what cannot be sustained on that basis is revised, improved upon, or discarded (Bernasconi & Cook, 2003, p. 2).

***Power and Privilege: The Critical Interrogation of ‘Whiteness’***

The exclusionary dimension of ‘whiteness’, which has been historically interrogated mostly by CADA scholars is also critique by ‘critical’ and social justice CADE scholars today. With the advent of ‘whiteness studies’, liberal European-Americans started to analyze ‘whiteness’ as an identity and ‘whiteness’ as a signifier of privilege and power. Even CADE philosophers have started to acknowledge that ‘whiteness’ is a worthy subject for philosophical analysis. As Kelly Oliver (2003) put it, “Whiteness and blackness are part of an ideology created to justify exploitation which becomes a psychological justification for one’s own sense of oneself as superior” (p. 183).

As I have noted above, ‘Whiteness’ had traditionally been studied by CADA scholars as part of their liberatory and activist scholarship and that made it easy for CADE scholars to treat it as belligerent, less scholarly, or irrelevant all together. But because intellectual hegemony and oppression are hidden in discourse unless they are articulated through state power that is expressed in physical violence, it took a long time for CADE scholars to self-interrogate. They were the traditional intellectuals; the ones who studied others, so they took who they are at face value. Non-CADE were ‘races’, but CADE were just ‘people’ (Andrews, 2016; Arnesen, 2001). We have already noted this with Egyptians who considered themselves ‘the people’ (Isaac, 2004). Against ‘CADE-being-the-only-people’ narrative, Liberal CADE Scholars therefore started to argue that continental and diaspora Europeans were also ‘raced’ so studying them was a matter of necessity. ‘Whiteness’ also needed to be studied, these scholars argue, for CADE people to appreciate their own privilege and support social justice and CADA liberatory discourses.

Like ‘blackness’ that became an economic condition, a social condition, and even a way of life, ‘whiteness’ also became an economic condition, a social condition, and a way of life. To be ‘white’ is to be privileged and powerful; to be ‘black’ is to be the exact opposite. Additionally, CADE whose consciences were tortured by what they witnessed *their* people doing to others, especially CADA, wanted to free themselves morally and psychologically. Author Lydia Child, whose anti-slavery was calculated and reasonable, and John Brown whose pious hatred of slavery led to his rebellion and consequent death by hanging, are representatives of CADE’s people whose consciences were tortured. This tortured conscience led John Brown to strike at the heart of the slave power structure at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, on 16 October 1859. It was an offense by the human conscience against ‘whiteness’, its solidaristic value, and to its ‘supremacy’.

In his letter to his wife, Mary Brown, on 8 November 1859, Brown expressed this tortured conscience: “I am, besides, quite cheerful, having (as I trust) the peace of God, which “passeth all understanding,” to “*rule in my heart*,” and the testimony (in some degree) of a *good conscience* that I have not lived altogether in vain” (Brown, as cited in Ross, 1876, p. 111, emphasis added). This tortured conscience led a slave-owner, a certain Mr. Mallory, to free a slave mother, Sophy, and her child after Sophy was acquitted after killing a very cruel overseer. Mallory was also not a kind master but Sophy’s condition tortured cruelty out of him:

Mallory, hard-fisted man as he was, had been greatly moved by the painful case, and immediately announced, in presence of the whole court, that “as the jury had acquitted Sophy, he would now set her and her child free.” The whole court-room of people cheered his maganimity to the echo, and it was all in vain for the crier to cry, “Silence ! silence ! ” The enthusiasm of the crowd was too strong to be easily suppressed. Many now gathered round Sophy, and congratulated her upon her double escape, from death and from slavery.

Mallory was as good as his word, for he immediately took her to Lawyer Hickey's office, and had freedom papers made out for herself and child. (Glenn, 1889, p. 135)

This was 'whiteness' self-correcting as CADE 'whiteness' scholars are doing today. But 'whiteness' has not only been oppressive against CADE as we have mentioned. So, Jews, Eastern Europeans and Irish, who were previously excluded from the privileges then reserved to Anglo-Saxonism in the Americas, were in some cases excluded from the sublimity of 'whiteness'. For some scholars, these excluded groups became 'white' in the United States (Allen, 1994). However, Eric Arnesen argued that the problem was not exclusion from 'whiteness' because these people were always 'white'; the problem was their immigrant status so when they started to exemplify what it means to be an American, their eventual inclusion made appear like they were finally 'becoming white'. At the same time, Arnesen concedes some empirical cases in which native born European-Americans made a distinction between 'whites' and Germans. Edward Blyden (1905) also observed this English and Anglo-American exclusion of other Europeans from 'whiteness' when an English captain told him that "there is only one white man ashore there...the others are Germans" (p. 19). Burton (1863) has expressed this differently when he argued that civilization takes time so Africans should first be shown what it means to be civilized before they are treated as equals of 'whites' in the British colonies: "Even the Irishman and the German must pass some five years civilising themselves in the United States before they are permitted to vote" (p. 220).

Today, 'whiteness' continues to symbolize power and privilege that some CADE have called for its abolition (Andrews, 2016). For some scholars, 'whiteness' is 'racism', 'white supremacy', 'oppression' and exclusion. However, some scholars argue that we need to put a distinction between 'whiteness' as an identity, privilege, and oppression. A person can be 'white' without being oppressive; and someone can be 'white' without being privileged. 'White trash',

poor ‘Hill Billies’ and ‘trailer trash’ are modern examples. My main point here is this: being ‘white’ does not always confer privilege nor does it make one automatically an oppressor.<sup>136</sup>

But what is clear is that CADE continue to control power and wealth globally. What is not clear is how ‘whiteness’ can be dismantled when it has not been conceptually clarified. If ‘whiteness’ is a status symbol, a position of privilege—or a psychosis as Andrews (2016) has argued—then there must be a clear analysis of what ‘whiteness’ is before its abolition or dismantling can make conceptual or existential sense. Andrews argues that ‘whiteness’ is embraced irrationally so it is moot to talk about abolition because abolition presupposes rational deliberation. Because ‘whiteness’ is still linked to appearance, it must be made clear what is to be abolished or dismantled. ‘Whiteness’ is a discursive identity so it can easily be discarded in CADE social grammar. But ‘whiteness’ as a structure of power and privilege may be difficult to remove because of the benefits it affords those who are classified ‘white.’ If it is so good and beneficial to be ‘white’, then why would anyone want to dissociate from it? When, in the history of the west, had Europe ever put the interests of others above their own? CADE see themselves with ingroup prisms, through survivalist lenses, not through power, so they have interests to protect. It is CADA scholars—and liberal CADE—who write to make CADE see its power.

What is important to note here, however, is that ‘whiteness’ was part of European self-understanding, self-exertion, and control of the world. It has no phenomenological meaning. CADE body, as an object of intentionality, does not appear white, as a phenomenon, to a subject. As G. K. Chesterton (2006) has argued, “We give Europeans, whose complexion is a sort of pink drab, the horrible title of a ‘white man’—a picture more blood-curdling than any spectre in Poe” (p. 32). He added wryly, in what I interpret here as a truly *phenomenological attitude* (based on

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<sup>136</sup> ‘Whites’ with severe disabilities, for instance, face oppression.

first-hand experience) that “it is undoubtedly true that if a Government official reporting on the Europeans in Burmah, said, ‘There are only two thousand pinkish men here’ he would be accused of cracking jokes, and kicked out of his post” (p. 33). ‘Whiteness’, like ‘blackness’, is a discursive formation.

I therefore argue here that its dismantling, abolition, or removal should not be confused with combating inequality. European-Americans may part with ‘whiteness’ but still oppress African-Americans because the problem is not ‘whiteness’ but the social consciousness that uses it as a tool for social control. The ‘whiteness’ abolitionist magazine, *Race Traitors*, that was edited by John Garvey and Neol Ignatiev has as its slogan the following line: ‘Treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity.’

But couching a presumably social justice discourse in this language is a luxury the marginalized cannot afford. To antagonize people who call themselves ‘white’ is not a social justice discourse. It is to take pleasure in a social antagonism in which one loses nothing. ‘Whiteness’ just like ‘blackness’ can be abandoned with ease as long as they are explained in a way that does not make people lose a sense of who they are. Trying to ‘dismantle whiteness’ while people who attach their sense of selves to it and feel intricately linked to it, and who have not been adequately apprised of the historical facts of ‘whiteness’, cannot feel ‘whiteness’ being abolished without affecting who they are.

CADE affiliate with ‘whiteness’ not because it is oppressive but because they either feel it is who they are, or it affords them privileges they do not associate with oppression. Starting with antagonism is an inadvertent antagonism to social justice. What liberal CADE scholars do not realize is that any offense against ‘whiteness’ is translated as benefit to ‘blackness’ and that antagonizes CADE regardless of the social justice individuals undertaking human equality and

equity discourse. In the 1850s, pro-slavery European-Americans described anti-slavery European-Americans as “black republicans” as a denigrating term (Wood, 1970, p. 18). ‘Black republicans’ were ‘white’ only that they were advancing a discourse on behalf of people who were ‘black’. Some CADE scholars, like Hinton Helper in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, may attach a moral importance to ‘whiteness’ or regard it as a unifying Pan-European identity as CADA continue with ‘blackness’ to do as discussed below.<sup>137</sup> What I suggest is to first show that ‘whiteness’ is not who people are before treating it as a moral problem. But once CADE people believe ‘whiteness’ is their natural humanity, or a natural fact of their bodies, any talk of ‘dismantling’ it becomes counterproductive to social justice. In this context, CADE rationalize *dismantling* as social injustice, as a discourse of destruction on behalf of CADA.

### **The New, Proudful ‘Blackness’**

Europe and Euro-America continues to control the universal ethics of identity without seeming to do so. They control African politics, economies, and universities without appearing to control them because power relations are exercised as a discourse of little things, imperceptible changes that conceal effects of the controlling powers (Foucault, 1995). Colour prejudice in the Americas and colonization in Africa, which first brought together intellectuals of African descent together in chromatocratic and experiential collegiality in London in 1900, continues to unite CADA people globally.

### ***The Solidaristic and Collectivizing Function of ‘Blackness’ and Social Contradictions***

Between 1900 and 1970s, ‘negro’ formally played a collectivizing identity role. While identity discourse between African, ‘negro’, ‘black’, Afro-America and African-American

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<sup>137</sup> Note that this is before African-Americans became lawmakers during the Reconstruction period when they were elected to state and federal legislators as republicans.

(Bennet, 1969) dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Steward, 1904; Weems, 2002), it was in the middle of the 1960s that identity discourse became intense, and at times polemic (Bennet, 1969; Martin, 1991). ‘Black’ won over as young, vocal, and militant intellectuals looked for more aggressive—CADE-shocking—approaches to combat divisive and oppressive American chromatocracy. Some were inspired by the Cesairean and Senghorian ‘negritude’ that was styled as the 20<sup>th</sup> century “new humanism” of the ‘negro’ or ‘black’ people in the world (Senghor, 1994, p. 27). This was the era of ‘new ethnicity’ (Martin, 1991) that was characterized by expressive ‘black is beautiful’, ‘black power’, ‘I’m black and I’m proud’. While ‘black’ would also be adopted by Africans in the spirit of colour-collegiality, it is in South Africa that it became instrumental as in Steve Biko’s ‘black consciousness’ movement against apartheid (Snail, 2008).

In this prideful paradigm, the older generation united CADA around ‘negroness’, but the younger generation in the 1960s united CADA through ‘blackness’. ‘Negro’, which has previously been defended as logical and ‘strong’ and something that should be uttered with pride, became associated with obsequiousness of servitude and the objectionable submissiveness of ‘Uncle Tom’ (Bennet, 1969). As Kwame Ture argued in his BP speech in Berkeley in 1966, “If we had said “Negro power” nobody would get scared...If we said power for colored people, everybody’d be for that, but it is the word ‘black’ that bothers people in this country” (Blackpast, 2010 [1966]). According to Ben Martin (1991), “Black was associated with youth, unity, militancy, and pride, while Negro increasingly connoted middle age, complacency, and the status quo” (p. 92).

In the consciousness of CADA writers from the 1950s and 60s, embracing ‘blackness’ was a reclamation (Crossley, 2011) of an identity that has been denigrated by the slave regime for more than 200 years. The reclaimed ‘blackness’—which to Senghor (1994) was ‘negritude’—was “the humanism of the twentieth century” (p. 27). Today, the reclamation of ‘blackness’ continues (see

Dei, 2018; Kirumira, 2022). Reclamation of ‘blackness’ according to Dei (2018) “is about calls for resurgence, reclamation, and cultural renaissance” (p. 132). The reclamation of ‘blackness’ was, to use one of Foucault’s (2010) discursive formulations, not a creation of new discourse but a “repeat...from what has already been said” (p. 157). This is discursive continuity or quasi-continuity.

The ‘blackness’ of the 1960s was also different, new, somehow. Though ‘black’ was a foreign invention and has been used for centuries, as already discussed, it was the new social condition under which it was being assumed that is of moral significance, especially in the Foucauldian genealogical context. In its new use, there was a sense of subjectivity, of agency, of saying ‘I choose to...’ and ‘I refuse to....,’ a discursive condition Foucault (1984, p. 78) would say challenges “carefully protected identities.” It was as if this new discourse of ‘blackness’, to use another formulation of discourse, “appeared for the first time...[with] no similar antecedents...as new creations” (Foucault, 2010, p. 157). But how far does this CADA agency, this subjectivity go outside CADE epistemic control? Not very far, apparently. Ture (Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967; Carmichael, 1967) was only choosing from pre-existing appellations within a pre-determined structure. What bothered European-Americans was not the ‘black’ but the chutzpah for African-Americans to choose. It was the choice not the word that bothered the power discourse in the United States because it offended European solipsistic will to power, the will to control. The ‘child’ was starting to defy paternalistic dictates in the United States just as she/he was starting to ask for self-determination on the continent of Africa. The peasant was intellectually wiggling out of feudalism and moving away from the farm.

While the formal preference for ‘black’ over ‘negro’ in the late 1960s projected a sense of self-determination, the change was only discursive and deceptive. Martin (1991) has argued that



“Each of the previous shifts from colored to Negro to black emerged from within the group and won gradual and often grudging acceptance in the larger society” (p. 103). Indeed, the ‘shift’ may have emerged within the African-American community but the origin of the terms themselves did not. These changes were resistive social grammars that were deceiving themselves about their originalities, about their creative power because they are contours of ‘how’ power exerts itself on CADA (see Foucault, 1982, p. 786). Not only were ‘black’ and ‘negro’ CADE’s creation, the rationale for choosing ‘black’ over ‘white’ was still prescribed by these changes. The attempt by CADA to turn themselves into subjects, to be autonomous, to create their own subjectivity as Foucault (1982, p. 778) would put it, was still controlled by CADE. Alan Locke’s ‘New Negro’ would be an example of this attempt to become subjects. In the Greco-Roman world, in the Middle Ages, Renaissance and centuries between the 1500s and the 1960s, Africa was, to CADE, an object of study.

