

**EUROPEAN MODERNITY'S REPRESENTATION OF AFRICA, AFRICANS,
AFRICAN AMERICANS AND ASIANS IN ITS IMPERIALISTIC EXPLORATIONS
AND COLONIZATION**

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Abstract

In order to justify their annexation and subsequent subjugation and colonization of Africa, of the Americas and of Asia during Western Modernity, European powers had to depict Africa in a way that supported their missions. First, Africa had to be portrayed as a savage continent that needed the benevolence of the white man in order to attain the civilization. Second, Africa and the Americas had to be depicted as virgin feminine lands that could provide all the raw materials that Modern Europe needed for its industrial take-off. Third, one of the characteristics that was used in that project was to present the African man in general, and the black man in particular, as a dangerous beast that is always in hot pursuit of the white woman's virginity. The black man was also portrayed as a perpetual child who could never achieve maturity and was simply fit for obeying the orders of the Westerner. As a consequence, the black man in Africa and in America had to be kept under constant check. This paper examines the strategies that Modern Europe used in its subjugation of the territories that it needed to possess for its own survival. It shows how the raw materials needed for the industrial, economic and social survival of Modern Europe were aggressively and cunningly gathered taken from Africa by European powers. The paper refers to the specific cases of Africa and America, and also to Asia to some extent.

Keywords : Western Modernity, Eurocentrism, Stereotypes, DOM/TOM, Postmodernity, Feminization, Sexualization, Subjugation, Apologia

1. Introduction

Modern Europe devised a series of negative stereotypes that she associated with Africa, the Americans and Asia in order to justify her appropriation, pillage, colonization and ne-colonization of those territories. This article takes a critical look at those stereotypes as they are exposed in some of the racist European texts, and the article also shows how those stereotypes are treated in more recent European and American movies. The last part of the article focuses on the fact that those stereotypes designed by Western Modernity have been embraced by some Francophone Caribbeans through the DOM/TOM French administration policy that makes of Francophone Caribbean territories a "continuation" of mainland France. As a corollary, most Caribbean Francophones affiliate themselves with Europeans and distance themselves from continental Africans, whom they perceive as savages.

2. A Survey of the Main Modern European Derogatory Stereotypes on Blacks and Asians

Western Modernity reduced Africa to a certain number of stereotypes which occur – although sometimes in disguised forms – in European writings, in some African American writings, and in most of the Caribbean Francophone writings: Africans are conceived as savage, the African man is represented as a boy to underline a constant immaturity, the African woman is represented as a servant to the white woman, the exotic African woman is represented also as a sex object, the African man is also represented as hypersexual, always in pursuit of the white woman's body, and the African continent itself was portrayed as a defenseless feminine entity full of natural resources to be appropriated by the white European man. In *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French*, Christopher L. Miller reveals how Western Modernity produced flawed and often self-contradictory views of Africa:

Utterances on Africa tend to be hints rather than statements, hearsay rather than direct evidence, allegory rather than realism. Millennia before Conrad's "unreadable report" in *Heart of Darkness*, a tradition without a beginning had been established and perpetuated. Texts on Africa were severely limited in number until the nineteenth century and tended to repeat each other in a sort of cannibalistic, plagiarizing intertextuality. Pliny repeats Herodotus who repeats Homer, just as later French and English writers will copy each other and even copy the Ancients." (Miller, 1985: 6).

In his work *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, Count Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, who is dubbed by Jean Paul Sartre as "the father of racism" (Miller, 1985: 16), outlined a classification of the races, with Blacks at the bottom, the yellow race in the middle, and Whites at the top. Gobineau equates Blacks with wild beasts:

"La variété mélanienne est la plus humble et gît au bas de l'échelle. Le caractère d'animalité empreint dans son bassin lui impose sa destinée dès l'instant de sa conception. Elle ne sortira jamais du cercle intellectuel le plus restreint. Ce n'est cependant pas une brute pure et simple, que ce nègre à front étroit et fuyant, qui porte, dans la partie moyenne de son crâne, les indices de certaines énergies grossièrement puissantes. Si ces facultés pensantes sont médiocres ou même nulles, il possède dans le désir et par suite dans la volonté, une intensité souvent terrible..." (Gobineau, 1855: 205-206).

