

Reading Response

Black Skin White Masks, The Fact of Blackness

In chapter 5 of the book *Black Skin White Masks* Frantz Fanon, states that white society ignores the existence of black people and their presence imposes the role of a race ambassador on every man of color. All of their actions will speak for the black race, if they are good it is because they are behaving like white man and if they are bad they reinforce the negative stereotypes imposed on them. This responsibility puts the black man on a constant state of awareness in which their bodies are controlled by reason instead of unconscious will. This state prohibits them from ever being in a natural state in the presence of white man and creates a separate meta-narrative for the black man to live in separate from the white. This unnatural state of living in the third person makes objects out of their bodies, which in turn makes them susceptible to the complex of inferiority.

Frantz Fanon then creates a parallel between black and Jewish prosecution stating that the mechanism of decimation is the same and that when Jewish people are discriminated so are black people, however unlike Jewish people, the black man doesn't have slightest chance of disguising himself and is discriminated from birth to death. This inescapable prejudice is unnoticed in white culture in which white people are all individuals and owners of their own personality however if a black physician ever makes a medical mistake his race is to blame and it will fuel the prejudice and the separation of races.

In order to save himself from objectifying his own self the black man embraces the history and culture of his race and explores the lifestyle of his ancestress allowing him to have his own voice and live in 1st person. This perspective shift however doesn't grant the black man freedom for his new self is still linked to his heritage and their practices, which might conflict with his true hidden personality. In order for the black man to become free he then rationalizes what makes him superior than the white man. He looks at white culture as one that lost touch with their world, insensible to the mystery of faith and detached from their bodies. He then realizes civilization and technology thrived in Congo and Egypt independent from Europe's empires, to his eyes white man have a corrupted soul and if they are the perpetrators of social injustice it is because of their inherent inferiority granting the black man to look at racism with the boldness to voice this injustice "Get used to me, I am not getting used to anyone." (Pg. 100) The man of color now is a symbol for humanity and it is used as such in white society.

The black man then sees the world as it is, he understands himself and the world around him, he is more aware of his minority and societal exclusion generating a fear of his own suicidal thoughts for he is under armed and outnumbered "Yesterday, awakening to the world, I saw the sky turn upon itself utterly and wholly. I wanted to rise, but the disemboweled silence fell back upon me, its wings paralyzed. Without responsibility, straddling Nothingness and Infinity, I began to weep." (Pg. 108)