

Hidden History

The Unsung Saga of the Black Man

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Origin Of Color Prejudice

As followers of the VOICE's "Hidden History" feature are aware, the works of the late historian-anthropologist J. A. Rogers has been a prime research source. No other author-historian has delved as deeply as Rogers did in tracing the history and contributions of the Black Man.

The authors of "Hidden History" are of a mind that readers would be interested in Rogers' findings on the origin of color prejudice. His report is given here in installments due to its length. Although Rogers' research resources are not given in these series, the depth of his research is indicated by the fact that the footnotes on this piece are as lengthy as the treatise on the Origin of Color Prejudice.

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PART I

"THE TWO varieties of humanity which have intermixed the most and longest are so-called Negro and Caucasian. There is some evidence that they mated in prehistoric times; that a Negro, or Negroid, people inhabited Europe when it was joined to Africa and was still tropical. As for the historic period, or about eight thousand years there is abundant evidence they did, especially in the Americas since Columbus.

"In so-called racial intermixture there are usually two forces; exogamy or out-breeding and endogamy, or inbreeding. In colonial lands, the first is called miscegenation; the second, race purity, in those lands as in all lands where one's partner in marriage is not selected by his parents, like and dislike generally determine one's choice of a mate. Which qualities attract or repel are quite beyond precise definition, so much depends upon the individual, regardless of race, caste or religion. As Shakespeare said:

'Strange is it that our bloods
Of colour, weight and heat, poured all together
Would quite confound distinction, yet stand off
In differences so mighty.'

"SOME OF these 'mighty' differences are not all physical. They are economic, social, educational and religious, also. Any of the latter can operate as strongly as the racial, which is supposed in colonial, or former colonial lands, to be strongest of all objections. The peculiar thing about miscegenation is that some of its most vociferous objectors practise it.

"In certain colonial and former colonial lands as in the United States, South Africa, and the West Indies, color of skin, (which is accepted as normal in Europe, where the population is white, or Central Africa where it is black) is a 'mighty' difference, influencing not only mating but life on some of its most unexpected phases. For instance, the matter of the blonde and the brunette among white women. When one reads in American papers of a man having an affair with some gorgeous girl, she is always blonde. When brunettes are mentioned it is almost with some sort of apology. Is this depreciation of the white brunette an extension of the prejudice against the Negro's color? Whiteness of skin has become a symbol of purity, goodness, and fine Christian living. 'Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow,' runs the hymn. Thus the more bleached the skin, the more bleached the character---Negro albinos, not included, of course.

"BUT WHATEVER be the reason the blondes are raved over in America, and the brunettes aren't. However, in the Scandinavian lands, where as one visitor remarked, 'Blondes are a dime a thousand,' blonde skin and hair count for no more than does black among the blacks of Central Africa or yellow among the Chinese. Unmixed blacks in Scandinavia, I have noticed, attract attention and are usually welcome. They

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and lived with in battle.

Them slums are worse 'cause they are older. They got more mileage on 'em, baby. They are all wore out--they are dirty--they are dangerous, and full of disease. They bug Bro, baby, but bad.

Smart as Whitey is with shootin' Cats to the moon and all that jazz, and, much bread as he spends researching about health, long life and freedom from disease, he breeds danger and disease in every single one of his cities, and damn near everyone of his towns. He keeps his Harlems to bring desperation to Black Folks and danger to all folks. Whitey should have to live with us so he could know.

Whitey is still in the lead but he ain't tryin' to lead the way to remove conditions that cause riots.

WE AIN'T sayin' that Charlie don't like peace but he seems always to be more concerned with being cool than he does with being fair and just.

Whitey just won't let himself dig the truth. The truth is that justice will keep the cool, and blindness to justice will bring a long, hot summer.

It seems like Charlie thinks that Bro should spill his blood half way 'round the world so that Vietnamese people can enjoy the fruits of democracy. But, he don't think that Bro should spill any blood at home where he ain't never tasted them sweet things in his own democracy.

Maybe Whitey don't think that freedom at home is worth fighting for. We got news for Whitey, baby. We ain't mad at them Viet Congs --they ain't the ones that are messing with our freedom. Charlie is guilty of that, but he don't think we should fight about it, he wants us to wait until he is ready to give it to us a crumb at a time.

HOW COME them Viets can't wait for their freedom if Bro has to wait for his? When is Whitey going to learn baby, learn?

