

## Chapter 2

# Colonization as the Origin of Western Discrimination

Modern-day discrimination, acted out by victim groups in America, is an extension of Europe's historical colonial era. The act of European colonization is defined as the peopling of foreign territory—usually Third World—previously settled by a native population, with emigration from the mother country [1]. Since the existence of the Western Roman Empire, European colonial powers including Spain, England, and Portugal have dealt with their Third World subjects (people of color) in one of three ways: eradication, exclusion, or assimilation [1]. Ironically, it is the assimilation experience of people of color and other victim populations that has psychologically inspired their tendency to discrimination in the aftermath of colonization.

Western (European) colonization and dominant US influences at various locations around the world have long since ended. Unfortunately, the subjugation suffered by victim-group populations during colonization has not been resolved. Most of the previously colonized nations are now proud, independent sovereignties, but the psychological effects of their colonization remain. The Western obsession, including that of America, with skin color is ever visited upon the victim psyche. It is evident among victim populations as psychological colonization, in which the victims of the colonial era act out various forms of discrimination against other equally subjugated or victimized populations themselves. One manifestation of victim-group discrimination is the apparent preference for colonial mates as a spousal ideal. While spousal preference may be less brutal than traditional overt colonization, psychologically it is identical to discrimination in the way that it demeans victim-group populations.

Indicative of the colonial psyche, dominant-group Europeans—being light-skinned—are easily differentiated from dark-skinned populations, hence the convenience of their denigration. This response facilitates the subjugation and control of dark-skinned men, who pose the greatest threat to overcome the subjugated status of victim groups, thus the focus of the need for their colonial control [2]. That control has resulted in their being ultimately denigrated and discriminated against in Western courts, prisons, education, and all other quality-of-life institutions [3]. In the genetic makeup of dark-skinned men is a strong, color-producing material—melanin. Melanin is biologically dominant and something the light-skinned, Western male cannot manufacture at the cellular level. At the same time, Western males value melanin for its association with power and

masculinity; they also despise melanin for their inability to produce it. The Western colonial fear—particularly among males—is that should the producers of this material not be subjugated and subjected to colonial control, status may be lost and they may have a limited future in offspring [4].

Among Western women, the colonial implications of dark skin are manifested differently, but for the same basic reasons. Their personal disposition is a textbook lesson in colonial psychological domination. At one end of the spectrum is the light-skinned, sexless virgin who is so preoccupied with the cultural dictates of chastity that her sexual needs are limited by dysfunctions. At the other end is the fallen vamp whose reputation for having given in to what makes her a woman is forever banished from the fold of being a respectable lady. In an effort to endure her pain, the vamp may delve totally into the world of dark-skinned men. She can know no mediation between the Western mainstream and the dark-skinned community, which is a function of the colonial stigma applied to interracial marriage, especially between black men and white women [5].

Western colonial implications of dark skin are germane to the colonial status hierarchy among victim-group Americans. Harry Kitano implied that colonization is an extension of human cultural stratification and is based upon a system that consists of a dominant light-skinned Western and dominated dark-skinned non-Western populous [6]. It is the contention of Max Weber that societies are divided between those who rule and those who are ruled and that dominant groups tend to draw lines around themselves in order to control the quality and consistency of interaction between the subjects of their denigration and themselves [7]. They exhibit a tendency toward closed systems and the ordering of people into hierarchies based on proximity to dominant-group prerequisites more often than not on the basis of the most obvious skin color. Victim-group populations, because of their skin color, were generally placed near the bottom of the Western colonial hierarchy [8]. As immigrants migrating from non-English speaking countries, most could not speak the language very well; they were less familiar with American culture and sometimes lacked the necessary resources to succeed. Furthermore, many had not the education and/or competitive skills required for rapid mobility; unlike those of European descent, their dark skin was alien to the American mainstream. The permanent subjugation of these groups was a psychological vehicle to the internalization of discrimination norms relevant to assimilation and ultimately to the preferred quality of life.