However, the new moral outlook by this Lockean ‘new negro’ (Locke, 1925) and Turean ‘black man’ (Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967]) in their formalization of ‘black’ over ‘negro’ was, and still is, unquestionable. According to Alain Locke (1925), the ‘New Negro’ of the 1950s and 60s was no longer interested in integrationist ideals and the passive wait for the American political system to be inclusive. To the older generation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century, being too militant angered ‘white folks’ and that invited brutal legal responses or the wrath of the KKK. The ‘New Negro’ was no longer afraid to die and to challenge ‘white power.’ The ‘New Negro’ was also not afraid to take pride in their African heritage. My contention here is its claim to originality and creative assertions, which are still locked in CADE colonial epistemic and epistemological traps. Contrary to their claims, the shifts (except for African-American or Afro-

American) were not heritage-based, centring identities but reactive decisions whose ontologies shifted with European-American attitude.

Firstly, European-Americans still controlled this change for the change was predicated on defiance against their control, identity ethics and the historically suppressed subjectivity of CADA. African-Americans did not think outside CADA lexical imperialism (Appiah, 2005); they acted in a manner that borders on parent-child disobedience (Mignolo, 2009). It was not a creation of a cultural identity for oneself but an adoption of a resistive identity against an oppressive other.

Secondly, 'blackness' as a Husserlian phenomenon has little (if anything) to do with CADA skin appearance phenomenologically. It was a discursive identity; a colonial construct whose philosophical and social utility would find *raison d'être* in CADA segregation and debasement. Benjamin Rush, who not only campaigned philosophically and morally against slavery (1773) but also hailed the mental capacity and scientific import of African-Americans (1798), still wrote of CADA 'morbid blackness'. He argued scientifically and medically that the 'blackness' of CADA skin was a disease of the skin caused by leprosy (1799, p. 291). This is the discursive creation of the alienating image of the 'negro' that, as Baldwin (1989 [1954]) has argued, has little to do with CADA phenomenological reality.

Third, both 'negro' and 'black' denoted the same colour and connoted the same being. They are, to loosely use a biological term, homologous. As George Williams (1882) has argued, "The term "Negro," from Latin "*niger*" and the French "*noir*," means black" (p. 13, original emphasis). 'Blackness' was embraced in the 1960s by either ignoring its homologous relations with 'negro', or by ignoring its morally questionable past (Tsri, 2016a) because it *felt good* to embrace it. As Baldwin (1993 [1962], p. 77) aptly put it, "black has *become* a beautiful color—not because it was loved but because it was feared" (original emphasis).

This fear of ‘blackness’, this Fanonian phobogenesis, is what Warren Calvin (2018) has referred to as ‘ontological terror’ of ‘blackness’. It was one of the reasons why European-American preferred “Removing the free black presence from U.S. soil becomes an ethical and theological imperative, since this presence threatens to destroy the nation” (Warren, 2018, p. 57). And why would CADE not fear ‘blackness’ if it was caused by leprosy, phlogiston, or a divine curse? ‘Blackness’ was therefore adopted not because it meant something to African-Americans and CADA generally, but because it was a strong statement of defiance against the American legal, political, and social structures that have historically determined and controlled the African-American identity (Wise, 2011). To appropriate Foucault’s analysis of Nietzsche’s question and Mallarmé’s reply, who was “speaking” was not the meaning of ‘black’ but ‘black’ itself (Foucault, 2002, p. 333).

### ***‘Blackness’ and Identity Ambivalences***

CADA identity during the slave and colonial regimes and in the postcolonial period is still a site of identity ambivalence (Bhabha, 1994). It is shrouded in what Foucault (2002, p. 330) would describe as “a region of shade” or “blurred light” that hides more than it reveals. But this ambivalence, this region of shade is not inherent in CADA cultural and social landscape. It emanates from the ghost of CADE epistemological and cultural delimitations which continue to haunt CADA decolonial processes and the state of episteme. Even when Mbembe (2017) and Tsri (2016a) presented a weighty philosophical and historical indictment through an analysis of the ethical problematics of ‘blackness’, CADA thinkers continue to use appearance-based identities against western colour prejudice and modern paternalism. They seem trapped within CADE’s epistemological hegemony from which they seem not to escape. They, however, make strong declarations that they have escaped (or intend to escape) these epistemological traps (see Ture and

Hamilton, 2011 [1967]; Dei, 2018). I agree with Asante (2009) that ‘black’ in “Black Studies still carries legitimacy in a philosophical sense but that it is stuck in time” (p. 15).

Mbembe (2017), for instance, describes the invention of the ‘Black Man’ as stemming from “vandalism of meaning”, from “nonsense and fantasies of the west” (p. 38). However, he still believes, like Foster (2002), that ‘blackness’ can still be reappropriated by CADA as a positive moral discourse. However, Tsri (2016a) argued that ‘blackness’ should be abandoned for what it means socially and for what it has done historically. Admittedly, countries such as France and Brazil, which downplayed skin appearance as an important part of identity construction and social stratification because of their [pretentious] liberal sensibilities, have overlooked problems of colour prejudice and left people of African descent with, arguably, *no* solidaristic tool, locally and globally (Abel, 2018) because CADA did not think beyond ‘blackness’ to realize that solidarity could be forged without embracing ‘blackness.’ Asante (2009) has argued that “Black Studies” had a “moral and political” purpose and that “The political purpose was that it gave us a rallying point, a place of departure, and a point of destination” (p. 18).

What happened in Brazil and France is not a lack of solidaristic tools or the inability to create solidaristic tools, but the moral problem of prescribing to people the deterministic conceptual vocabulary through which they could describe themselves (Appiah, 2005, p. 47). While Senghor and the negritude movement undertook a cultural project that has not only given CADA scholars and writers a prideful culture-centered discourse to make sense of themselves, their adoption of ‘negritude’—an appearance-based discursive identity created by CADE—compromises its decoloniality. It is the colonial trap that makes CADE scholars circle away around coloniality hoping to escape it only to loop back to it. CADE told CADA that you are nothing more than your ‘morbid blackness’ (Rush, 1799) or ‘hideous blackness’ (Helper, 1867). But

CADA argued that they are more than a colour; that they had a culture, moral values, and world-saving traditions. But the CADA, in bad faith, settled for colour as their humanity.

*'Blackness' and CADA Humanity*

'Negritude' was a project of well-informed CADE scholars who had a deep and a complicated understanding of the cultures on behalf of which they were writing, but it is surprising they not only chose to abide by appearance-based cultures of the west, but also used an identity that was constructed to denigrate and exclude them. Additionally, they mixed up a discourse with people's humanity. When anti-negritude Ghanaian government commissioned a poem titled "I hate Negritude", Senghor counters: "[as] if one could hate oneself, hate one's being, without ceasing to be" (1994, p. 27).

It is a conceptual and moral disaster to equate 'negritude', which simply means 'blackness', with CADA *being* and CADA *self*. One can hate an identity created for oneself by an oppressive other without hating oneself. 'Negritude' is an 'idea' about oneself not one's phenomenological self. The self, and one's being predated 'negritude'. While I agree with Senghor (1994, p. 27) that 'negritude' is neither "inferiority complex" nor is it "self-negation", I believe it is 'self-alienation'. It is an alienation from one's phenomenological self for the self of Senghor is a discursive self that displaced the phenomenological self. There is no historical and intellectual originality to 'negritude' because the 'negre', from which Césaire coined it, is a colonial term used to eclipse CADA cultural identities. And since 'negritude's' "originality" is a negative ontology intended "as an instrument of liberation and as a contribution to the humanism of the twentieth century" (Senghor, 1994, p. 27) it cannot also be CADA *being* and *humanity*. One's humanity and being should not be constructs of creative discourse, or social grammar.

*The Inclusionary Ethic of 'Blackness' and the Pain of 'Passing' (Hyperdescent)*

Internal divisions based on culture, geographical region, and colour, among CADA people continue to exist. 'Blackness' as a received concept, nonetheless, still plays a collectivizing role (Kelly, 1998; Nwakanma, 2022; Szetela, 2020). As Fanon (1982 [1963], p. 216) has argued, what united CADA is that they were "defined in relation to the whites." Unity-against-whites also engendered unity in the face of brutal violence and suffering on the continent and in the Americas (Mbembe, 2017). As Césaire argued during the 1956 *Conference of Negro-African Writers and Artists*, CADA are not 'negroes' by their desire; they are united by European injustice against them (as cited in Baldwin, 1993 [1954], p. 54).

Since the three-tier chromatocratic system did not take root in North America, 'blackness' became the fount of colour-based collegiality regardless of the appearance of one's skin as long as there was a known African ancestry in one's genealogy. It was not only the legal conditions (Baldwin, 1993 [1954]; Buntman, 2001]) that made visibly European people 'negroes', it was also the sense of rejection, of the exclusionary nature of 'whiteness'. Marcus Garvey and Edward Blyden, for instance, did not consider 'mulattoes' true 'negroes' because of the part of their European ancestry. However, the European-American forced them to accept 'mulattoes' into 'negroness' and 'blackness'. The exclusionary nature of 'whiteness' gave 'blackness' its new ethic of inclusion, solidaristic power. The involuntary inclusionary nature of 'blackness' was bolstered by poor 'whites', who, Horowitz (1973, p. 552) argues, considered themselves better than educated and rich free 'blacks' and 'mulattoes'. Du Bois's 'wage of whiteness' and Maya Angelo's grandmother example provided earlier serve as examples.

Unlike the case of South Africa where 'coloreds' still remain a separate group, 'mulattoeness' fused into 'negroness' during the Jim Crow era and then into 'blackness' post-civil

rights movement (Prah 1998; Tsri, 2016a). Hollinger (2005) argues that the slave and Jim Crow regimes gave some privileges to ‘octoroons’, ‘quadroons’, and ‘mulattoes’. But this made it difficult to police colour-identity borders to ensure the purity of ‘whiteness.’ This made the one-drop-rule (hypodescent) necessary during the Jim Crow era. According to Hollinger (2005),

The principle was sharpened under Jim Crow, when opposition to social equality for blacks was well served by a monolithic notion of blackness accompanied by legislation that outlawed as miscegenation black-white marriages but that left less strictly regulated any nonmarital sex in which white males might engage with black females. (p. 20)

While some African-Americans like Anatole Broyard passed for ‘white’ and lived as ‘white’ to their deaths (Gates, 1997) because of the dreadful one-drop-rule, others who could pass for white like John P. Davis identified as ‘black’ and lived as ‘black’ (Baldwin, 1993 [1954]). Accordingly, Professor Allen (1853), who described being referred to as ‘negro’ in the 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘preposterous,’ would have no choice but to embrace American appearance binarism: either ‘black’ or ‘white’; either ‘negro’ or ‘white’; either ‘colored’ or ‘white’. ‘Blackness’ did not therefore lead to solidarity; solidarity gave meaning to ‘blackness’.

In Nella Larsen’s *Passing* (1929), Clare Kendry is an African-American who has ‘passed’ for a European-American and married one of them. Irene Redfield lives as a ‘negro’ but she uses her ‘whiteness’ to get privileges in ‘white only’ places in segregated public spaces such as malls or restaurants. Clare does not associate with ‘negroes’ at all for she decided to ‘pass’ completely. However, Clare still finds it emotionally liberating to be among ‘negroes’ and her meeting Irene made her reconnect with being ‘negro’ and it gave her a sense of fulfilment she could not get even with the comfort offered by ‘whiteness’. Clare and Irene only accepted by European-Americans only if their ‘blackness’ is not known because it is not apparent in their appearance. ‘Passing’ is

self-torturing. In passing, Clare's and Irene's tortured souls must remain silent when Clare's husband, Jack, makes statements like this: "I tell her if she don't look out, she'll wake up one of these days and find she's turned into a nigger" (1929, p. 67). Jack believes the darkening of Clare's skin is her penchant for tanning and that earned Clare the moniker 'Nig'. But all that Clare and Irene could do is laugh at Jack's denigration of "niggers, a laughter that was not a laughter but repressed cry. Jack does not only dislike "niggers", he hates them, the "black scrimy devils" as he puts it (pp. 69-70).

Like Clare and Irene, Gail Lukasik's mother was also a tortured soul when she decided to pass for 'white' as related by Lukasik in *White Like Her*. When Gail found out that her mother passed for 'white', she said her mother asked her not to reveal she was 'black' until after her death. The exclusionary nature of 'whiteness' is an ethic of death, of killing part of one's identity, of denying one's ancestry to be accepted. In 'blackness' both 'white' and 'black' ancestry parts are not only known but accepted as part of 'blackness'. Consequently, 'African-Americans' accept them if they know they have some African ancestry in them. This is an ethic of inclusion 'whiteness' has not attained. This inclusiveness of 'blackness' gave it its collectivizing and resistive capacity, so it is not being downplayed here nor is it being underestimated even if it was, and is still, an "intellectual outsourcing", to use Appiah's phrase (2005, p. 48).

In South Africa, 'blackness' in the form of 'black consciousness' galvanized diverse African nationalities against the apartheid government and linked the South African movement against appearance prejudice with the global anti-discriminatory project in the rest of ['black'] Africa, the Caribbean and North America. Native South Africans could have invented a different appellation to resist apartheid; however, they chose to utilize what was already available for its global utility. 'Black' in 'black consciousness' was rationalized as a uniting, Africa-regarding attitude, and not



the colour of the skin (Snail, 2008). It is this solidaristic sociocultural currency of ‘blackness’ that gave ‘negritude’ writers the confidence to write against “alienation that a foreign way of thinking imposes on him [and which obliges him] to reconquer his existential unity as a Negro” (Sartre, 1988, p. 307).

### ***‘Blackness’ as a Social Condition***

The aim of the Negritude Movement was a decolonial cultural project that was meant to rethink CADA image and *Being* as prefigured by the colonial ideology. Started by Aimé Césaire (from Martinique), Léopold Senghor (from Senegal) and Léon Dama (from Guyana), among others, in Paris, the Negritude movement foretold the postcolonial theory that now seeks to rethink centuries of cultural obliteration, to indulge in self-remembering (Fanon, 1982 [1963]). The Negritude scholars understood the power and effect of domineering western cultures dressed up as objective, morally neutral epistemology, a colonial power/knowledge nexus (Abrahamsen, 2003) that discursively oversimplified and disrupted the colonized culture, history, and way of life. While identity nomenclatures such as ‘negro’, ‘colored’, ‘negritude’ have lost social currency, the solidaristic purpose they played is now served by ‘blackness’ to secure a life worthy of free people, autonomous moral agents and dignified human beings (Appiah, 2006; Taylor, 2001).

