

Towards a New brand of Racism in USA:

Blacks Vs Blacks an Issue of Controversy

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Abstract:

In an attempt at tackling one of the most prominent issues facing African-Americans in USA from their arrival as slaves till the present time where they have, brutally, suffered from whites' discrimination and isolation as a main part, indeed, of racial segregation. However, blacks who struggle for the sake of having equality and integration within the whites' society, claim their dissatisfaction with their new situation as this famous united community suffered from a severe division. Hence, throughout this paper, a great focus will be placed upon blacks' situation, their fight for integration within the American society and their current attitudes towards each other as members who are supposed to belong to the same community where they are supposed to share the same colour of skin, the same beliefs and seek the same purpose. To meet this end, a careful comparison, namely, between the former black generation and the new one as two different generations belonging to the same category has been established aiming at exploring this new trend of racism, i.e., Blacks Vs Blacks.

Key-words: African-Americans, blacks, whites, USA, integration, racism, segregation, society.

ملخص:

في محاولة لتناول أحد أهم المعضلات التي تواجه الأفرو-أمريكيين في الـ ١٠٠ سنة منذ وصولهم هذه الأراضي كعبيد إلى يومنا هذا أين مازالوا يعانون من عداوة البيض والتفرقة كأهم جزء في عملية التمييز العنصري. ومع ذلك السود الذين حاربوا من أجل المساواة والاندماج في مجتمع البيض يشكون من وضعيتهم الجديدة فهذه الفئة من المجتمع المشهورة باتحادها تعاني من

انقسام خطر في أوساطها. وبالتالي ، من خلال هذا البحث ، تركيز و اهتمام كبير و ووليا
لوضعية السود وحرهم من اجل الاندماج في البيئة الأمريكية ،سلوكهم وردات فعلهم الحالية
باتجاه بعضهم البعض باعتبارهم ينتمون إلى نفس الوسط، ويشتركون في نفس لون البشرة ،
نفس المعتقدات ،، ويحاولون تحقيق نفس الهدف . إذن لتحقيق هذا الهدف ، أثيرت مقارنة
جادة بين جيلي السود الأول والثاني حيث تهدف هذه الأخيرة إلى استكشاف نوع جديد من
العنصرية ظهرت في المجتمع الأمريكي ألا وهي "السود ضد السود"

الكلمات المفتاحية: الافرو-أمريكيين, السود, البيض, الو.م.ا, الاندماج, العنصرية, التفرقة,
المجتمع

Over the last four centuries, blacks suffered from a total segregation and unfair situation where discrimination in the United States of America was and still, to some extent, the first sign which comes to someone's mind when the African-Americans topic is open for a debate. However, the former Negroes, one of the oldest names given to Americans citizens of dark skin and who came, particularly, from Africa as slaves, keep fighting for social justice, fully recognized political rights as they maintain and focus on the idea that there is no relation between the color of skin and the level of intelligence. In the same line of thought, Banneker (1976) sustains that: *"the color of skin is no way connected with strength of the mind or intellectual powers."*

While tracing back the history of blacks in USA from their arrival as slaves to the American lands till the present time where some of them has just achieved high positions in the American governments as Obama has done, one may say that a radical change has occurred and accompanied them in each level of the famous story of those strangers in that strange land where they have little or no idea about before.

Throughout history, it can be found that a series of events happen which prove that the emergence of blacks as a power in the United States represented in their leaders could be placed upon two groups where, mainly, two different generations have come into sight, notably; the first generation and the second one. The former has a close relation with celebrities as; Dr. Martin Luther King; Malcolm X; James Baldwin, and so forth. The latter, indeed, has a strong correlation with those famous personalities as Earvin Magic; Johnson Oprah Winfrey; Condoleezza Rice, and many others who have appeared in different domains, across diverse areas, in special fields, appointing in various trends.

In this vein, what might be debatable is in fact: *Who are the main leaders that fight for the blacks' rights? And even, if there are so, is there any continuity of the same aims and sacrifices of the first generation by the new one?*

As one of the famous expressions whites used to say is the following: ***“If you are white you are right”, “if you are black stand back.”*** From these words, it can be analyzed that whites feel a total superiority towards blacks; they are civilized people and they have the full right, indeed, to, notably, dominate those weakened people and the descendants of the former slaves. Starting from this point, and as a reaction to this fastidious circumstances black leaders, the representatives of the black community, tried to focus their attention on their own situation while working on their own in different domains to achieve a, more or less, better improvement of their particular situation which may cause, later on, a flourish of that segregated community.