Peculiar to the modern era is the manifestation of discrimination by and among victim-group populations exposed to centuries of white colonial domination. Unlike that of Europeans, the victim version of discrimination is more often psychological in nature. To understand the impact of victim-group discrimination requires an examination of both European and the equally dominant American influences. Both factors played a role in the creation of a discriminatory hierarchy that victim populations initially found objectionable but later practiced as an extension of preferred Western norms. Thus, according to Anthony Powell, it should not come as a shock that an unusually large number of African-American soldiers, in objection to colonial dynamics, deserted the armed forces while serving in the

Philippines; many then joined the Filipino struggle for independence [9]. Despite such noble efforts, the result is a hierarchy ever so subtle, but nonetheless existent among colonized victim groups at home and abroad. In every country colonized and/or dominated by Western forces, a similar hierarchy exists under similar circumstances, including Cuba, Brazil, Panama, Jamaica, Japan, and Puerto Rico. In fact, Cuba is regarded by some such as Carlos Moore—a dark-skinned native of Cuba—as the most discriminating society in the Hispanic Caribbean. The physical, social, and cultural mores that the European Spaniards exported were thus shaped and modified to effectively sustain aboriginal populations under a system of psychological colonization. The beneficiary of course was Spain. The success of this system in the Philippines was largely dependent upon the experience of the first generation of locals to be colonized [2]. Although their lives and those of later Filipinos were directly impacted, mixed-race Filipinos in particular, in association with dark-skinned and light-skinned Filipinos, would continue manifestations of colonization, reflected in their Western migration and human social interaction patterns.

The ability of victim populations to act out discrimination during social interaction depends principally upon somatic visibility, attested to by Hoetink's somatic norm image and the assumed superiority of Western colonials. However, the mere belief in superiority is not enough to sustain the phenomenon. Mechanisms that were less likely to exist among ancients must be constructed to stigmatize and reinforce differentiation. Included are (a) the use of stereotypes, which leads to avoidance; (b) the use of legal barriers and norms, which leads to a competitive disadvantage; and (c) isolation of the previously colonized group [5]. How colonials are treated by their colonizer is a function of any perceived threats, unpopularity, and the enforcement power of the colonizing entity. Frequently, the eruption of a crisis rationalizes extreme actions that may even include extermination. In the aftermath, exiles, refugees, and various acts of cultural genocide prevail. The more excessive actions tend to occur when prejudice, discrimination, and segregation have exacted their toll to the extent of becoming idealized norms. As a consequence of these idealized norms, victim-group populations who settle in Western countries may idealize colonial somatic ideals without conscious recognition of their existence. The act may indeed conflict with the sensitivities of their moral convictions because race-based social interactions are difficult to psychologically justify. Whereas Europeans may be differentiated by socially selected cultural traits, in the West, victim populations—including people of color—are distinguished by socially selected physical traits, for example, dark skin [10]. Designation by cultural group traits would have little or no meaning absent colonization. Hence, in Western countries including the United States, the classification of people of color as alien is dependent on the perceptions and definitions held by members of the mainstream population in cooperation with their racial subjects. Whereas some Europeans, such as Italians, did not initially fit the Western ideal, they were not differentiated as permanently alien via the skin color norm. They do not regard themselves as subjugated nor are they so regarded by the dominant-group mainstream [10].

Among the largest number of victim-group populations in the United States resulting from colonial domination, dark skin is germane to their somatic makeup.