It better be soon 'cause we can't keep our cool much longer. It's getting hotter all the time, baby.

offer some variety to the color scheme. In certain villages in the West Indies where the people are dark I have noticed similar welcome given to a white visitor for the same reason.

"Is color in sexual selection a factor only in colonial and former colonial lands? Evidently not. It probably goes back to the time when variety of skin coloring began to appear in the human race, or many hundreds of thousands of years ago. Since the first human beings were all of the same color it is clear that difference of color of skin is an important factor in human evolution. All human beings, except albinos, have some degree of color in their skins.

"Another question. When and where was color first used as a social, economic and political factor? Many who have given thought to that say it started with the invasion of the dark men's lands -- Asia, Africa, America -- by the whites in the fifteenth century. Lord Cromer, distinguished statesman, thought however, that the question had never been competently examined. 'I am not aware,' he said, 'that any competent scholar has ever examined into the question of the stage in history at which difference of color... acquired the importance it now possesses as a social and political factor.' I think he is right. If it has been done I have not seen it.

"The first recorded instance of color prejudice I have been able to find is in India of some five thousand years ago when the Aryas, or Aryans, invaded the valley of the Indus and found there a black people --- the Dasysus, or Dasyus. In any case we find very clear evidences of it in Aryan writings. In the Rig-Veda (Book IX, Hymn, 42) Indra, their national god, is depicted as 'Blowing away with supernatural might from earth and from the heavens the black skin which Indra hates.' Hymn 42, tells of 'Driving the black skin far away.' The blacks were called 'Anasahs; (noseless people). Book V, Hymn 29, tells how Indra 'slew the flat-nosed barbarians.'

"India's caste system was based on color. The word varna (caste) literally means 'color.' Arya varna (white skin); Krishna varna (black skin).

"The Aryans of India,' says the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, 'prided themselves on their fairer skins and more aquiline features and held in derision the black color and flatter physiognomies of the aborigines, regarded them

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ABA Endorses Pending Rights Legislation

HONOLULU - (NPI)--The American Bar Association, for the first time, has endorsed pending civil rights legislation. At its 90th annual convention, it urged Congress to enact bills designed to eliminate racial or economic discrimination in choosing juries--one of the key features in President Johnson's 1967 civil rights package. The ABA's policy-making House of Delegates took the unprecedented action as its convention closed.

THIS WEEK IN NEGRO HISTORY

AN "NPI" FEATURE

- Aug. 24, 1847 Independence of Liberia, first black nation to be founded by freed American Negro slaves, proclaimed.
- Aug. 24, 1854 John V. DeGrasse, Boston physician, admitted to the Massachusetts Medical Society. He served as assistant surgeon during the Civil War.
- Aug. 25, 1928 Althea Gibson, tennis champion now developing a golfing career, was born in Sumter, S.C.
- Aug. 26, 1839 The ship Amistad was brought into Montauk, L.I., by Africans who revolted against their captors. They were freed by High Court.
- Aug. 26, 1949 Anti-Negro, anti-Semitic riots at Peekskill, N.Y.
- Aug. 26, 1852 Charles Sumner made his famous "Freedom" speech.
- Aug. 27, 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debate at Freeport, Ill.
- Aug. 27, 1915 Carter G. Woodson organized Association for the Study of Negro Life and History at Chicago.
- Aug. 27, 1919 American Federation of Labor convention, at Atlantic City, votes to abolish jim crow.
- Aug. 28, 1955 Fourteen-year-old Emmett Louis Till of Chicago was kidnapped in Money, Miss., and his body was found four days later in the Tallahatchie river. Half-brothers J.W. Milam and Roy Bryant, whites accused of the kidnapping and murder, were tried by an all-white, all-male jury and acquitted. Till, vacationing in Mississippi with relatives, allegedly wolf-whistled and made "insulting remarks" to Bryant's wife, 21, in the Bryant grocery store in Money.
- Aug. 28, 1881 J. Finley Wilson, the late grand supreme exalted ruler of the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World, born in Nashville, Tenn. He headed the Elks for 30 years. Some 200,000 Freedom Marchers converged upon the nation's capital in an unprecedented display for equal and civil rights.
- Aug. 28, 1963 The late Dinah Washington, "Queen of the Blues," was born in Tuscaloosa, Ala. She died Dec. 14, 1963.
- Aug. 20, 1901 Roy Wilkins, NAACP official, was born.

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