"The Melanian variety is the humblest one and lives at the bottom of the scale. The animalistic character etched in his loins imposes his destiny from the minute of his conception. His fate holds him within the most limited intellectual scope. However, he is not a pure and simple brute, this Negro with a narrow and sloped forehead, who bears in the middle section of his brain the signs of certain grossly powerful energies. If these thinking faculties are poor or even null, he is possessed, by desire and by his will, of an often terrible intensity..." (Gobineau, 1855: 205-206; translation of the author).

Eurocentrism also eroticized and feminized the areas that Europe subjugated and exploited in order to tap the raw materials which were necessary for modern Europe's economic take off. In *Empire*, Negri and Hardt explain how the annexation of colonized territories was the sine qua non for the economic survival of modern Europe under the system of capitalism:

"Capitalism is "the first mode of economy which is unable to exist by itself, which needs other economic systems as a medium and a soil". Capital is an organism that cannot sustain itself without constantly looking beyond its boundaries, feeding off its external environment. Its outside is essential." (Negri & Hardt, 2000: 224).

Although the appropriation and the exploitation of colonial areas by modern Europe was necessary for the survival of Europe, it was also a risky one, due to the fact that these areas were unknown to Europeans. Europe had to "produce the non-European world" (Henry Morton

Stanley's *How I Found Livingstone* thoroughly delves into that European activity) through a discourse which could erase the European anxiety and belittle, infantilize and eroticize the colonized lands, as Peter Hulme observes in his reference to the colonization of the Caribbean in *Colonial Encounters*:

"Discursively, the Caribbean is a special place, partly because of its primacy in the encounter between Europe and America, civilization and savagery, and partly because it has been seen as the location, physically and etymologically, of the practice that, more than any other, is the mark of unregenerate savagery – cannibalism –" (Hulme, 1986: 3).

Beyond the depiction of colonized areas as primitive and cannibal lands, Modern Europe also had to create some myths asserting the superiority of the Western culture, such as the myth of the colonized females' total admiration for the culture and the language of the European male. The myth of Pocahontas's love for John Smith, described by Hulme in *Colonial Encounters*, belongs to this tradition of justifications of the colonial enterprise. According to Smith's narrative, Pocahontas was smitten by him; as a consequence she "got his head in her arms, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death" (id.: 3). On the basis of this story, a myth was elaborated, which translates the princess' act into a recognition of the superiority of the English culture, asserted both by her role as a mediator between the native Americans and the settlers, and by her embrace of Christianity. Smith's Pocahontas story is undermined by the fact that he is also the author of another story, in which he was saved in an exactly similar fashion, by Charatza Tragabigzanda, a Turkish damsel living in Constantinople. In *The Life of Captain John Smith*, W. Gilmore Simms recalls some of the salient points of that story:

The personal appearance of Smith was in his favor; and his address soon awakened in the fair Charatza a degree of interest which was not allowed to escape his notice. To what extent he availed himself of the discovery, his own modesty forbids us to know. That he won her affection was unquestionable. (Simms, 1846: 74).

Clearly, in his early seventeenth-century accounts of his travels, Smith was already establishing an ideological pattern, or perhaps invoking a pattern that already existed. The projection of the native woman's sexual availability for the colonizer can therefore be classified as a part of the subjugating narrative of the colonizer, and that subjugation often leads to the feminization of the

colonized land itself. In other words, both the colonized woman and the land where she lives are turned into submissive entities, whose bodies the male colonizer can access at anytime and abuse, without any remorse. The illustration of the "feminization" of the colonial land appears in the imagery of the "virgin land", which was associated by the English settlers with the New World, and also in the name of that new land; as Hulme points out, "America" is simply the feminized version of the name of the European cartographer, who attempted to depict the area in an early map, Amerigo Vespucci (Hulme, 1986: 8-9).