It presupposes interpretation in the West as a peculiar phenomenon extended across both historical era and geographical location. In the West, no other somatic trait so essentially defines non-Western, victim-group identity as does dark skin. Conversely, the role of a self-defined identity is compulsory to the emotional and psychological health of a people confronted by the challenges of historical colonization. However, as with classic literature, Charles Cooley likens much of psychological well-being stemming from identity to the "Looking Glass Self" [11]. The Looking Glass Self is a metaphor that characterizes identity as a reflection of the self in public perception. From that perception, the core of identity is fashioned. A similar analysis has been proposed by G. H. Mead, who contends that identity is a product of social interaction [12]. The process is complete once the host has moved from the "I" to the "me" perception of self. Complimenting the work of Mead, Wade Nobles and W. Cross extend the concepts of "I" and "me" to group memberships [13,14]. According to Nobles, group membership bestows a "weness" to the identity development process. Finally, Erik Erikson contends that identity is not static [15]. Vis-à-vis physiological characteristics, it evolves out of a complex of decision-making experiences. Exemplifying the traditional, Erikson later wrote that final identity is fixed "at the end of adolescence" [15]. Identity pathology as evolution of colonial experience is well demonstrated in an analysis of victim groups who discriminate. Their discrimination is an attempt to realize a "weness" by which they are psychologically merged with the dominant, mainstream population even at the risk of their own psychological well-being.

Given the critical dynamics of identity, once members of colonial victim-group populations migrate to Western countries, they engage in a process of self-denial relevant to skin color. As a result, they may develop their identities around a racist self-concept as reflected in the bleaching of hair, alteration of eye folds, and other cosmetic modifications. An intense self-hatred then produces feelings of inferiority, making for a paternalistic attitude toward the Western mainstream. They mimic behaviors assumed to be necessary as a means of escape from the victim-group population, which ultimately is beyond the realm of possibility. Their efforts are evident in documented research that confirms their ascribing "badness" to dark colors and "goodness" to light, seeing dark objects as smaller than they actually are and seeing light objects as larger, plus other powerful positive/negative color evaluations. Thus, people of color as colonized victim-group populations, having relative darker skin, act out self-hate in a variety of discriminatory life choices. When opportunities are consistently made available on the basis of skin color, those who have darker skin experience despair, regardless of race. For some victims of discrimination, such discrimination against others serves a critical psychological function attributed to the historical influences of dominant-group oppression.

Consequent to Western ideals, people of color as a subjugated victim population with some exception intermarry and bear biracial offspring specifically for purposes of escaping a despised self. Biracial offspring as a separate entity comprise a group with which most Americans may have had little or no experience because, until recently, they did not identify themselves as a separate population entity. Although the literature acknowledges the existence of a biracial population, there

has been minimal discussion of the significant differences and similarities indicative of mixed-race Americans and how these differences and similarities might impact the identity of victim populations and their potential for discrimination. Instead, discussions regarding psychologically colonized, biracial Americans tend to incorporate them into separate or mainstream groups on the basis of skin color and other racial criteria. In the aftermath, social scientists might ask as follows: How are biracial people of color diverse and in what ways are they similar? Second, what are the implications for culturally and racially diverse populations to be perceived as members of an alien group based upon skin color and other racial attributes?

In the backdrop of these queries, colonized people of color as a victim-group population pose formidable challenges to social scientists. The size of this group is increasing rapidly, and indicators such as dating and marital patterns in the western area of the United States suggest the need for more comprehensive study of those located particularly in the United States. In California, the state government in the 2000 census has made available a group category separate from traditional race to accommodate mixed-race populations [16]. Hitherto, the Federal Census Bureau has yet collected data summarizing this population. Consequent to criticisms from an increasingly vocal biracial population, federal agencies have begun to modify standards for collecting race and ethnic data. However, such information remains unavailable for public consumption. Fortunately, a few states—including California—having a significant biracial population have acted with deliberate speed to acknowledge its racial diversity.