That same moral quest for a worthy, dignified life, which is proscribed by and yet constructed around ‘blackness’, still makes CADA use ‘blackness’ against contemporary socioeconomic marginalization and system-wide skin prejudice. The new purpose of universal ‘blackness’ is no longer a protection of ‘native life’ or ‘negro Life’ but ‘black life’. Contemporary ‘blackness’, like the ‘blackness’ of BCM, is not a colour but an attitude or a political stand. Or as Paul Taylor (2010, p. 3) would say, following Du Bois, “black is not a color but a condition.” According to Alysia Morgan (2015), “skin color and history of shared struggle is the binding indicator that can never

be erased or replaced” (p. 2). Of course, ‘skin color and history of shared struggle’ are binding, but ‘that they can never be erased or replaced’ is a morally problematic statement.

The ‘skin color’ Morgan references is ‘black’ so it is not phenomenological but discursive so naturalizing it or giving it a sense of permanence can only be discursively upheld through power. CADE scholars like Hinton Helper, Benjamin Rush, Immanuel Kant, Thomas Jefferson, Richard Burton, Leo Frobenius, have argued along this permanence of CADA ‘blackness’ to eternally maintain a wide social chasm between CADA and CADE (Smith, 1905). ‘Blackness’ was not what CADE and CADA saw on the CADA bodies but what they presumed to have experienced. ‘Blackness’ was on CADE minds, in their social grammar. And by social osmosis, it percolated into CADA minds and social grammar.

Husserl helps us understand that the object of intentionality, of perception, is not the same thing as the perception we have of the object. The object does not change but the perception we have of it is subjective. As Zahavi (2017) has argued, “the appearing of the thing is not the thing that appears” (p. 40). CADA body may appear ‘black’ to a perceiving subject, but the CADA body itself and its natural characteristics are not necessarily ‘black’. We have already encountered Appiah (1994) using ‘black’ to describe African-Americans yet still describe them with “shades of skin color, *milk* through *chocolate*” (p. 54). Discourse makes Appiah say ‘black’ but he seems to ‘see’ the skin appearance as ‘milky’ and ‘chocolaty’. Discourse also make Leo Frobenius (1913) describe Yoruba “black”, but he seems to ‘see’ them as “dark brown, some reddish, or yellow in complexion” (p. 145).

However, ‘blackness’ as a tool for resistive discourse makes CADA people identify with one another in global marginalization as Black Lives Matter (BLM) testifies. BLM, which was created by Alicia Garcia, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi after the murder of Trayvon Martin by

George Zimmerman (Garcia, 2016), goes beyond issues of injustice in law enforcement in the United States as it was used to raise awareness about the 200 Nigerian girls, who were abducted from their school in Chibok between April 14-15, 2014 (Garcia, 2016, p. 28).

### *CADA Social Complexification of 'Blackness'*

Even when 'blackness' has been operationalized for solidaristic purposes, what it really means remains complex and confusing. There is no univocal meaning of 'blackness' as applied to CADA skin pigmentation. But this lack of a univocal meaning of 'blackness' is not the case because the appearance of CADA is diverse, but because its discursive use for resistive or solidaristic purpose is driven by response to CADE discursive, epistemological control and hegemony. There is no monolithic 'blackness' (Morgan, 2015; Ohito, 2021); but this is not because of CADA having 'dark brown...reddish, or yellow...complexion.' Rather, there is no univocal or monolithic 'blackness' because of the complexity of the political project that uses it as a resistive or a solidaristic tool (Shelby, 2002) and the implicit nature of CADE socio-intellectual hegemony through the legacies of slave and colonial regimes.

Accordingly, the modern complexification of 'blackness' is a project of CADA scholars; it cannot be located in CADE epistemes and social control. CADE only wanted to oversimplify CADA identities into a singularity that made slavery, colonization, and segregation manageable. Africans, with all their cultures, value systems, and shades of skin appearances were simply 'negro'. A German colonialist in Southwest Africa, a French administrator in Senegal, a British commissioner in Sudan, or a European-American in Alabama talked about 'the negro' as if all these people were of a single appearance and cultures. This 'the negro' was not a phenomenological *being* but a product of language, of discourse, "a thin temporal series unfolding

in [CADE] men's minds" (Foucault, 2002, p. 331). Even the 'New Negro' of Alain Locke (1925) was a product of discourse, of this 'thin temporal series unfolding in [CADA] men's minds.'

*Colour as People: Seeing Oneself Through Colonial 'Eyes'*

However, CADA bought into the discourse that reduces the complexity of people's identities into reductive terms by adopting 'colour' instead of cultures or places of origin. They write of 'my color' to mean 'my people'. Henry Williamson, a former American slave, who fled to Ontario wrote that "In all places and among all kinds of men there are some loafing characters: *so with my color*" (Williamson, as cited in Drew, 1853, p. 135, emphasis added). When he fled the draconian fugitive slave laws of 1850s, William Brown (1849) wrote in his narrative that he arrived at a place "where we found as many more of *our own color* trying to hire horses to go in search of the fugitives" (p. 112). During a stand-off between anti-slavery and pro-slavery groups in Buffalo about a family that fled the United States to Canada only to be abducted in Canada by slave hunters and brought back to the United States, Brown argued that he joined a group of anti-slavery crowd to rescue the family from being sent back into the dungeon of slavery. He described a short, 'white man' in the anti-slavery crowd as having 'done *our color enough!*' In her essay, *Graduation*, the late American poet and essayist, Maya Angelou (2008), dreaded how a European-American speaker during her high school graduation ceremony in 1940 undermined their future ambitions: "We were servants, farmers, and washer-women. Anything higher that we dreamed about was ridiculous." She added dreadfully that "It was terrible to be young and already trained to sit quietly and listen to charges brought *against my color* with no chance of defense" (p. 62, emphasis added).

For Angelou, Brown, and Williamson, therefore, 'my colour' meant 'my people'. This is the discursive power of CADE social and epistemological control that alienated CADA from their cultures, from values, from themselves and attach them to a discursive colour that did not appear

on their skin. This is the same power that makes ‘negritude’ and ‘blackness’ become CADA *humanity* and *being*. The most important reality for the slave and the colonial regimes was CADA skin ‘colour’, her ‘blackness’ (Mbembe, 2017; Jordan, 1974, George, 1958), and ‘my colour’ would become the most important identity reality through which CADA would self-identify.

CADA could only see themselves through the ‘third sight’, through CADE’s eyes if they were afforded any form of subjectivity. But because they were ‘thingified’ (Césaire, 2000) and existed in ‘thinghood’ (Mbembe, 2017), they became detached from themselves. They became, to CADE, a colour not human beings: *my colour, not my people*. The eye of the philosophical subject that Foucault argued has been denied the ability to see, of his vision, by the death of the subject, is the fate of CADA as a perceiving subject: “In the distance created by violence and uprooting, the eye is seen absolutely, but denied any possibility of sight” (Foucault, 1996, p. 48). Unlike this Foucauldian eye that has lost its vision, CADA have a vision, only that ‘violence and uprooting’ has given CADA a new ‘vision’ that can only allow them to see ‘colour’, to see ‘blackness’ not their natural body as *it is*. It became nearly impossible to say, ‘I am beautiful’ because ‘I am’ has been erased and replaced by ‘colour’, by a ‘black thing’ as Mbembe would say. Thus, ‘black is beautiful.’ ‘Our lives’ have become ‘black lives.’

## **Conclusion**

The solidaristic capacity of ‘blackness’ is something that cannot be denied for its historical and contemporary role. I have argued, however, that adopting colonial identities that were the basis of CADA marginality and oppression is to remain in a CADE epistemological and epistemic trap and hegemony. As Gramsci has argued, domination may happen directly through the state or through legal avenues as the Jim Crow and apartheid regime did (Fredrickson, 2002) or through the “‘hegemony’ which the dominant group exercises throughout society” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 145).

For the past one hundred years, CADA have shown their intellectual, creative, and resistive capacity so using appellations that were created by CADE for CADA denigration, as resistive tools contradict what is advanced as CADE liberatory discourse and decoloniality. People come from places and cultures. They do not come from colours. Additionally, CADA are ‘black’ not because ‘black’ appears on them, but because they have some connection with Africa, however far, however small.

CADA being and humanity existed before ‘blackness’, before ‘negritude’, before Europe. To argue that there is a precolonial ‘blackness’ is to naturalize ‘blackness’ onto the CADA skin; it is to introduce ‘blackness’ discourse into precolonial African societies, something history does not bear out. Because the continent called ‘Africa’—and regardless of any future name it assumes—forms the basis of CADA ‘blackness’, it will continue to unite with or without ‘blackness’. Russell (1912) makes a similar argument about the physical location of London, which is South of Edinburgh, and will remain South of Edinburgh even if there were no human minds to know these locations. Even if we were to change the names we give London or Edinburgh or North and South, the physical location in which they are located will remain the same (Morera, 2014). Similarly, the physical land mass called Africa will not change regardless of the name we give it. And CADA bodies will not change whether we describe them as ‘black’. We may stop using the appellation ‘black’, but Africa will continue to connect diaspora Africans with continental Africans regardless of the smallness of diaspora African ancestry and the temporal remoteness of that connection. So, the ‘Africa’ of Mudimbe (1994, 1988) that was invented by Europe is not the physical Africa but ‘Africa’ of European social grammar, of discourse, of historical cultural distortions.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: Conclusion: ‘Blackness’ in Social Work and CADA Epistemology**

### **Introduction**

In Chapter 4, I presented how CADA appearance-based identity started to take shape in the Greco-Roman world and in Europe in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period. As a Foucauldian genealogical analysis, the analysis was not a search for origin but how CADA identity changed overtime. This change includes the epistemic and epistemological authorities [CADE] that shaped that change while hiding its power footprints in discourse. By episteme I mean a general body of knowledge. By epistemology, as I have noted in Chapter Two, I mean knowledge justificatory (or production) processes.

For instance, Europeans in colonial Africa ignored the advice of ‘natives’ (William, 1919). To Europeans, nothing the African said was useful. Today, some social workers treat parental practices of African-Canadian parents with indifference (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Howard & James, 2019). In Chapter 5, I presented how slavery and capitalism used ‘blackness’ as a social control tool from the late Middle Ages until the ages of decolonization of Africa and the civil rights movement in the United States. It became clear in these chapters that CADA identity was controlled by CADE intellectuals. It was not until the 1960s (see Chapter 6), that CADA organic intellectuals started to seriously challenge CADE epistemological hegemony. But as CADA intellectuals started to challenge some of the ideas presented in Chapters 4 and 5, CADE societies started to think about ways to allow change without losing power and dominance. ‘Whiteness’ as

a social control consciousness changed to accommodate decolonization and desegregation while remaining dominant (Goldberg, 2002). In this chapter, I focus on how my analysis in chapters 4, 5 and 6 bear on CADA epistemology and social work today.

The first section of this chapter addresses ‘blackness’ in social work practice and its moral implications. The examples I list show how ‘blackness’ continues to be a problem in CADA-CADE relationship and, also, between dark-skin CADA and light-skinned CADA. The second section looks at knowledge production and morality in relation to CADA. CADE intellectuals from the 18<sup>th</sup> century presented themselves as traditional intellectuals with no group affiliations. Some social work practitioners and scholars make similar mistakes (Shah & Grimaldos, 2022). However, their ideals were (and still are) meant to promote the interest of European people globally so they were, in practice, organic intellectuals. This section therefore calls for CADA to centre their epistemological and moral ideals. The third section recommends a move away from CADA identity as presented theoretically in CADE discourse. This will allow its presentation and grounding based on experiential perspectives. CADA’s ideas about ‘blackness’ remain in the natural attitude. Most CADA scholars take it for granted that the African is ‘black’ in the way CADE has presented it. In this section, I recommend the suspension of CADE’s denigrations, social control discourses, and moral exclusions as presented in Chapters 4 and 5. This would help them move from ‘discursive seeing’ (through CADE’s eyes) to ‘phenomenological seeing’ (through their own eyes). Social work as a historical ‘product and project of whiteness’ (Gregory, 2021) continues to perceive African-Canadians discursively, through distorted histories (Chapman & Withers, 2019). Social work may, in this case, benefit from the rethinking of epistemes and epistemologies that inform how social workers relate to African-Canadians because oppressions are historically co-constructed (Chapman & Withers, 2019, p. 11). Chapters 4 and 5 detail the



history that informs modern oppressive practices hidden in institutional practices including social work. In the fourth section, I discuss some limitations and problems for future research in the field.

In the last section, I summarize my *key* learnings from the dissertation based on the research questions and the five moral problematics I presented in Chapter 1. These problematics, which I have also addressed throughout the dissertation, especially in Chapter 6, are bad faith, naturalization of ‘blackness’, linear transition of CADA identity, normalization of ‘blackness’ as a human identity, and solidarity without ‘blackness’.

### **‘Blackness’ and Social Work**

The discussion in this dissertation makes the interrogation of contemporary ethical issues of ‘blackness’ a social justice issue. Being among the most socially and economically disadvantaged social groups in Canada, African-Canadians regularly access social services, so they constantly work with social workers and social working (Chapman & Withers, 2018) where ‘blackness’ still determines how they are treated. Social work practice in Canada is still Eurocentric [coloured ‘white’] (Chapman & Withers, 2018; Adjei & Minka, 2018; Shah & Grimaldos, 2022) so social workers still judge African-Canadians on historical presuppositions and cultural assumptions inspired by ‘blackness’ as a CADE’s ‘discursive formation’. As Stone (1971) has argued, “The psychology of whiteness, has dominated educational processes, shaped theories of learning, and controlled pedagogy” (p. 4). Today, ‘whiteness’ continues to shape and dominate social work practice (Gregory, 2021; Shah & Grimaldos, 2022), social work ethics (Weinberg, 2022) and educational institutions (Lopez, 2020; Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2021).

Three social issues come to mind in the negative representation of African-Canadians (Lopez, 2020) in social services. The first is that the image of African-Canadians used by social workers who are not trained in the critical scholarly tradition still follow historical discourses and

CADE epistemes that assume an exhaustive understanding of African-Canadians. The second social issue is the alienating role played by ‘blackness’ in its representation of African-Canadians when accessing services and resources. System professionals (SPs)<sup>138</sup> work with the signifier ‘blackness’ not the person ‘as she/he actually is’ so they see no need to understand the clients with whom they work. The third reason is phobogenesis of ‘blackness’. Some SPs tend to use ‘blackness’ as a moral warning so their assistance to young African-Canadians becomes compromised. They see African-Canadians and/or ‘blackness’ with trepidation and then conclude ‘danger!’ without further interrogation (Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2022). This is where experience takes what it ‘sees’ at face value. They see the Sartrean man and stop there.<sup>139</sup> Their cultural and epistemological horizon does not necessitate the importance of verifying that this is not a man but a tree. They are therefore stuck at the natural attitude as they take some assumptions in Chapter 4, 5 and 6 for granted. For instance, a teacher told an African-Canadian student, Alyssa Alexander, in a school in the Peel Region, Toronto, that it is a ‘myth’ that African slaves were mistreated by slave masters. Another teacher told Alexander not to use the word “racism” in class (Raza, 2022). When these students protest, the social services or the police are called before their grievances are addressed (Hairstory, 2019).