As a careful path towards a better integration within the American society, a set of works have been done, chiefly, about the African-American experience in the US. In this respect, Dubois, one of the most important Black leaders a historian and sociologist too, conducted an initial research on the Blacks’ experience there. His work, definitely, paved the way for the civil rights and Black Power movements. He offered a work of worthy value where he studied blacks as a social system which could guide them, later on, to bring about a higher civilization. The need to politicize this discriminated race for the sake of being accepted within the whites’ society is of worthy value and was the first motive for Dubois to carry out such a study.

Holding the same motive, i.e., being accepted and integrated in this society, and unlike Dubois, Booker T. Washington one of the most influential men of his time, and the founder of NNBL; an organization aimed at developing the commercial, agricultural, educational, and industrial improvement of African-Americans, deeply believed in the fact that Blacks must prove their worth by learning skills to be economically independent as a key to be accepted by the whites.

Consequently, Black leaders were in different domains; they function as politicians; scientists; writers; sportsmen ...etc, and due to this variation they used different means to, hopefully, achieve the sharing dream of freedom; justice; equality; respect throughout their struggles. To this end, and without Dr. King; Mrs. Park; Malcolm X; and all the black generation and their sacrifices of the period (1950-1960), they could not guarantee such strong laws. Moreover, they could not fulfill the dreams of a wide discriminated generation in the USA.

Accordingly, Dr. King and his followers, besides, Malcolm X and his supporters have sturdily accomplished a set of valuable triumphs which can be summarized in the following way:

- Thanks to Dr. King’s, unlimited, efforts blacks were, somehow, integrated in USA.
- Segregation was prevented at the level of schools due to the Brown decision.
- Protecting blacks’ rights as the right to vote, equal access to housing and job has been insured.

- Recognition, fully, goes to Mrs. Park as segregation in transportation has been, totally, prevented.
- Self-defense was widely preached among black community, following Malcolm X philosophy, to face whites' hostility, segregation and violence.
- The passage of the civil rights act of 1964 and the voting act of 1965.

As it has been stated above, whether they were about advocating integration or urging self-defense the sharing dream of freedom was their main purpose standing behind such movements. Each one of those celebrities has participated in his own way to insure, roughly, promotion of their particular situation in that special context.

In the same vein, Louis Armstrong the famous jazzman had spread jazz all over the world where he used his music as a peaceful messenger which carries out messages of love, freedom, equality between all races and from different backgrounds.

In literature, James Baldwin the great novelist and the blacks' spokesman who found readers from all races and surroundings, helped his community to be accepted and partly integrated within the whites' society as he emphasized on the idea that blacks together with the whites should look for a solution where they establish a new balance for a better life.

While dealing with those who had a real touch in establishing the stones for a new living platform for both races, i.e., blacks and whites, no one can deny the vital role played and hold by the greatest of all times Muhammad Ali Clay. Though, he has retired from boxing years ago, he continued his career not only in sports but going beyond this trend to social fields since he shifted his attention to fight for peace against racism and for literacy. Ali wanted to show to the entire world that Black is beautiful and despite his color of skin he has done something for the United States after getting most worlds' records at that time. In improving blacks' situation, Ali has done marked his participation in different ways by re-enforcing and supporting education; fighting against poverty and hunger, or simply by attempting at attaining a full picture of that, optimistically, respectable race in the whites' world.

Therefore and due to their sacrifices, achievements and as integration in the society become a near-end dream, they open the doors and facilitate the way for a second generation which can be considered to have a lucky situation as they gain acceptance among the whites' world rather than their ancestors.

From the above pointed out situation, a problematic may rose as a response to the new situation black could go through as they became more accepted in the society whether they follow the same path as their ancestors or not? Do they look mainly for the improvement of the entire blacks' situation or only their own interests?

As far as this new generation is concerned, one may refer to a number of well known black figures notably; Jesse Jackson; Magic Johnson; Oprah Winfrey, besides, Condoleezza Rice. The first leader of this group is Jesse Louis Jackson; one of the America's well recognized and respected black leaders, the oldest son the former civil rights activist, who scarified a very long period of his life fighting for the blacks' rights wishing at gaining recognition in the society, and defeating racial discrimination, as well.

One of his best acknowledge achievements is the foundation in 1971 of the PUSH 'People United to Save Humanity' operation where a rainbow coalition of both races, i.e., blacks and whites worked together to push for a great share of economic and political power for all poor people in America. Moreover, Fights against racisms, militarism and the class division were the major principles of such movement, and because blacks' youth suffered from drugs and truancy, PUSH-Excel, as a program was created, mainly, to motivate children and teens helping them succeeding in their daily life.