In California, a Eurasian Filipino—that is, biracial—is defined as one descended from more than one racial category [16]. The fact that interaction among people of color is more likely between colonial elements and people of color than between people of color suggests biracial is more often than not colonial in nature. However, because maternal/paternal race data are organized by mono-racial criteria, it is impossible to report the racial status of parents. Thus, the number of Eurasian births reported in the same data may be biased downward. Conversely, since the racial status of children in the California data are derived rather than self-identified, there may be an overestimated number of Eurasian births. Thus, in the aftermath of historical colonization, California today has one of the United States' most diverse populations in the country. While legal barriers to intermarriage were abandoned relatively early compared to other states, this has otherwise enabled little more than a moderate increase in Eurasian births within a 15-year period. However, taken as a percentage of state data as a whole, biracial births—including Eurasian births—rose from just under 12% in 1982 to just over 14% in 1997. In real numbers, this increase accounts for about 50,000 births in 1982 and about 70,000 in 1997 [16]. The most dramatic aspect of such births is the fact that differential rates involve Eurocentric women to men of color. More often than not, couplings consist of white men married to Asian women of color, as colonial dictates would prescribe.

Despite modest rates of increase, the number of Eurasian births in California is significant and substantial. In fact, biracial births exceeded Asian mono-racial births for the state of California in 1997 [16]. The increasing size of this population provides a context for understanding the concerns raised by Eurasian groups

regarding identity. Further concerns pertain to the implications of psychological colonization relative to biracial births and the potential for victim-group discrimination. As such, when asked to identify themselves by traditional race categories, Eurasians are more often resentful or confused. Those who resent are more inclined to discriminate against victim populations if they are not educated about the relevant dynamics. All too frequently, racial criteria have been utilized to categorize the more resentful as Caucasian, being those who may subsequently experience what George Meade and others would regard as serious identity conflict [17]. As a result, it is necessary to consult with individual Eurasians regarding their identity and how they define it. Questions must be sensitive to the possibility that such persons may have experienced a dramatic change in social status attributable to a system of race-based identification. That is, culturally they may be more rooted in the Euro-American community, but skin tone would cause them to be considered a person of color. Successive change can impact their psychological well-being, self-esteem, interactions with others, and assimilation prospects, which encourage victim-group discrimination as a norm into adult life.

In the historical aftermath of colonization, victim groups including biracial Americans encounter today a much more industrialized Western culture. Some who manage entry into the upper classes are familiar with Western discriminatory norms. Enabled by education and less threatening circumstances, post-World War victim groups—especially if they are light-skinned—are spared the violence and overt hostility endured by previous generations. However, their unique features and out-group status have remained alien to the Western gene pool and mark them as permanently ineligible for all but marginal acceptance into society absent some alliance with the colonial mainstream [18]. The alternative experience, by the biracial in particular, is assumed to facilitate quality of life should they conform to the influences of psychological colonization.

Psychological colonization of victim groups facilitates modern-day victim-group discrimination because it implies the ability of postcolonial groups to impose their ideals without resorting to overt strategies or violence [18]. Regardless of the particular methods used, postcolonial groups may then construct a social universe extended from self-prescriptions, which—in the case of biracial Americans—is not always perceived as pathological. Furthermore, aside from the more obvious aggressive tactics, psychological colonization may also derive from assimilation and an inspiration to reach the desired quality of life. In the West, dominant-group Europeans have not been inclined to negotiate more civil norms to accommodate their color opposites [18]. Individual Euro-Americans, who labor under the influences of colonization as well, cannot bring themselves to confront the fact of their oppression. They respond instead as if such oppression is a remote abstraction and, while it exists, is rare and not attributable to them personally. The willingness of their subjects to discriminate against their own is rooted in their forefathers having been colonized, first overtly and then covertly. Colonized victim groups who perceive reaching a self-appreciation by alien norms are psychologically reinforced, thus necessitating discrimination under all too often amenable circumstances [19].