Because social work and social services in Canada are still guided institutionally by CADE historical discourses and (mis)representation of CADA, many social workers still make assumptions about CADA clients from the natural attitude—from societal assumptions or

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<sup>138</sup> I use this as a collective term for professionals working in public institutions such as social workers, doctors, teachers, youth workers, police, etc. (see Garang, 2022; Garang et al., 2023)

<sup>139</sup> According to Sartre (1992, p. 3), if I mistake a tree for a man, it would be a mistake to say that what I saw was a tree in *appearance* and man in *reality*. What I saw, he argues, , was a man. That it is a tree is a question of verification. If I don’t verify, then it remains a tree. This means that vision is not mistaken; what appears to it is what it sees. To many people, what they see in their culture is taken to be true at face value without the need to verify whether or not it is true. Most cultural ideas, I argue, fit this Sartrean rationale.

preconceived ideas—without finding out information from the clients’ first-hand experience before making decisions or judgements. They find institutional records enough for decision-making. Like Kant who believed ‘blackness’ is enough to conclude that an African was ‘stupid’, some social workers assume a mother is a bad parent (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Clarke, 2011; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2018) by looking at her; a young man is a criminal because his appearance apparently justifies that conclusion (Jiwani & Al-Rawi, 2021; Davis, 2021); a little girl is the one who had stolen the bag because she is ‘black’ and poverty is highly ‘racialized’ (Maynard, 2017; Allahdini, 2014).

Given the importance of social identities in social work research and practice, the ethics of ‘blackness’ becomes important in mitigating assumptions during intakes and case management. Social workers would do well if they adopt the phenomenological attitude by looking beyond the discourses which were part of their education and cultural upbringing. System professionals such as teachers and social workers in schools assumed African-Canadian students are less intelligent or not academically inclined (Briggs, 2018; Kelly, 1998; Dei, 2008). It is the history I related in chapters 4, 5, and 6 that informs the natural attitude, the behavior-in-discourse. But as Robert Williams (1973) has argued about IQ tests, “Test inferiority is not to be equated with actual inferiority” (p. 33). When system professionals conclude from institutional discourses, they leave no room to learn from their clients. They draw conclusions from documented discourses, at macro levels (policies), even when they perform intake assessments. However, they would perform better in the interest of African-Canadians if they adopt a phenomenological attitude, the “radical self-investigation” (Husserl, 1983, p. 153), by bracketing what they assume they know (or take for granted) about their clients. What they take for granted, their-lived-perspectives (Gordon, 2000), are based on their Eurocentric education and cultural conditioning. This would help them attain,

through radical self-investigation, what Husserl (1983) calls a self-responsible beginning. This is similar to what social work researchers and practitioners refer to this as reflexivity (Mendonca et al., 2023). The difference is that the radical self-responsible beginning is directed both at the world and the meditator (subject) while reflexivity is directed at the self to overcome prejudices and assumptions a system professional may take for granted.

A sample phenomenological attitude, as a self-responsible moral *beginning*, would follow the steps below. They centre the social worker, or system professionals generally, at the heart of this radical, self-responsible beginning at the micro level.

1. Note and study what has already been written about the client.
2. Note your analysis of the client from documented narratives – official discourses.
3. Note your own attitude of the client from first encounter and from official discourses.
4. Note the difference between your attitude from first encounter and from official document narratives.
5. Bracket what you learn from the official discourses and what you may have assumed from observation.
6. Then talk to the clients as if you have never heard anything about the clients' social situation. Listen to the client's narrative as the client tells you.
7. Document the narrative as it is told without editorializing what is said.
8. Comparing your first impression of the client, what is written in official documents, and what the client's first-hand accounts tells you.
9. Itemize contradictions or similarities between the three accounts – this leads to “grounded judgements” (Husserl, 1983, p. 10).

10. Make decisions by letting the client know the accounts depending on what social work ethical codes, organizational policies and your own reading of the situation, *in-time*, allow.

While these steps may still not prevent SPs from becoming prejudiced based on appearance, this may assist social workers to think critically by prioritizing clients' experiences and avoid making decisions exclusively from 'official discourses.' What is important here is not necessarily the critique of social work institutionally but individuals' attitude on encounters with CADA because attitudes are the first gates toward sound or questionable service provision. Human beings are subjects of their culture (Painter, 2010) or ideological indoctrination (Merleau-Ponty, 2002; Gramsci, 1999). This important emphasis on one's attitude may therefore help inform a critical movement from discourse-based decision making to phenomenology-based ones: from cultural assumptions to first-hand experiences. Because what we see depends on what our cultures have trained us to see (Painter, 2010), these steps become necessary to help complement organizational policies and social work ethical codes in shaping attitudes. Social work, as Chapman and Withers (2018) have argued, has a long history of *benevolence* that has caused suffering and pain to CADA and Indigenous Canadians because of its Eurocentric epistemology and cultural heuristics. According to Yearwood et al. (2021) "social work practice and education have a long history of engaging in practices that are racist and that perpetuate white supremacy" (p. i). There has also been a decline in anti-discriminatory social work practices and education (Ladhani & Sitter, 2020).

However, there has been promising developments in the Afrocentric context since 2019 because of the world-wide response to the police killing of George Floyd. For instance, in September of 2020, the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) signed an agreement with the Association of Black Canadian Social Workers (ABCSW) acknowledging "the systemic

racism in our country and the need for our joint forces to rectify the wrong and strengthen the lives of people of African descent” (Este & Walmsley, 2022, p. 2). This CASW-ABCW highlights the negative experiences of African-Canadian social workers with racism and professional neglect and alienation documented by Wanda Thomas Bernard (2006). As of September 2023, the School of Social Work at Dalhousie University offers a part-time Africentric Bachelor of Social Work. It is a positive development in introducing social workers to the African world view and the experience of African-Canadians from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Additionally, in May 2021, Delores V. Mullings, Jennifer Clarke, Wanda Thomas Bernard, David Este, and Sulaimon Giwa published *Africentric Social Work*, a book whose intention is to introduce undergraduate students to best practices on how to work with African-Canadians. These new developments will not only complement existing anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices, but they will also help shape how Canadian social workers can better assist African-Canadians. Even anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices are still shaped by Eurocentric world-view, which is at times paternalistic. These practices do not, at times, go far enough to centre the experiences and histories of African-Canadians.

### ***Colourism Within CADA Communities***

Another relevant social justice issue in colour-based identities is within the CADA community itself. It is based on what has become known as colourism: ‘light-skinned’ versus ‘dark-skinned’ and moral dimension intra-communally. As Ngo et al.’s (2017) research on immigrant youth involvement in gang life shows, ethical problematics of ‘blackness’ cannot be taken-for-granted in the name of solidarity and resistance. A young South Sudanese man in Ngo et al.’s study exemplifies this ethical problematic:

I was looking at the mirror...I just wanted to, feel like, spitting at myself, you know, spit on my skin or something. I just hated it, you know, disliked it...I just felt like, people look at me and call me the N word, you know. That's why I hated myself. (Cited in Ngo et al., 2017, p. 75)

In an explicit reference to colourism within the CADA community itself, the young man added: "there's Black, and then there is light, and then there is a little bit Black, and then there is mulatto, and then all the way down here is where tar is, you know. And I'm like there (*pointing to the bottom*), that's what I feel like, you know. These kinds of light skin guys, they get away with everything. Me, I'm Black" (emphasis added).

The young man's self-hatred is conditional. It is based on his experiences in the school because light-skinned African-Canadian students in his school were getting preferential treatment due to their lighter skin tone. However, the young man was using the Fanonian image in the third person to analyze his own skin. He is not operating on what he sees but what society makes him see. His view of himself is not internal to his cultural upbringing but his lived experience in the Canadian school system in Calgary. That he uses colonial terms like 'mulatto' is illustrative. The young man was, like CADA scholars in the European educational institutions, entrapped within the colonial discourse, so he was not able to see himself 'as he actually' was. He was alienated from himself, his body; he only saw on his skin the narratives (see Chapter 4 & 5) he was told about his skin appearance. He could not bracket the schools' and colonial narratives to see himself afresh (Finlay, 2012) outside the caricatures of colonialism that still inform Canadian school systems (Lopez, 2020; Howard & James, 2018; Dei, 2008). Like traditional SPs who are not social justice inclined, the young man sees the Sartrean man, and he has no reason to verify whether it is a tree or a man.

Appearance-based identities as the basis of inter-personal relations therefore alienate those who are dark-skinned from themselves and from society through ‘vertical discrimination’. Such social alienation and a feeling of low self-esteem have led many young African-Canadians to join gangs in order to feel a sense of belonging and to reassert what they lose for not being light skin. What is morally important is not appearance *per se* because differences in appearance have ontological states and phenomenological status; what is important is the social value placed on skin appearance and the hierarchical social consciousness it creates. While the social relations between CADE and CADA have been reduced to ‘black-white’ binarism, internal complexities of appearance-based identity continue to affect young African-Canadians like the South Sudanese young man above.

However, colourism does not only affect dark-skinned African-Canadians and other CADA. Light-skinned people also face exclusion by CADE and dark-skinned CADA. Mixed race CADA people (Dhooper, 2004; Wusu-Bempah, 1994) are at times faced by the ‘not-really-black’ and ‘not-quite-white’ description. They therefore face vertical discrimination among CADE and horizontal hostility among CADA (Campion, 2019). Canadian author, Lawrence Hill (2001, p. 92), experienced the alienating effect of horizontal hostility of ‘blackness’ when his classmate asked: “Black! Larry, you’re not black. Look at your skin.”

While the historical and theoretical inclusiveness of ‘blackness’—the *inclusionary ethic of ‘blackness’* noted in the previous chapter—makes Hill consider himself ‘black’, the practical realities of the confusion surrounding ‘blackness’ make him ‘not-black-enough’. This prompted Carol Aylward, one of Hill’s participants to argue ethically that “to define blackness by skin color is not to the *benefit* of the community” (Aylward, as cited in Hill, 2001, p. 108, emphasis added). Aylward’s moralization of ‘blackness’ through its communal functionality is one of the



foundations of 'black' solidarity that have been expounded by Shelby (2002). This is the solidaristic function of 'blackness' that Aylward wants prioritized as quoted above in her interview with Hill.

Hill relates how some mixed-race participants he interviewed wanted to (and indeed did) marry darker skin partners to avoid the horizontal and vertical hostilities they experienced growing up in the Bhabhan in-betweenness. Like the postcolonial subject whose identity is stuck between the influences of the colonial (western) world and the new realities of postcoloniality (Bhabha, 1994), Hill participants were caught between the 'white' and 'black' worlds that do not entirely accept them. They are in the "narrative uncertainty of culture's in-between...neither one nor the other" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 180). They are neither 'black' nor are they 'white.' Like Hill and his participants, former US President, Barack Obama, faced this horizontal hostility in 2007 when he was running for president. Being a mixed race continental African, Obama was considered not 'black' enough to qualify as an African-American because he had no direct painful connection to slavery (Walters, 2007). Obama's only connection with slavery, which he invoked in his sombre response in the wake of the controversy generated by remarks made by his former pastor, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, was through his wife, Michelle, and daughters, Sasha and Malia: "I am married to a Black American who carries within her the blood of slaves and slave owners; an inheritance we passed on to our two precious daughters" (CNN, 2012).

As a son of a continental African father and a European-American mother, Obama was seen by some African-Americans as outside their version of 'blackness'. But according to Walters, those who were excluding Obama from American 'blackness' "appear to close off the opportunity of those who have different kinds of "Black" identity to share the experiences of community" (p. 11). Walter's argument, the inclusionary ethic of 'blackness', is what Aylward invoked as noted

above. Hill would also find this collectivizing ethical imperative challenged when he volunteered in Niger on a cultural exchange program in 1979. Not only was his ‘blackness’ invisible, but that he has genetic traces of African ancestry seemed ludicrous to Nigeriens (2001, p. 113).

The history of slavery and the colonial discourse, especially the one-drop-rule, have unequivocally made Barack Obama ‘black’ with all the millions of ways of ‘being black’ for every African American (Gates, 1997). The ethical problems here is how CADE created ‘black’ and left CADA to grapple with its social consequences and philosophical tautologies. Social workers come face to face with colourism in CADE communities where mixed-race students find themselves alienated by both CADE and CADA (Wusu-Bempah, 1994). Ethically, the lightness of the skin of mix-raced CADA reminds dark skin CADA – or “dark black” according to Hill (2001, p. 113) and Angelou (2008, pp. 10 & 40)—of the moral basis of their exclusion, denigration, and oppression by CADE. The societal preference for light-skin ‘blacks’ is both historical (Horowitz, 1973; Jordan, 1962; Mills, 1997) and contemporary (Spann & Nyutu, 2023; Janusz, et al., 2023; Dixon & Telles, 2017; Webb, 2019; Mathews & Johnson, 2014). This is what gives it moral currency.

### **‘Blackness’, Ethics and Epistemology**

The modern utility of ‘blackness’ continues to be dogged by ambivalences and contradictions between the discursive ‘blackness’ of the skin and literal blackness. There is, however, a reasonable consensus that ‘blackness’ is a social construct, a result of CADE colonial solipsistic conquest of the world since the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Mbembe, 2017). My analysis shows that both CADA and CADE scholars understand that the ontological status of human ‘blackness’ cannot be located on the human skin but in language, in colonial discourse.

From the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Europeans, inspired by Enlightenment science and philosophical ideals when Europe emerged (theoretically) from the darkness of Kantian state of immaturity,

believed to have wiggled out of the grip of the dogmas of the church of the Middle Ages. They had also, they believed, triumphed over the existential challenges of Islamic political and religious power. When Europeans triumphed over the dogmas of the church to think for themselves through reason and science, they did not use the new reason-based agency, this Cartesian *I-think*, for the benefit of humanity. It was a freedom to self-exert. The power of nature God gave Adam is the same power Europe assumed after the triumph over the pre-modern church and their ethically contradictory dogmas.

As such, science and reason became tools for the understanding of the world to dominate it for the benefit of Europe. The newly discovered peoples (Cooper, 2010) did not exist the way Europe existed. They did not have the same ontological status Europeans had. They existed-for-Europe. This is the basis of what I have called Euro-solipsism. Europe only saw non-Europeans as tools for European march to total triumph toward Nietzschean self-overcoming through reason and science, to the eternal triumph over Islam. De Azurrara's (1899) *chronicles* and the first Portuguese raids on the West African coast were within this ethical framework to spread Christianity. Christianity would be overtaken (not eliminated) by capitalism in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as the *raison d'être* of European global conquests. To see Muslims would be to see something to destroy; to see Africans would be to see something to use.