As far as the legend of NBA 'Earvin Magic Johnson' is concerned, one may say that he, as a sportsman and businessman, accomplished a lot of legendary achievements no one could do. As his nickname indicates he was and still a source of magic. Behind this great star there was another man who is proud of his blackness and who just wanted to do anything for the sake of helping his community for a better life conditions. Because he was tested positive for the AIDS virus, Johnson turned towards people to make them, fully, aware of such disease where he established a foundation for the promotion of AIDS research.

Together with HP 'Hewlett-Packard' Company, Earvin work on a realizing a dream of bringing technology training centers to underserved minority communities, hence, bridging the existing digital divide gap in those communities would be possible. In the same line of thoughts, Magic's Foundation raised more than twenty million dollar for charity and educational activities since its establishment in 1991. In sum, Magic, the source of happiness, success, and fame, as principle he was for providing his community with the major elements of their needs to improve their situation.

The third black figure who sacrifices her life for a better future of her community is the most influential lady of all times Oprah Gail Winfrey. Beyond her fame, power, influence, and wealth, Oprah this black lady strives for the success of her community inside and outside USA where she used her wealth besides attractiveness for numerous social causes in which she contributed in charitable organization such as More House College, the United Negro Fund, and in 1998 she ran a program entitled '*Oprah's Angel Network*' aiming at encouraging people around the world to make difference in their way of life, this made her, indeed, the thirty-second most philanthropic personality of her time.

As a main part of her achievements outside USA, Oprah and her team filmed an episode of her show labeled '*Oprah Christmas Kindness*' in South Africa with

the purpose in mind to help those children affected by poverty and AIDS while distributing presents to them. In 2005, she alongside other prominent African-American figures gave their names and support to raising funds to build the ‘*National Museum of African American History and Culture*’ in an attempt at protecting it. In addition to this, she established in 2007 the ‘*Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls*’ near Johannesburg in South Africa.

Apart from those who sacrifice their lives for their communities, another group has emerged where their main interest was the achievement of personal progress as they did not care about their neighborhoods. The peak of their dreams, in this case, is to be, totally, integrated within the white’s society as being, more or less, white persons forgotten, at the same time, their blackness, besides, the first and the second generation’ sacrifices.

In this sense and as an example of what has been said before, Condoleezza Rice the former US secretary of State, who is not in fact a white woman nor belongs to a rich family, shows a remarkable standing point towards her community. The controversial issue faced, therefore, that powerful woman is that she is a black woman from a second class family born and grew up in segregation area of Birmingham, Alabama who deeply believes and behaves as white persons, abhorring the idea of being black and weak woman trying her best to achieve the highest positions in the American society holding a typical political ideology where according to her blacks are weak persons who do not seek to improve themselves and who are only losers.

In the same line of consideration and despite the fact that, she has achieved a brilliant academic and political career where she served as an advisor to George H.W. Bush, as a foreign policy advisor to son George W. during his first term 1999, as a National Security Advisor ‘2001-2004’, and as US Secretary of State starting from 2005, she faced, a harsh, criticism from the rest of the black community as she emphasized on the individual ability, her sense of responsibility and self-discipline as an essential keys for her success, denying the fact that other black figures have facilitated the way for her and others to be integrated in that special society. Rice was and still unappreciated by the rest of the African-American community. In this respect, the former leader of Trans-Africa forum Bill Fletcher Jr. (2005) described her as being ***“very cold and distant and only black by accident.”***

Starting from this point a remarkable shift has occurred in the blacks’ inner situation and after centuries of segregation where they suffered from whites’ discrimination a new wave of racism has, notably, emerged; that of blacks Vs blacks. In this regard, African-Americans who achieved high positions in the American society feel superiority towards the rest of the black community and show a total feeling of loathing towards those they use to label ‘the losers’ for them they are only weak and poor persons who seek no progress the top of their dreams is, crucially, having a house, a new car and a sweet girl. Therefore, for this new generation, holding this special ideology in their minds from the part of those ‘losers’ will prevent them, for sure, from improvement and, in this case, they stay

under whites' domination everlastingly, hence, whites' superiority and blacks' inferiority will continue taking place within the American society.

Though the existing gap between blacks and whites still exists and the fight for the civil rights never ends, this new brand of racism in USA adds an extra issues for the African-Americans community within the American society and cause another challenge for the American leaders from both origins; blacks and whites, to deal with in an urgent way to overcome a new crisis in this special land.

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