Among victim-group populations who discriminate, psychological colonization is enabled by Eurocentrism, a postcolonial paradigm that has impacted the thinking of international scholars regarding various subject matters [20]. This otherwise obvious assumption is not subject to dispute in the least. Academia and other colonial-influenced intellectual institutions are no doubt a recapitulation of a colonial world order, which has been dominated by a Western geopolitical entity since Europe's colonial imperialism. What is more, as part of a geopolitical entity, "knowledge" pertaining to what is and is not discrimination extends largely from Europe [21]. Thus, until 1945, social science was centralized in the West, including France, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and the United States. Furthermore, despite the emergence of non-European or victim populations, the generation of knowledge remains given to the ideas and ideals of a limited perspective [22]. As a result, non-European populations and accounts of discrimination are portrayed in European colonial contexts that are all but irrelevant to victim-group existence. Thus, as a matter of logic, victim-group discrimination has been trivialized regarding race. This trivialization has distorted the perception of by whom and how discrimination is enacted. In order to accommodate an increasingly diverse era, the generation of "knowledge" must bend to facilitate emerging trends in population shifts. The inability to do so will encourage accusations of elitism from the very groups it proposes to serve [23]. The unforeseen implication of this elitism is that "knowledge" will convert to something colonial in both shape and substance and will then lend itself increasingly to the auspices and/or influences of myopic Eurocentric standards [24]. In an effort to succeed, the potential of humanity will accordingly fall prey to the pressures of colonial forces. Re-thinking the dynamics of discrimination extending to victim-group populations is a beginning effort to rescue "knowledge" by validating challenges to the current status quo.

Eurocentrists who determine the implications of discrimination have facilitated the canonization of racial discrimination without engaging conclusive debate or empirical analysis of various other forms. A loosely organized conspiracy would be polemic and would demean scientific methods. Their hegemony is neither justifiable nor ethical, but is a pseudoscientific colonial collaboration designed to standardize the existential reality of human life. In the aftermath, the significance of victim-group discrimination would be all but dismissed from what is existentially real. The inability to conform to the Eurocentric perception of discrimination is a casualty of the hegemony that has standardized colonial norms to date. Such an inductive method undermines democracy and discourages the intellectual rigor, which could provide new solutions to world problems. In a postcolonial era vastly more diverse than in the past, uncontested consequences will court disaster.

Eurocentric scholars have advocated recently for diversity and the uplifting of oppressed populations [25]. However, their advocacy has not been consistent in conceding the role of victim group status in the analysis of pathological social norms. In rhetoric, they concede the significance of victim groups, but are for the most part ill equipped to fully grasp its dynamics. This shortcoming is devastating because it is the hegemonic, Eurocentric, colonial element that drives the manufacture of "knowledge." Scholars of color who excel do so by espousing Eurocentric rhetoric

[26]. Those who do not excel are labeled as radicals and ultimately banished to the fold of intellectual obscurity. Their banishment serves the status quo, preventing discussions of discrimination or any social phenomena not validated by the Eurocentric elite. These elitists are formidable in that they are the gatekeepers of admission to programs at the best universities. They manage publication of the best textbooks and peer-reviewed journals by which the dissemination of knowledge is conveyed. Thus, those who would profess the significance of scholarship acquiesce, with some reservation, to the dogma of race discrimination until such time that empirical investigation can determine they are wrong. They endorse race and are willing to accept the hypothesis that best fits existing evidence.

The inability of Eurocentrists to concede the colonial influence upon knowledge suggests their hegemony does not rise to the level of consciousness [27]. Conversely, non-European victim groups are astutely aware of that influence [28]. The result is a psychological colonization that has rendered knowledge all but totally irrelevant to the issues confronting non-European populations. Extended from psychological colonization is then unnecessary ignorance. Ignorance of victim populations is measured by individual effort, which allows Eurocentrists to sustain themselves despite their intellectual transgressions.