In this new paradigm, this ethical framework or the expanding moral circle, to use Peter Singer's (2011) description, did not include Africans and the rest of the newly 'discovered' peoples. Slavery and the extermination of native people of North America did not count as moral wrongs because the gazes, the eyes through which Europe encountered them were guided by Euro-solipsism. Africans and the Native peoples did not really exist as people. There was no framework through which they could see them as people who could be included in the expanding circle of

morality. The circle was frozen so Africans and the natives would be outside the circle where their enslavement and extermination did not raise moral objection. Alternatively, new circles were created outside the European inner circle to give Africans the illusion that they have been included in the circle. For the most part, continental Europeans and later, diaspora Europeans, became increasingly desensitized against the suffering of these ‘discovered’ peoples.

Here are some examples of this moral desensitization. When the Dutch people (now Afrikaner) arrived in Southern Africa in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and raided Indigenous people, they saw them as outside the European moral circle. For instance, when General Lotha von Trotha of the colonial Germany gave the extermination order against Herero and Nama people between 1904 and 1908 (Gewald, 2003), he was not killing people inside the moral circle. He could kill everyone including children without any moral compunction. When the owners of the *Zong* ship went to court they did not care about the African lives wilfully thrown into the sea to safe-guard profits, they only went to court about insurance to safeguard their bottom-line.

American founding fathers decried the immorality of slavery that they believed was imposed on them by the British royal dictatorship between the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Chambers, 1861). However, following the American revolution and independence, Americans reverted to what they had previously believed was an immoral enterprise. Slavery would lead America to war against itself in 1861. This moral contradiction did not matter because Africans were not really inside the moral circle. As van Evrie has argued in *Subjection* (1864) and *White Supremacy, or Negro Subordination* (1868), slavery can only be between human equals so what existed between Africans and Europeans was *not* slavery but the natural states of things between superior and inferior beings. Another pro-slavery clergy argued that “slavery was a wise and beneficent institution, devised by God for the protection of an inferior race” (cited in Ross,

1876, p. 126). But this is the same slavery Lydia Maria Child described in her letter to abolitionist Hamilton Ross (1867) on August 15, 1875, as “virulent disease that was poisoning the life blood of the nation (p. 5, in ‘Letters’).

When CADE listened to moral voices, when their consciences were awakened, they set a moral standard that was too high for them to meet. Slavery was acknowledged to be morally objectionable, but it was accepted based on its economic importance to Europe and Euro-America. The moral impact on Africans on the continent and in the diaspora was secondary. Here CADA went from non-existence as human beings in a world in which only Europeans existed as human beings, to a world in which Europeans took a war of position, a subject position in which what was prioritized was in the interest of CADE. In this new cosmos, the discourse acknowledged the existence of Africans and CADA generally. CADE could see CADA and they also understood that CADA has interests of their own that they needed to protect. But CADE did not believe it was their duty to protect CADA interests.

During the American civil war, Southern states did not go to war because slavery was morally right; they went to war because of its importance to their very existence economically and socially. Their own identity was wrapped around slaves: moral and immoral entertainment; food production; cash crop; cooking; social status; ego-boosting, etc. To end slavery was to end the ontology of the southern society. This was no longer Euro-solipsism; it was the virtue of selfishness, survivalism. To expect them to prioritize the interest of African slaves or native Africans during imperial colonialism (1880s-1960s) was to expect the impossible. When Aimé Césaire (2000) argued that Europe was dishonest (p. 45) or indefensible (p. 31) in its colonial adventures, he is assuming that there is a universal moral standard through which Europe could have been judged. CADA assume that Europe ascribed to a universal, inclusive morality. But

Europe did not have such a standard, or it set universal standards that were too ambitious, too lofty, for Europe (or any human being) to meet. The ‘civilizing mission’ of the 1885 Berlin Conference Act shows that Europeans were setting a standard they knew human self-interest could not allow them to meet. This, to use Morera’s (2014, p. 9) concept here, was the ontological ‘illusion’ about the existence of a universal colonial morality.

This therefore brings me to epistemology and knowledge production generally. Europeans have shown over the last four hundred years that their knowledge is Eurocentric even when they do not explicitly state it. Euro-solipsism and virtue of selfishness guided knowledge production explicitly or implicitly as for-Europe. Even when critical philosophers like Nietzsche were critical of European self-indulgence, of their morality based on power while premised on pity, his philosophy was of ‘we Europeans’. He was critiquing western philosophy, like Kant’s late critique of colonial immoralities, to self-correct. Nietzsche’s ability to critique western social, philosophical, cultural, and scientific contradictions were for-Europeans even when he wrote of the wickedness of the ‘blond beasts’. Nietzsche considered the ‘negro’ as “a representative of the prehistoric man” who did not feel pain to the same degree as Europeans (2003, p. 43). Admittedly, Nietzsche, like Benjamin Rush (1799) in his discussion of ‘blackness’ and leprosy, was referencing the science of his day. Nietzsche, like other European intellectuals of his day and those who came before him like Kant, Hume, Descartes, Rousseau, Blumenbach, made references to science about CADA in their writings. Their work, philosophical or scientific, was still for-Europe not for-humanity even when it was touted in a universalist language. This is the illusion of universality.

This does not mean that CADE is incapable of universal morality and epistemology. What this dissertation shows is that universality has not yet happened to the same degree promised by Enlightenment science and morality. If there is anything the abolitionist movement, the civil rights

movement, and anti-Jim Crow and anti-apartheid movements have shown, it is that CADE is capable of universal morality and epistemology. It is therefore important for CADA to be clear about the basis on which CADE is criticized if a universal morality and epistemology have not been achieved.

When bell hooks (2015) and James Baldwin (1993 [1962]) write of ‘love’ as a moral solution to the African-American self-love and their meaningful inclusion in the American moral circle, they are assuming too much of European-Americans and CADE human capacities generally. CADE must first transcend the limitation of four centuries of cultural and epistemological constraints. Philosopher Robert Wolff (2005) epitomizes this constraint. When he was invited by the head of the Afro-American department at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to help develop a new doctoral program in Afro-American studies, Wolff did not know that a whole new world of ‘subjugated [American] knowledge’ within America existed.

The African-American intellectual and the scholarly world was a black hole to him. Even when he saw himself as a social-justice-minded political philosopher who was involved in the anti-apartheid movement, raising funds for ‘black’ South Africans, Wolff was not ready for the shock of not knowing the extensiveness (and intensiveness) of African American literature, slavery, Jim Crow, Sharecropping, Harlem Renaissance, World War I riots, etc.

After reading the first fifty-three books, Wolff found that the United States he knew, the United States of European America, was shattered. He was exposed to a new epistemic universe, a new moral vision. But Wolff did not know African-American epistemes not because of his philosophical leaning or because of any evil intent as the *Nation of Islam* would assume of all ‘white folks’. It was because cultural and epistemological constraints did not allow him to go beyond his discourse-created subject position. Here Foucault (2002) helps us with an explanatory

language to describe the discursive nature of ‘blackness’ and the epistemological structure that supports its use: “His existence was defined not so much by what he saw as by what he retold, by a secondary speech which pronounced afresh so many words that had been muffled” (p. 142). This moral and epistemic constraint makes Mary Dalton in Richard Wright’s *Native Son*, tell Bigger Thomas that she had been to England, Mexico, and France but she did not know ‘negroes’ who lived just ten blocks from her. It is with this understanding that Uncle Wellie tells Maya Angelou’s brother [Bailey] that “They [European-Americans] don’t really hate us. They *don’t know* us. How can they hate us? They’re mostly scared” (2008, p. 65, emphasis added).

The ethical imperative here is for CADA to understand that CADE still needs a new epistemological rupture out of the virtue of selfishness, of their subject position, to be able to arrive at a world in which ‘blackness’ can be used as a resistive tool. Epistemic or epistemological resistance (Zezeza, 2006) would only help if CADE has arrived at the point in which a well-read *political* philosopher like Wolff does not go through life without knowing an important part of an American scholarly and literary tradition. There are CADE scholars who have chosen to get involved in ‘African Studies’ or ‘African Philosophy’ who may, unlike Wolff, be aware of this African-American tradition.<sup>140</sup>

However, the majority are locked away and constrained by the discourses that have given a strict path that makes them ignore heuristics related to CADA. This epistemological constraint and limitation are the reason a young European-American woman training to be a teacher wondered in an ‘anti-racism’ workshop how she had not read any African-American authors in her English classes (Tatum, 2017). And it is a reason why another European-American wrote in

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<sup>140</sup> See the list of notable African Studies programs by Standard Library (n.d.). Most of the faculty in these programs are CADE scholars. There are also CADE scholars who study Africa in disciplines that are not part of African Studies programs.



his journal that “it is not my fault that Blacks don’t write books” (Tatum, 2017, p. 6). There are European-Americans who have never heard of Edward Blyden, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Carter Woodson, Ida B. Wells, Langston Hughes, etc.

However, there are those who have heard of them, but their epistemological and epistemic universe does not allow them as part of their educational reading. This is the America that divided Bigger Thomas and Mary Dalton in Richard Wright’s *Native Son* leading to the latter’s tragic death. Mary Dalton would have not died if the social chasm between Mary and Bigger did not exist. It is not surprising that the Senegalese-American musician, Akon, told Folly Bah Thibault of *Aljazeera* (2015) on January 24, 2015, that “the system in America was never build for Black people.” African-Americans were in America as workers, as people to be perpetually slaves if they were to live in the United States. That they are now American citizens is an accident of history. In her arrest document by the police in Montgomery, Alabama, on December 1, 1955, Rosa Park’s nationality (not ‘race’) was written as ‘Negro’ not ‘American’. But I have already discussed, European-Americans, whether pro-slavery or anti-slavery, saw African-Americans as ‘Africans’ not ‘Americans’ for America was built for people of European descent.

The preceding analysis and the history presented in this dissertation points to the following. CADA need to centre their ideals. They should not adopt colonial ideals against CADE. That makes CADE continue to make CADA exist for-CADE. CADE has centred themselves. Unconscious colonial discursive assumptions affect even the most well-meaning of CADE scholars. CADE philosophers write of ‘continental philosophy’ but none of us asks, ‘which continent?’ because epistemological hegemony makes us assume *the* continent. Europe has centred itself and is not worried about the ‘which continent?’ question. But I have already mentioned that CADE saw itself as an ingroup that has its interests to protect. This is clear in their global conquest,

their enslavement of Africans and their colonization of Africa. They may have uttered something resembling a universal morality, but their actions showed us the *how* of their power, to reference Foucault's (1997) theory of power. CADA's centring of themselves may then help the two [CADE and CADA] meet in a mutual exchange to build a world in which universal morality and epistemology become a common pool from which both draw with mutual respect and support.

I would not expect CADE simply to part way with a tradition, a position they had enjoyed for over four centuries. The decolonization of academia that is now sweeping universities on the continent of Africa and in the west still operates within CADE discourse (Mbembe, 2014; Bhabra, Gebrial & Nişancioğlu, 2018). A continental African who embraces 'blackness' is unconsciously conceding her/his intellectual ingenuity, and scholarly agency. He/she is looking away from African cultures to 'defy' a parental European through a 'rebellion' that uses words created by this scholarly and intellectual parent.

The socially just and inclusive world Fanon calls for at the end of *Black Skin, White Masks*, and the shared humanity Mbembe calls for at the end of *Critique of Black Reasons* is the world, going by the history I presented in this dissertation, we may wait for until kingdom come, or until CADE goes through an epistemological rupture; or until CADA adopt a CADA-centred epistemology and epistemes that would make CADE look up with *respectful interest*. So far, CADA is making use of CADE's creation within CADE's hegemony. Baldwin, for instance, wondered if America has ever wanted such equality: "...this day has been coming for nearly one hundred years" (1989 [1954], p. 76). This is the "long history of moral evasion" that makes CADA colour a crime (Baldwin, 1989[1954], pp. 60 & 77).

The 'man' Europe invented in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as Foucault tells us was the birth of the European *Man*. I agree with Fanon (1982 [1963]): "Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us

combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create a whole new man, whom Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth” (p. 313). Baldwin (1993[1962]), Césaire (2000) and Fanon (2008 [1952]) understood that CADE cannot be used as the moral standard because their actions have historically been *for-CADE* not *for-Humanity*. The atrocities of slavery and colonialism shows that CADE still has a moral test to pass. As Du Bois (1920) has argued, “Some of the very ones who were freed from the tyranny of the Middle Age became the tyrants of the industrial age” (p. 135). The proposed universality of Enlightenment morality was untenable either because of ingroup interest or because of human weaknesses. Sometimes, it is difficult to transcend human pettiness when emotionally offended or materially disenfranchised.

For instance, when some French and Portuguese colonial officials left their colonies in Africa, they vandalized some office equipment (Meredith, 2014). For British colonial officials, this destruction included the devastation of colonial records that detail colonial atrocities (Sato, 2017). CADE has no universal morality to ascribe to but their personal interests. They have shown by consistently talking of ‘western civilization’ as a frame of reference. Yet CADA continue to see a ‘world civilization’, a universal morality in which everyone is included in the morality circle. There was a universal civilization in antiquity even when ancient Greeks and Romans referred to others as ‘barbarians’. Inter-human relations in antiquity were based on culture and social status even when the appearance of the skin was talked about and even mocked in its ontological status.

However, it is important here to note that ‘blackness’ did not become an identity until Arabs and modern Europeans met dark-skinned continental Africans. Ethiopian, which meant, burnt skin or face, did not mean ‘blackness’. It would not be until the Portuguese arrival in Africa that ‘blackness’ became the basis of African identity and, later, humanity. The nature of epistemology between CADE and CADA as I have explained in this section influences social work

scholarship, curricular, and practice. I believe paying attention to this dynamic can contribute positively to social work.

### **From Discursive to Phenomenological**

As I have already discussed, ‘blackness’ is a foreign socio-cultural invention, a product of European solipsistic discourse in which only the European, continental, and diasporic, mattered, had knowledge-producing subjectivity, and a *universal eye* and mind for standardizing ethics. ‘Blackness’ was used consistently as a social stigma (Goffman, 1963) and a social control instrument (Allen, 1994; Horowitz, 1973) in the European and Euro-American identity discourse. Cultures and geographies as anchors of human identity, such as *African*, instigated negative feelings in 19<sup>th</sup> century America (Bennett, 1969). They also inspired negative feelings among European-Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> (Zilber & Niven) and 21<sup>st</sup> (Wise, 2011) centuries.

As Tim Wise (2011) has noted, “Many whites today react hostilely to the use of the term “African-American” because it came from within the black community” (p. 29). This is an ethical imperative. Adopting appellations outside colonial dictates challenges colonial ideology, linguistic authority (Wise, 2011) and lexical imperialism (Appiah, 2005). CADA scholars like Mbembe (2017) and Foster (2002) have tried to theorize positivity into the historical negativity of ‘blackness’. Yet ‘blackness’ continues to play what Wynter calls “discursive institutional degradation” (Wynter, 2003, p. 309). Therefore, culture-based and place-based identities like ‘African-American’ or ‘African-Canadian’ or ‘African-Caribbean’ undermine the discursive control Europe and Euro-America have exercised on CADA for centuries.