With respect to psychological colonization, there are several reasons why scholars should consider the incorporation of alternatives to race discrimination. First, the significance of discrimination is well known and if skillfully addressed, it will likely enable worldwide study of victim and other populations [29]. Second, discussions of discrimination for most conjure images of legal conflicts with the potential to charge emotions; when it is associated with stereotype, it encourages knee-jerk condemnation of an entire people, their social structure, lifestyle, and other aspects of their being [30]. The traditional substatus surrounding victim groups will impair their ability to thrive in a Eurocentric, postcolonial environment, unless the more rational prevail. Third, discrimination must be viewed in proportion to its consequence in the lives of both victim and mainstream populations. To do otherwise will accommodate Eurocentrism, rendering knowledge a less accurate portrayal of people and the “facts” conveyed about them.

Beyond racial constructs, the most efficient means of compromising psychological colonization is to become more amenable to a universal perspective. Education pertaining to the relevance/irrelevance of race will enable that effort [31]. Scholars who are so enabled will then be in a better position to study and accurately portray discrimination by and among victim-group populations. Equally important is the impact of education upon the world at large. An advantage of education includes the ability of scholars to create tolerant environments by the building of bridges beyond what is politically necessary. The focus on such bridges to victim populations should be their language, history, cultures, colonial influences, and so forth, rather than the assumptions associated solely with their race.

Following the turn of a new millennium, the ability to accurately perceive, conceptualize, and study victim-group discrimination is necessary in our rapidly changing and complex world. Upon entering a new millennium, scholarship must be the starting point for the rescue of non-European populations from the standards



of colonial norms. Hence, scholars are obligated to a higher benchmark of “fact” establishment and moral excellence. Their ability to purge humanity as a whole can be accomplished by expanding group discrimination beyond the construct of race to include skin color, religion, politics, gender, and other aspects that are equally significant. In order to accomplish such a feat and enhance knowledge, and reduce the threats of ignorance, scholars and other concerned citizens must additionally concede the ecological fact that all groups have assets, capacities, and strengths as well as weaknesses. Since many of these are derived from colonial legacies, particularly among people of color, all must considerably increase their information base. Furthermore, as more contacts occur between world populations, scholars are confronted by discrimination issues and perspectives that have not required consideration in the past [32]. They are thus challenged in future research to develop creative constructs less confined to Eurocentric and/or colonial traditions. That consideration must remain consistent and viable without interruption to sustain the emerging world order.

Therefore, the psychological colonization of victim populations exceeds mere political subject matter that is passively reflected in Western postcolonial culture, scholarship, and institutions. It is not representative and expressive of some overt nefarious Western plot to subjugate people of color. It is, rather, the manufacture of geopolitical awareness via the West as the dominant somatic ideal [19]. Psychological colonization is an elaboration not only of a basic somatic distinction but also of a series of assumptions by such means as scholarly endeavor, philosophical construction, and psychological analysis. It not only creates but also maintains the present postcolonial world order. It is, above all, a discourse that is, by no means, indirect. It maintains a corresponding relationship with political forces, which ultimately drives Western civilization. It manifests as psychological colonization in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to an effective degree by political, intellectual, cultural, and idealized criteria that are ultimately relevant to victim-group discrimination today.

Finally, aside from colonization, discrimination assumed less often perpetrated by victim groups is not extraneous to their ecological reality [33]. Their role in the perpetuation of discrimination must be acknowledged, including the decoding of Eurocentric concepts, illumination of hegemonic inequalities, and other moves to intellectual discourse. Through the prescripts of struggle, their efforts have not been without precedent but, in fact, endure as a continuum wedded to the larger blueprint of knowledge. Scholars, Eurocentrists included, must then become cognizant of their unique role: that of advocating for more accurate population facts [34]. Enabled by the study of victim-group discrimination, these scholars will contribute to an effort to purge colonial influence from the American intellectual ethos. The outcome will nurture the evolution of knowledge, despite the implications of psychological colonization among victim-group Americans; that having not occurred sustains racism in the modern era as the next most significant dynamic in the perpetuation of victim-group discrimination.

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