Through these new decolonial non-colour appellations, CADE perhaps fears that CADA may finally wiggle out of CADE’s colonial and epistemological traps. CADA is finally trying to end their alienation by showing both CADA and CADE that CADA come from cultures and places

not the singularity of the nondescript and the complexity blurring ‘blackness’. CADE may raise objection to, or ridicule, internally generated identities that prioritize culture and places. CADA has, however, attained an appreciable level of subjectivity since the 1960s to be able to understand that CADE may not stop ridiculing CADA identities or sustain epistemic and epistemological control over CADA.

Responding to a reporter’s ‘concern’ about the violence in gangsta rap that it reenforces the claim that ‘black people’ are violent, American gansta rapper, Ice Cube, retorted that ‘white people’ are more violent and disrespectful to their women than ‘black people’ could ever be. He then added that

[the] kids are not really concerned about white people endorsing who we are. They are not concerned about that in 93. And I think we really need to refocus as a community and could care less who looks bad upon us because it doesn’t make a difference. White people have never helped our situation, matter of fact, they found us and put us in this situation so their endorsement shouldn’t matter in 1993 (Jay Dizzle, 2019).

Unlike African-Americans of the 19<sup>th</sup> and earlier 20<sup>th</sup> centuries who were very much concerned about how European-Americans perceived them, Ice Cube had learned enough about the United States to understand that European-American endorsement is important only if it has a controlling power on African-Americans. Du Bois’ (1948) ‘Talented Tenth’ were meant to help make the African American community raise itself to the level of European-Americans in America. Holtzclaw has illustrated this fear of judgement from European-Americans through what his mother told him: “She told me it was wrong to steal from the "white folks," that "white folks" thought all Negroes would steal, and that we must show them that we would not” (1915, p. 23).

One of the main projects of free-born diaspora Africans and former slaves in the new world of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was to prove that the ‘negro’ was as human, as moral, and as intellectually capable as any CADE person. On August 10, 1850, African-Canadians in the town of Buxton, Ontario, formed “the ELGIN ASSOCIATION, for the settlement and improvement of the coloured people of Canada” (Drew, 1856, p. 292).

But as CADA improved in education and modernized their social and political life, CADE shifted their measuring rod. The bar kept on getting moved to ensure that CADA did not attain what would be considered a level of equality. Therefore, Fanon argues that CADE “were countering my irrationality with rationality and my rationality with “true rationality” (2008 [1952], p. 111). The past argument was that CADA did not have any civilized nation (Hume, 2018); today, the argument is that CADA do not have any industrialized and democratically developed country. It therefore remains questionable that CADE will stop attempting to control CADA identity so adopting colonial identities and assuming that they have been delinked from their colonial and slave past is a trap.

It may be argued that the meanings words have is not static. This is true. I have already given John Stuart Mill’s example Kripke (1980) gives about denotative and connotative meanings of names. ‘Dartmouth’ had a literal, denotative meaning when ‘Dartmouth’ was located at the mouth of river Dart. However, the town continues to be called Dartmouth even when River Dart has changed its course and Dartmouth is no longer at the mouth of Dart River. It may therefore make sense to argue that ‘black’ has lost its denotative, so it only has a connotative meaning today.

This is acceptable if we assume that we have attained a level of clarity when it comes to ‘blackness’ in its contemporary political and ethical value. The connotative and denotative meanings of ‘blackness’ continue to be confused. George Dei (2018), for instance, argues that “I

find it also inconceivable that Africans would not have their own *Indigenous* conceptions of Black and Blackness, which is outside of European thought” (p. 119). Dei supports this by arguing that there are African cultures where black and blackness have positive valuation: “In effect, African ancestral cultural knowledges about Black[ness] symbolizing holiness, purity, beauty, happiness, anger, and resistance is both subverting Euro-constructions of Black as deviant, criminal, abnormal, and degenerate and pointing to other ways of knowing” (2018, p. 126).

The first problem with Dei’s position is the almost mythical and emotive attachment to ‘blackness’ that almost defies explanation. I will come back to the ethic of this attachment. But the main problem is the conflation of the metaphorical ‘blackness’—which I have already analyzed through scholarly consensus of both CADE and CADA scholars as a social construct—and the literal blackness. To defend blackness as a ‘natural’ colour should not be considered a praise of CADA skin. The literal blackness as a colour in-itself has little if anything to do with CADA skin outside the colonial discourse. The ‘blackness’ of CADA skin is a discursive product of CADE’s mindscape (Taiwo, 2010) and psychic structures (Fanon, 2008 [1952]). That Catholic priests wear black (Fredrickson, 2002) relates to the natural blackness not the ‘blackness’ of CADA skin so this cannot be rationalized as giving an ethical value to the metaphorical ‘blackness’ of CADA skin even if blackness has a positive valuation in African traditional societies.

Additionally, Dei has overgeneralized the positive valuation of blackness in African societies. Among the Jieeng of South Sudan, blackness is associated with morally and socially undesirable and objectionable things. For instance, *Raan col piöu* [a black-hearted person] is a bad/mean person. *Raan yer piöu* [a white-hearted person] is a good/kind person. The Jieeng also prefer white cows. However, the most aesthetically pleasing cows or bulls are the ones with both black and white colours. Young men pride in having bulls of black and white: *majok*, *marial*,

*mangaar*, etc. The amount of black and white varies and that is how the Jieeng differentiate them. But for the Jieeng, these colours have nothing to do with the human skin. The Jieeng prefer white cows not because they like the skin of ‘white people’.

Like Dei, Louis Farrakhan has also defended blackness against whiteness by arguing that God must be ‘black’ because he created the world from darkness (Supreme Wisdom Education Center, 2020: 1.00: 48-1.02: 51). He asks: “[if] the real darkness before there was sunlight had matter in it that was real, how then could the God make himself up in darkness and come out white?” He then added: “If he made himself up out of darkness and the darkness coloured him, then the God who originated the heaven and the earth is a black God.” One can praise a beautiful black suit, or a black BMW, but these blacknesses have nothing to do with CADA skin so praising blackness as a natural colour is not only an introduction of an epistemological confusion, but it also risks the naturalization of blackness onto the African skin, something against which Stuart Hall (1996b, p. 472) has warned us.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hinton Helper and Edmund Burke engaged in this epistemological conflation by praising whiteness and denigrating blackness as natural colours in themselves. The example of the blind boy who was horrified by the ‘negro’ woman ‘blackness’ and a ‘black object’ blackness is an example of this confusion.<sup>141</sup> It adds nothing to our understanding of the phenomenological reality of CADA skin. One can denigrate natural blackness without denigrating CADA skin because the former is literal, and the latter is discursive.

The metaphysical reality of CADA ‘blackness’ and its ontology is in language-in-use, in CADE’s mindscapes and psychic structures, and in discourse (as in power-knowledge-nexus). Scholars, including Dei, consider ‘blackness’ to be a social product of CADA history of will-to-

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<sup>141</sup> See an example Margaret Cannon (1995, p. 120) gives about her African-Canadian friend, Althea, who got offended by the normal use of the phrase, “Black Monday”. Althea found it “offensive”.



domination and will-to-power. Dei still strikes an ethically questionable and an inexplicable detour to coloniality by risking biologizing CADA “blackness” (2018, p. 125). Zeleza (2006) from whom Dei draws this concept considers Africa as a natural reality and as an explanatory device. But Dei’s analysis risks the biologization of the ‘blackness’ of CADA skin. The biologization of ‘Africa’ as a place is not ethically problematic because Africa is inhabited by organic beings who have their own, non-colour identities. However, biologization of ‘blackness’ of the African skin is ethically and epistemologically questionable so it has been dismissed by scholars as I have already discussed. Consequently, the African skin and ‘blackness’ are not one and the same; they can be decoupled without questioning African humanity and self-esteem. Scholars, however, have not addressed it in the way I have done in this dissertation so ‘blackness’ and CADA skin are still confused. This addresses research question 4: “Do these discursive regimes<sup>142</sup> consider CADA phenomenological skin appearance and literal blackness as one and the same or have they decoupled “blackness” from CADA body?”

The failure to avoid colonial names inadvertently suggests the colonial thingification, the lack of subjectivity, of agency—of intellectual outsourcing—of CADA people. Appearance-based identities like ‘negro’, ‘coloured’ (or ‘people of colour’), ‘black’ and ‘nigger’ were embraced in the Americas at different colonial periods. For instance, when surviving former slaves were interviewed in the 1920s and 1930s, some of them still described themselves using the objectionable ‘niggers’ instead of ‘negro’. They lived with the aura of slave mindscape and psychic structures. Of course, ‘nigger’ was not accepted by the educated section of the African-American community. They, nonetheless, used ‘negro’, ‘coloured’ and ‘black’ interchangeably. I have

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<sup>142</sup> These are the regimes that facilitated or proscribed the transition of ‘blackness’ from an ethic of denigration to an ethic of pride.

already noted that the presumed linearity and temporal changes applied to them (Gates & West, 1997; Smith, 1992) are a matter of discourse. Until the late 1970s when ‘negro’ completely dropped out of popular and scholarly usage (Martin, 1991), ‘coloured’ and ‘negro’ existed alongside Afro-America, ‘blacks’, ‘black people’, ‘Ethiopian’, ‘Africans’, ‘African race’, ‘people of colour’, etc.

Even though CADA scholars such as Dei argue that ‘blackness’ must be maintained to help in the fight against colour prejudice and decolonization of knowledge, it must be acknowledged that there is no pre-colonization or pre-slave trade ‘blackness’ of CADA unless we consider ‘blackness’ and CADA skin to be one and the same. But we have already seen that both CADE and CADA scholars reject biological blackness. Consequently, the contemporary social and political currency ‘blackness’ has attained implies a *disempowering reproduction* of Eurocentric intellectual hegemony and social control stigmas because “historical descriptions are necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge” (Foucault, 2010, p. 5).

Since ‘blackness’ is not the phenomenon that appears when one looks at the African and ‘blackness’ is theoretically given meaning in Eurocentric epistemology and discourse, it is necessary to ask why it is still important to use ‘black’ as an identity category. The argument that ‘blackness’ is necessary as a solidaristic tool against ‘white supremacy’ (Walcott, 1997; Kelly, 1998) raises other ethical questions. Since CADA people have shown over the last hundred years that they have the intellectual ingenuity to challenge Eurocentric ideas without trepidation, as Sartre (1988) demonstrates in *Black Orpheus*, one wonders why CADA still honour a discursive, colonial ‘blackness’ that is also the fount of CADA oppression and marginalization.

CADA body pre-dated colonialism and slavery in the Americas. But that this body is ‘black’ is a discursive production of CADE colonialism, slavery, and capitalism (Mbembe, 2017).

‘Blackness’ is part of the distortion of the body Fanon talks about in *Black Skin, White Mask*. What the analysis in this dissertation has shown me, and which I hope other scholars will appreciate and take on, is that the continued use of ‘blackness’ essentially undermines Afro-centric intellectual agency that asks Africans to think outside European ideas (Hountondji, 1996; Ture & Hamilton, 2011 [1967]). In other words, ‘blackness’ as a human identity reality inadvertently suggests that the discursive constitution of CADA subjectivity cannot be created outside European colonial discourse or what its constituted systems allow (Wise, 2011; Gates, 1997).

‘Blackness’, the arresting of CADA in ‘the dungeon of appearance’ as Mbembe aptly put it, is an entrapment in Eurocentric imagination and hegemony. As Mbembe has poignantly put it, violence stole CADA’s “humanity and reconstituted him as Black” (2017, p. 68). While historical ‘otherness’ of CADA was a subjection to a dominant discourse, the contemporary use of ‘blackness’ is through what Hall (1994, p. 226), following Fanon, calls “inner compulsion and subjective con-formation to the [Eurocentric] norm.” Long after the end of slavery and official colonialism, ‘blackness’ finds social currency in ‘bad faith’. Bad faith, Sartre (1943, p. 49) argues, is self-imposed; it is not externally conditioned. It is to hold two contradictory meanings about the same events and attempting to reconcile them in the same consciousness: “we are-anguish-in-order-to-flee-anguish” (Sartre, 1943, p. 45). Here is ‘blackness-in-bad-faith/black-as-bad-faith: CADA are ‘black’, but not ‘black’; they want to be ‘black’; but do not want to be ‘black’; ‘blackness’ is morally questionable, but morally necessary; ‘blackness’ enslaved and colonized us; but it can free us.

Here is my argument about blackness-as-bad-faith. Continental Africans do not need ‘blackness’ no matter the new connotative meaning it assumes for solidarity because Africans have internally created cultural identities (Tsri, 2016b). Any appropriation of ‘blackness’ by continental

Africans can only make sense if ‘blackness’ means something ‘biological’ to African cultures and appearances. But as phenomenological analysis shows, blackness is not what appears when one encounters CADA. Additionally, the expression of pride in ‘blackness’ as one finds in ‘black is beautiful’ or BP is an endorsement of alienation from the self, from the organic body. CADE colonial and slave regimes created what CADA should be proud of: a discursively created appearance [blackness]. ‘*I am*’ is erased and replaced with ‘black’. ‘I am beautiful’ either becomes inadequate or nonsensical. The signifier ‘black’, not the person, is beautiful.

That ‘blackness’ has a higher philosophical meaning as Foster (2002) argues or that there is a sophisticated meaning of ‘blackness’ according to Walters (2002), is to be stuck in the dungeon of appearance appellations CADE created for social control. Appearance-based identities are not necessary in the post-slavery, post-colonial, post-imperial era. But if there is indeed a need for appearance-based identities then CADA needs to go back to the *body*—to the thing itself—to tell themselves and the world what *appears* to them when they see CADA skin. This is what calls for the Husserlian bracketing of what the colonial discourse and CADE psychic structures have conditioned on CADA to perceive a phenomenological appearance of CADA skin. This is the self-responsible, radical beginning that would centre CADA as a subject (Husserl, 1983).

We have already encountered phenomenological descriptions such as brown, yellow, dark brown, nearly black to describe CADA skin. A decolonial approach should not be a circling back to colonial *insults* but the experiencing of the body, of the skin as it appears to CADA as the observing subject. The ‘blackness’ of CADA skin is what Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 90) has called the “image in the third person” because CADA still uses the ‘second sight’ to look at their skin. When Fanon argues that he is “a slave not to the “idea” others have of me, but to my appearance,” my phenomenological attitude argues otherwise. CADA is indeed a slave to ‘ideas’—discourses,

social grammars—CADE created and utilized for centuries for social control. The problem is not CADA appearance but the colonial discourses (ideas) that returned CADA body “spread-eagled, disjointed, redone, draped on mourning in this white winter’s day” (Fanon, 2008 [1952], p. 93).

‘Blackness’ was central to the alienation of CADA from their cultures, their values, their languages, their subjectivity, and their humanity. It was part of the colonial caricaturing of the African body and its transformation into the “black body”—*human-merchandise, human-metal, human-money* (Mbembe, 2017, p. 180)—so what Europe rationalized was not CADA appearance (of different colours) but the idea [‘blackness’] they had created and attached to CADA body. The ‘blackness’ of CADA stemmed from CADE’s subjective ontological consciousness while CADA body has an objective ontological consciousness (Searle, 2015, p. 16). This means that ‘blackness’ of CADA skin is not one and the same with CADA body. To fail to decouple ‘blackness’ from CADA body is to naturalize “blackness” onto CADA skin.

The Afrocentric movements (the movement against colour prejudice such as the BCM and Negritude) that attempted to create a proud anti-colonial African sense of self against colonial rule and hegemonic intellectualism circled back to colonial terminologies. As Tsri has succinctly argued, “This unnoticed link between the term ‘black’ and its referents undermines the liberatory objective of these movements because Africans are still imprisoned by the idea of blackness which denigrates (blackens) and dehumanizes them” (2016b, p. 156). While these important movements were exhorting African cultures, civilizations, and values, they still settled for an ethic of identity Europe constructed for them (Mbembe, 2017).

That one can use colonial names and then reverse the meaning to ‘defy’ the colonial condition and oppression is to remain entrapped in what Sartre would call “white man’s insipid paternalism” (1988, p. 323). In other words, ‘blackness’ with a ‘decolonial’ meaning as intellectual

defiance (Dei, 2018; Zeleza, 2006) is an unconscious endorsement of CADE colonial paternalism. CADA seems unable to escape it. To define themselves from their own words and ideals, CADA must centre themselves, their ideas. Intellectual defiance is being-for-others lived as being-for-oneself, which is bad faith. This is what makes this statement from Mbembe (2017) informative: “To be Black is to be stuck at the foot of a wall with no doors, thinking nonetheless that everything will open up in the end” (p. 152). CADA expect CADE to build doors for them. CADE build their doors for themselves. Centring of oneself would remove this expectation: waiting for doors.

Instead of using South African cultures and social mores to find a unifying identity reality or solidaristic social tools, indigenous South Africans used ‘blackness’ against apartheid. It is important to be “mindful [about] how the stories we tell can further colonial and imperial projects” (Dei, 2018, p. 119). While Diaspora Africans lost their cultural identities through the deculturing power of the slave regime, continental Africans still have indigenous identities and ideals from which they can draw for solidaristic projects. The adoption of ‘black consciousness’ was an endorsement of CADE’s discursive, epistemological, and psychological control that betrays CADA’s lack of internal creativity and ingenuity. The use of ‘blackness’, ‘negritude’ or ‘negroness’ to resist racism is an entrapment in a child-parent kind of rebellion, a paternalistic relationship CADE has been evangelizing for centuries. This is being-for-others; it is not liberatory. This therefore helps answer research question 3<sup>143</sup>: The regimes governing the transition of ‘blackness’ from an ethic of denigration to an ethic of pride are not liberatory; they are neo-colonial schemes whose hegemonic power has been accepted with consent.

Having argued that ‘blackness’ is not only a colonial construct but also a discursive ideal that cannot be located on CADA skin, it is therefore imperative to note that ‘blackness’ does not

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<sup>143</sup> Research Question 3: Are these governing regimes liberatory systems or are they colonial schemes whose hegemonic power has been accepted in a Gramscian sense?

need decolonizing (hooks, 1990), reclaiming (Crossley, 2011) or promotion (Papish, 2015). It was a denigrating European discursive formation. It was not a pre-discursive, pre-theoretical primordial African identity or cultural reality that existed before the first Portuguese slave raids on the coast of Guinea. As Mbembe (2017) has argued, “‘Black’ is the name that was given to me by someone else” (p. 151). As the genealogical analysis in chapters 5 and 6 show, ‘blackness’ was not meant for CADA glorification, it cannot be located on CADA skin, and it was a colonial construct. How then can a person decolonize or reclaim an externally created term meant for one’s debasement and colour-based exclusion? And why promote the very object of one’s oppression when more than a hundred years of CADA intellectualism proves that a truly decolonial discourse is possible?

CADA have recently been rallying against statues that remind them of colonialism, pro-slavery personalities and *racist* figures, so they want these statues removed. They do not want to be reminded of the pain of colonialism and slavery that devastated Africa (Snail, 2008; Morel, 1920) and left an unfortunate legacy (King et al., 2022). When it comes to ‘blackness’, ironically, CADA seemingly have no problem being reminded of historical pain and denigration. Statues are external reminders that could be ignored. However, ignoring ‘blackness’, which is internally—historically and socially—fundamental to CADA’s socio-cultural existence, is ethically problematic. ‘Blackness’, I argue, is more morally objectionable than statues. This rejection of statues and acceptance of ‘blackness’ seems to be a flight from freedom, from autonomy, from responsibility.

What valorization and moralization of ‘blackness’ obfuscate is what I have already analyzed: the distinction between ‘blackness’ (discursive) and the appearance of CADA (phenomenological). This is the failure to make a distinction between *subjective appearance* and the object [body/skin] that appears to the subject. To reclaim, promote or decolonize ‘blackness’

is to assume there is a pre-colonial ‘blackness’ to salvage. This is a confusion of an image of a thing and the thing itself (Griffin, 2006 [1960]; Baldwin, 1993 [1961]). CADA skin pigmentation as a think-in-itself, as it appears ‘phenotypically’, to the human eye, is not, necessarily, black. As James Baldwin (1993 [1954]) has argued, this is a difficult position to advance on the face of CADE power-knowledge-nexus: “The world tends to trap and immobilize you in the role you play; and it is not always easy...to maintain a kind of watchful, mocking distance between oneself as one appears to be and oneself as one actually is” (p. 219). This is the entrapment of CADA ‘in the dungeon of appearance’. It is not imprisonment in appearance *per se* but as ‘one appears to be.’

It is this need to distinguish between ‘blackness’ and the objective body—the person—that makes William Allen (1853, p. 22) retort that “I never take advice from those who cannot tell the difference between a man and his skin.” That ‘difference’ is what Baldwin precisely called the ‘mocking distance.’ But this distinction—this mocking distance—is not rather between the man and his skin as Allen put it, but between man and, in Baldwin’s words, what ‘one appears to be.’ While I agree with Mbembe (2017) that ‘blackness’ as a paradigm of control, “imposes itself as symptom and destiny, or as a knot in the conspiracy of power” (p. 152); I do not believe this is an unalterable reality. The “Black Man cannot change his color” (Mbembe, 2017, p. 152). This is a phenomenological fact. But *he* can reject ‘blackness’ because of its discursive ontology.

The problem is not skin colour *per se* but the social consciousness[‘blackness’] CADE has created *as* instrumental ‘skin colour’. Instrumental skin colour (‘blackness’) as a ‘crime’ (Baldwin, 1989 [1954]) made Trevor Noah (2016) ‘born a crime’ in South Africa of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; it made William Allen’s (1853) marriage to Mary King almost a deadly affair in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; it made Meghan Markle’s marriage into the British Royal family phobogenic; and it made an African-American security guard, twenty-six-year-old Jemel Roberson of Chicago, end up



getting fatally shot (Sullivan, 2018). Roberson had subdued a shooting suspect and was holding him down as the police arrived. He was wearing a vest and writing showing “security”, but the police fatally shot him before asking questions. Police saw a ‘black’ man with a gun and used their epistemic and epistemological community that a ‘black’ man has always been the ‘bad man’ in America. We witness this consciousness, this fear of CADA, in Canadian institutions today (Sibblis et al., 2022; Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2023).

Accordingly, what needs reclaiming, promotion, or decolonization is the distorted body (Fanon, 2008 [1952]). To reiterate, there is no pre-discursive (Foucault, 1981, 2010 [1969]), pre-theoretical (Sartre, 1943) ‘blackness’ of CADA skin. To moralize ‘blackness’, then, seems like its naturalization onto the African body—an inadvertent colonial apologia—something about which Hall (1996b) has warned us. Moralization of ‘blackness’ dangerously helps refashion domination given ‘blackness’ role during slavery, colour-based segregation, and socio-intellectual hegemony. The mythic and grotesques image of CADA created by Europe during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period (Mudimbe, 1988; Mbembe, 2017; Wynter, 2003; Meisenhelder, 2003) and popularized in Euro-America during slavery still occupies western minds (Keim & Somerville, 2018). It is this haunting aura of ‘blackness’, its Fanonian phobogenesis, that makes Meghan Markle a problem to the British royal family and the British society. A ‘blackness’ that does not appear on her and her children is still dreaded by the British society. Her ‘blackness’, which is only in the mind, is still attached to her skin to make her objectionable.

About her son Archie, Meghan Markle told Oprah that “There was concerns about how dark his skin might be when he is born” (Inside Edition, 2021). But the problem is not appearance or colour because Markle looks ‘white’. The problem is the *idea* of her being ‘black’ or genetically

associated with ‘blackness.’<sup>144</sup> It is important to note here that the cultural and epistemic limitation that prevented CADE scholars between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries from seeing CADA realities from CADA perspective still prevents the royal family from understanding that appearance differential should not matter in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This limitation is the reason why the current Prime Minister of Canada did not know that ‘black face’ was offensive when he was a 29-year-old teacher (CBC News, 2019). Even as a teacher, and a son of a world-renown Canadian Prime Minister, he was limited to a specific cultural and epistemic universe.

I tend to see this as a CADE cultural and epistemic limitation *not* a natural immorality. Some CADA see the ‘white man’ as evil. He has indeed done *evil* things; but he is not evil. As a young man told Baldwin during his conversation with Elijah Mohammed of *The Nation of Islam*, “The white man sure *is* a devil. He proves that by his own actions” (1993 [1962], p. 65). However, CADE (except for the social-justice minded ones) do not think beyond the contours or limitations of their epistemes, discourses, and cultures. As American founding fathers argued in the declaration of independence on July 4, 1776, “all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed” (American’s Founding Documents, 1776). This is why the post-colonial rethinking of CADA history is necessary. So when Hegel (1892) located Africa outside history, he was operating within cultural, epistemic and philosophical limitation. It is within this limitation that I would argue that the Hegelian ghost that Taiwo (1998) wants exorcized should rather be seen as the need to introduce the African world whose existence Hegel did not know. Hegel saw something in Asia he did not see in Africa so Taiwo (1998) may be expecting too much

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<sup>144</sup> The *idea* of ‘blackness’ in Sudan made Sudanese who were as dark as South Sudanese reject ‘blackness’ because of its association with slavery (Sharkey, 2008). Sudanese who rejected ‘blackness’ in Sudan embrace ‘blackness’ in North America (see Deng, 2013; Awad, 2004).

of Hegel and other western philosophers who have written about Africa and Africans in that context. Since Africans are “victims of philosophical marginalization” (Morera, 2014, p. 15), the African philosophical project should not be the lamenting of African marginality but answering *why* it was marginalized.

In addition to the reason discussed above why ‘blackness’ poses a moral problem in its contemporary usage, ‘black’ still carries negative connotations even in modern languages such as English and Jieeng languages. It still symbolically evokes evil, socially undesirable traits, and base values. Hence, the ‘blackness’ (signifier) of the people (signified) categorized ‘black’ and the symbolic blackness, become hard to distinguish. This “symbolic association...is neither innocuous nor accidental” (Deliovsky & Kitossa, 2013, p. 164). Associative meanings of ‘blackness’ are why Kant believed ‘blackness’ means stupidity (Eze, 1997). And this is also why “Jean Veneuse is ugly. He is black” (Fanon, 2008 [1952], p. 61).

This is also why the imperial Manichean good versus evil (Fanon, 1982 [1963]) makes African connote ugliness and European connoting beauty (Fanon, 2008 [1952]). This association may also be why George Dei (2018) defends black as a colour in itself because he believes this translates to self-glorification of *a* pre-colonial ‘blackness’. But these translate to real life and cause confusion. I have already given the example of Margaret Cannon (1995) and her friend, Althea regarding experiencing a ‘Black Monday.’ Here is another illustrative example. When South Africa’s contestant for Miss Universe (2011), Bokang Montjane, was asked what animal she would be if she were an animal, she said she would be a panther “because I believe it is such a sexy, amazing, elegant animal. And then of course again it is black and I am a young ‘black’, proud woman.” Why is Miss Mantjane’s proud of the literal blackness of panther that has nothing to do with her skin? It is not her fault, necessarily. The human mind and society regularly confuse

the two. It gets more confusing when scholars confuse them (Dei, 2018) while denying the confusion at the same time.

During colonization and slavery CADA had no recourse to formidable means through which they could reject cultural impositions and distortions of their sociocultural realities even when writers like Edward Blyden, Alexander Crummell, Olaudah Equiano, Martin Delany, among others, tried to resist CADA's appearance and colour-based denigration. Therefore, postcolonial scholars interrogate and deconstruct (Abrahamsen, 2003) the colonial distortion and the extant issues of coloniality regarding discourse and power imbalance. The dominance of European socio-intellectual ideas first spread as fictitious fantasies (Keim & Somerville, 2018; Mudimbe, 1988; Mbembe, 2017), then through violence (Fanon, 1982 [1963]; Césaire, 2000) and European epistemological control that are effective but hidden in discourse. While impositions of European dominance are questioned by postcolonial theorists, ideas from colonialism and slavery (such as 'blackness') are now societally diffused without violence. They have become "conformation to the [Eurocentric] norms" (Hall, 1996b, p. 226).

Descriptions such as 'woolly hair', 'nappy hair', 'flat nose' 'depressed nose', 'thick lips', etc., were not objective or phenomenological descriptions. They were normative descriptions meant for comparative purposes against the standard human type, the European. Williams (1969) quotes *American College Dictionary* without any critical perception as a matter of fact: "flat nose, projecting jaws, everted lips (meaning to turn out... Ward or inside out. As an intestine) and coarse, woolly hair" (p. 6). As Petrie has argued, CADA have "a massive nose, firm projecting lips, and thick hair, with an austere and almost savage expression of power" (cited in Du Bois, 2018 [1915], p. 18). The nose is 'broad' or 'massive' relative to the European. It is this "flat nose, the high cheek-bones" that Burton says "form unusual amount of ugliness" (1863, pp. 288-289). And Du

Bois (2018 [1915], p. 85) joined this ugliness discourse when he quotes Ratzel that “[for] wherever dark, woolly-haired men dwell, this ugly type [of ‘Negro’] also crops up.” Du Bois does not dismiss Ratzel’s ‘ugly Negro’ for his interest is to exclude this type: “[in] this restricted sense the Negro has no history, culture, or ability, for the simple fact that such human beings as have history and evidence culture and ability are not Negroes!” (p. 86). In Frobenius’s description, the Africans were “The thick-lipped, broad-nosed face ...[and] The ears are large” (1913, p. 289).

Owing to the power of CADE epistemological hegemony, these denigrating tropes have become normal descriptions even to CADA. These descriptions, I believe, would change if CADA was to centre themselves and their ideals. Would CADA describe their hair as ‘woolly’, their noses ‘as broad or massive’ or their skin ‘black’ if they were to look at themselves through the first sight, outside the colonial discourse? I would say ‘no’; however, this is a phenomenological question, so the answer is open to subjective interpretation even outside the colonial discourse.

What is important to note here is how, as Hall (1994) has explained, ideas that seem internal to the creative freedom of the dominated groups are still produced within the delimiting framework of the dominant, hegemonic group. This is with the understanding that ideas produced by the dominated groups are not dictated by the powerful cultural ideologies of the dominant group. However, in some cases, the ideas are consented to, with the knowledge that the dominant groups dictated them, but that they are seen as acceptable to the dominated group. At times, as Lull (1995) has noted, the consent is a resignation because of the powerlessness in the face of the powerful [Western] ideologues. As Gates (1997, p. xvii) has conceded, a world in which someone can say “I am not black” is “a world without blackness, a world...where the concept has been dismantled or transfigured beyond recognition.”

The question is ‘dismantled by who?’ Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, CADE has assumed an ideological war of position in the name of Christianity, a position they now defend in the name of ‘western civilization’. According to Shelby, “there is little room for choice; you cannot simply decide not to be thinly black” (2002, p. 239). Here, the CADE’s knowledge-power-nexus has not only created their subject position (Foucault, 2002), it has also proscribed CADA subject position. In this case, ‘blackness’ seems inescapable. It is a discursive formation so it is escapable. CADA can reject ‘blackness’ because it was a colonial imposition. The adoption of culture-based and place-based identities such as ‘African-American’ or ‘African-Canadian’ are illustrative. While coloniality is still a problem, the presentation of CADA as completely helpless is ethically problematic and indefensible. The fact that Gates and Shelby teach in the most prestigious university in the United States, something the imminent W. E. B Du Bois was denied a few decades ago because of the colour line, shows that ‘blackness’ can be phased out.

CADA seem to need permission from CADE to make sense of their own identity. That is like facing the wall without doors and expecting them [doors] to appear (Mbembe, 2017). Edward Blyden (1887)—the father of ‘African Personality’ and consequently, Pan-Africanism—wondered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century “Why give more dignity to the specific than to the general? Why write Ashantee, Congo, Mondingo, with capitals, and Negro, the generic appellation, with a small “n”?” (p. 11, note 12). Unlike the Ashanti, Congo, Mandingo that are proper nouns, ‘negro’ is a common noun. That ‘negro’ was a human identity at all and that it had become a proper noun are products of CADE colonial discourse. Blyden assumed capitalizing ‘negro’ was as obvious as capitalizing Ashanti or Mandingo.

Similarly, W. E. B. Du Bois in the 21<sup>st</sup> century asked *The New York Times* in 1926 to capitalize ‘n’ in ‘negro’, arguing that using a small letter to name 12 million Americans is “a

personal insult.” The Times turned him down in 1926 only to relent in 1930 (Martin, 1991), writing that capitalization of ‘negro’ is not a mere grammatical question but “an act in recognition of racial self-respect” (Coleman, 2020). Martin (1991) notes that “in 1989 Jesse Jackson visited editorial boards of several major newspapers to try to persuade them to use African American” (p. 103). Inspired by the BLM movement nearly a century later in June 2020 after the police murder of George Floyd, *The New York Times*, after consulting “more than 100 staff members”, wrote that, “Based on those discussions, we’ve decided to adopt the change and start using uppercase “Black” to describe people and cultures of African origin, both in the United States and elsewhere” (Coleman, 2020). This is paternalism.

That capitalization of CADA identity names is still needed raises ethical questions about the extent to which CADA have freed themselves intellectually. Additionally, a change from ‘negro’ to ‘black’ is a tautology, a change only in language not in meaning: Spanish to English. As Lamming put it in 1956, ‘Negro’ means ‘black’ and nothing more. And as Fanon (2008 [1952], p. 46) said of Jean Veneuse, “he is black, so he is a Negro.” Letting others determine and toy with one’s identity creates this seeming helplessness. ‘Negro’ and ‘black’ are adjectives that were turned into nouns in colonial discourse, so it is reasonable to expect them not to be capitalized as a matter of grammar not prejudice. But appellations such as African-American or African-Canadian do not need CADA to helplessly request CADE-controlled institutions to capitalize them because cultural, non-colour thoughts went into their creation. They are not appearance-based; they became proper nouns upon their creation, and they show an appreciable level of intellectual creativity outside the colonial discourse and power regimes. Moving away from discursive appellations to phenomenological realities or culture and place-based identities is one avenue of avoiding this self-imposed helplessness.

Before I finalize the dissertation with a summary section of the key learnings, I must note the following four issues as a short summary of this section. ‘Blackness’ as an ethical imperative, as a discursive tool against which African-Canadians are judged is still a relevant social issue in social justice and social work. It is by adopting a phenomenological attitude that social workers may become self-responsible in their interactions with African-Canadians. They would make decision based on experience-based interactions rather than through discourse-mediated interactions. To strengthen the usefulness of the phenomenological attitude, social workers must pay attention to the kind of epistemologies and epistemes they rely on to make decisions about African-Canadians. Without a critical assessment of what inform their decisions, social workers may work within the limits of their culturally informed epistemology and apply them as universals. Social work is still largely Eurocentric so paying attention to the histories that inform our present is important to social workers to avoid repeating, without knowing, the mistakes of the past. This is where social workers and CADA scholars meet. Social workers (whether they are CADE or CADA), must pay attention to CADA histories and epistemes and then prioritize CADA lived experiences. This may help move professionals from discourse-based decision-making to phenomenology-based decision-making. While Canada is a beautiful mosaic linguistically and culturally, it remains a vertical mosaic, to use John Porter’s (2015 [1970]) apt expression. Canada today continues to be an inegalitarian society. And this inequality affects African-Canadians more than other racialized minorities in Canada. This is why it is important to continue to pay attention to knowledge systems and regimes that inform social work practice and training in Canada. This would include all Canadian voices and experiences, especially the ones at the bottom of the Canadian vertical mosaic.



## **Limitations and Future Research**

I have already mentioned the first limitation in Chapter 2 (Section: Rationale for Archival Sources). While I believe the sources I have used to address the research problem and questions have been adequate, travelling to the areas covered by the scope of the research would have added value to my research. Travelling to England, Brazil, Jamaica and the USA, for instance, to dive into colonial archives in person may have made the dissertation more comprehensive. This is something on which I may be able to embark in the future as a continuation of this work. The second limitation is the complexity and the length of the dissertation. There are areas where issues become too philosophical and that may affect the clarity of some concepts to some readers who may not be philosophically inclined. The length of the dissertation may prevent some readers from reading parts that may inspire their curiosities and do further research. The length, while necessary, in my view, does not make that easy.

Because ‘blackness’ is a social reality that affects many lives today, it is important to also use the findings and the arguments in this research to do empirical studies. While I may be able to undertake this research in the future, I believe other researchers may also use some of the problems raised here. These problems include the confusion between literal blackness and discursive ‘blackness’, and ‘blackness’ as epistemological-colonial entrapment. Researchers may challenge some of the arguments I have advanced. They may also use my research to strengthen some of their arguments whose rationale I have found either inadequate or unnecessary in the postcolonial era. Some of the examples I have challenged are arguments for reclamation of colonial identities or ‘blackness’ as a ‘necessary’ resistive social tool.

## Key Learnings, Summary and Conclusions

I have addressed the research questions and the five moral problematics I listed in Chapter 1 (see Research Purpose section) throughout the dissertation. Here, I will integrate these moral problematics and some answers to the research questions in this summary in no particular order. Most of the key learnings in this dissertation revolve around what Foucault (1995) would describe as “Small acts of cunning endowed with a great power of diffusion” (p. 139).

First, some morally problematic issues related to CADA denigration are either not easy to detect, or they are easy to ignore because of the assumed *smallness* of their effects on CADA. Their implications regarding epistemological control and reliance on questionable histories of slavery and colonization is enormous. For instance, CADA scholars had to use the same scholarship and history that denigrated them to push back against distortive and oppressive writings. While they rejected or pushed back on some denigrating and debasing writings (see Delany, 1852; William, 1882; Crummell, 1883; Du Bois, 2018 [1915]), they still took some denigrating descriptions for granted. They wrote about them as if they are objective descriptions that have no moral or normative dimensions. These descriptions were the basis of African ‘ugliness’ and ‘repulsiveness’ as encountered in the works of Van Evrie (1864, 1867), Helper (1867), Burmeister (1853), among others. Seeing themselves through CADE *discursive eyes*, CADA followed CADE and described themselves as having depressed or broad noses, woolly, nappy or kinky hair, big or thick/protruding lips.

Second, CADA are trapped in epistemological and epistemic ambivalence that leads to the *normalization* of the above descriptions. It is within this framework, this power-knowledge-nexus, that CADA have normalized ‘blackness’ today without CADE’s direct, coercive power. With all the social, moral, political, and economic ills it has helped CADE met out on CADA, CADA have

not only accepted this normalization, but they also defend it. However, they are not normalized because CADA do not know their historical and current ills. The example I have given in this dissertation show that CADA is aware of the current moral problematic of ‘blackness’. But the rejection of ‘blackness’ seems like a rejection of the CADA organic self. I have shown in Chapters 5 and 6 that ‘blackness’ and the CADA body can be decoupled through phenomenology. That CADA cannot change their skin colour is not the same thing as the impossibility of dissociation from ‘blackness’. There is a difference between CADA *skin colour* as it appears to the observing subject as a phenomenon and ‘blackness’ as a discursive formation.

Third, CADA still seem attached to ‘blackness’, in bad faith, that ‘blackness’ is *bad* and *good* at the same time. While they conclude that it is a morally problematic identity reality as Foster (2002), Mbembe (2017), and Warren (2018) have shown, they seemingly assume that the antiquation of ‘blackness’ as a colonial identity is either unnecessary or it will be done by someone else. This is an abdication of intellectual and moral responsibility by intellectuals who have undoubtedly shown they can get out of CADE’s intellectual paternalism and traps. Mbembe (2017) shows that the ‘Black Man’ was created to make CADE a *human-thing*, a *useful object*. CADA have shown all the reason why ‘blackness’, like ‘nigger’ and ‘negro’, are better antiquated. They, however, in bad faith, shy away from drawing that conclusion. This means that the modern normalization of ‘blackness’ is still a hegemonic control of CADA intellectual production by CADE discursive power. This is control through consent. This also answers research question 2<sup>145</sup>, because the discursive regimes dictating ‘blackness’ today are still CADE’s power-knowledge-nexuses. They are not liberatory regimes. They are Gramscian hegemonies.

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<sup>145</sup> What discursive regimes govern the transition of “blackness” from an ethic of denigration to an ethic of pride?

Fourth, CADA solidarity against colonialism and slavery was undergirded by existential realities not ‘blackness’. But continental Africans, who have their cultural identities still find it necessary to argue that ‘blackness’ has a role to play against colour prejudice. Racial solidarity, which is necessary even today, can be successfully undertaken without ‘blackness.’ A Jamaican, a Barbadian, a Canadian, a South African, a German, a Brazilian, are called ‘black’ not because ‘blackness’ appears on them. They are called ‘black’ because of ancestral connection with Africa. African-Americans who prefer “Black American’ over *African-Americans* know that they are ‘black’ because of ‘Africa.’ A solidarity without ‘blackness’ is therefore possible because the African in the diaspora and the African on the continent are united by history (colonialism and slavery) and place (Africa). With or without ‘blackness’, existential conditions such as colour prejudice, economic marginality, and the history of slavery, will continue to unite CADA. CADA have undoubtedly used ‘blackness’ for solidaristic purposes. This is a historical reality as I have already discussed. But they used it because it was familiar not because it was *necessary*. The existential realities that unite the poor in the slums of Nairobi and the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro, for instance, do not need ‘blackness’ because they are lived objective human conditions created by legacies of slavery and colonialism.

Fifth, ‘blackness’ as a social control tool has not been delinked from its socioeconomic, socio-political, and aesthetic role in the degradation of CADA. It continues to play exclusionary and denigrating roles. CADA are still marginalized and discriminated against because of ‘blackness.’ While CADA scholars understand that there is a difference between CADA body (phenomenological reality) and ‘blackness’ as a discursive formation, the way ‘blackness’ is discussed gives the impression that ‘blackness’ as discursive and CADA body are one and the same. Dei’s (2018) attempt to defend literal blackness blurs this difference. Why defend the colour

black when what we should be defending is the CADA body as a phenomenological, organic reality?

Sixth, most of the atrocities CADE has meted out on CADA were first meted out on European poor. There is nothing Europeans have done to Africans that they did not do to themselves. European indentured servants were treated in the same way African slaves were treated. The only difference is that Africans were enslaved for life and European servants served a temporally delimited period of servitude. Therefore, prejudice based on 'blackness' is not a natural aversion to the 'blackness' of Africans. Africans replaced the European underclass and inherited their existential condition. What was new was not oppression but the new subjects of oppression. As such, a respectful, colour-prejudice-free African-European relations are *possible* because colour prejudice was inspired by capitalism-slavery-nexus. Colour prejudice is *of* modernity.

Seventh, African-Canadians, because of their marginality and lower social economic condition, continue to seek social services within institutions informed by Eurocentrism. However, the education used to educate social workers, whether they are European-Canadians or African-Canadians, is still Eurocentric. It is therefore important for social work education in Canada to develop Afrocentric epistemologies to help social workers delink social work from the legacies of slavery and colonialism that still affect social work practice, consciously or unconsciously. Social workers, as Gramsci 'intellectuals' spread social ideas to, and about, their clients. They are supposed to be 'traditional intellectuals', existing outside any racial group in Canada. However, they become part of the Eurocentric hegemony, organic to European-Canadians as a social group, through social work education and cultural upbringing.

Lastly, turning appellations that were historically used for denigration and sanitizing them as resistive tools creates other moral problems. It compromises the emergence of the full creative capacity and epistemological freedom of the oppressed. It makes them beholden, unintentionally, to their own oppression. While the creative aspect of the oppressed may be located in the reversion of the meaning—from ‘black is ugly’ to ‘black is beautiful’—the fact that colonial and slavery era appellations are still being used gives the impression that the oppressed are incapable of creating their own appellations. For CADA, who have historically been infantilized and made dependent on CADE, the use of colonial appellations fit within this historical assumption. We can give new meanings to old words, but they will always be reminders of oppression that has historically assumed that CADA will always need CADE intellectually. Even with new meanings, these appellations seem like a nod—an *apologia*—to the same oppression. Colonial and slavery era appellations are, based on my research and in my view, inadvertent *monuments* to slavery and colonization.

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