3. The Hottentot Venus Scandal or the Climax of the "Beastialization" of the Black Woman's Body

The "Hottentot Venus" scandal provides a strong illustration of the exploitation of the black female body by Modern Europe. In 1810, a twenty year old South African slave woman named Saartjie Baartman was taken by an English ship surgeon from Cape Town in South Africa to London, and then to Paris, to be displayed naked in the streets and in the circuses to European audiences. She was nicknamed "The Hottentot Venus" because of her oversized private parts. In *Discours sur les révolutions du globe*, Georges Cuvier describes the results of his initial "observations" of Saartjie Baartman:

Her movements had something of a brusqueness and unexpectedness, reminiscent of those of a monkey. In particular, she had a way of pushing out her lips in the same manner we have observed in the Orangutan. Her personality was happy, her memory good, after several weeks she recognized a person that she had only seen one time... she spoke tolerably good Dutch, which she learnt at the Cape... also knew a little English... was beginning to say a few words of French; she danced in the fashion of her country and played with a fairly good ear upon a little instrument she called a Jew's Harp. Necklaces, belts, pieces of colored glass, and other savage trumperies seemed very much to please her; but that which flattered her taste above all else was brandy (Cuvier, 1864: 241).

Cuvier's description – which is presented as a scientific one – abounds with associations between black femaleness, bestiality, and primitiveness. He represents Bartmann as a learned and domesticated beast by comparing her to an orangutan. In *Black Venus*, T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting reflects on Cuvier's description of Bartmann:

He reduces her facility with languages, her good memory, and musical inclinations to a sort of simianlike mimicry of the European race. By the nineteenth century, the ape, the monkey, and orangutan had become the interchangeable counterparts, the next of kin, to Blacks in pseudoscientific and literary texts. Under the ever so watchful eyes and the pen of the naturalist, the master text on the black female body is created; the light of the white maleness illumines this Dark Continent. (Sharpley-Whiting, 1999: 24).

After Bartmann's death, her body was dissected and exhibited at the Musée de l'Homme; she was held up as the "proof" of the African woman's primitive sexual appetite. "She arrived on England's shores", Sadiah Qureshi writes:

within this traffic of animals, plants and people destined for display as objects representing colonial expansion and as means of economic gain; she served as both an imperial success and a prized specimen of the "Hottentot" (Qureshi, 2004: 235).

Western Europe's representations and treatments of Africa were often ostensibly designed to entertain and educate European audiences, but they also served another purpose: to justify the enslavement and subjugation of Africa and of Africans. Thus, a veritable catalogue of the racist stereotypes on Africa was on display in the Berlin conference in 1884, when all available resources had to be used to explain the inferiority of the Africans, an argument which in its turn was used to justify the need for Europe to take over the continent and "civilize" it.

4. The Mercantile Ambitions of Europe: the Truth behind the Apologia

Europe developed an important interest in Africa because European countries needed raw materials and new markets for their industrial production. As Marx and Engels write in *The German Ideology*, the class which has the means of material production at its disposal also has control over the means of mental production; the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it. In conformity with Thomas Richard's description of advertising in *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England* as "the capitalist form of representation" or as the "culture of capitalism" (Richard, 1990, cited in Ramamurthy, 2003: 11), some European experts in imperial expansion like Henry Morton Stanley pointed out clearly that the empire could only

be won through the expansion of commodity culture (Ramamurthy, 2003: 45). In other words, advertising is presented as the cultural representation of imperialism. Once the link between advertising and imperialism has been established, we can therefore understand why Africans and Asians became associated with derogatory stereotypes in the commercial advertisements of the 19th century in Europe: the stereotypical representations of those populations were the core belief of European imperialism, and the most adequate communication tool that imperialism possesses is advertising. In accordance with the ideology of imperialism, black men were represented as children in advertisements, as lacking maturity, and as incapable of independent decisions and enterprises like managing one's life or ruling one's country. Anandi Ramamurthy's *Imperial Persuaders* examines some of the salient features of the representation of the African woman in European advertisements. She is represented as an exotic sexual creature, or as a shabbily dressed servant, who raises no sexual desire. She is implicitly contrasted to the Western white woman, who possesses all the opposites of the traits of the black woman, whose job is to serve the white woman. Here is Ramamurthy's close examination of an advertisement from 1903 of Plantol Soap, a product of Lever Brothers:

Visually, the advertisement poses the black woman in the position of a servant offering the commodity to the viewer. Her beauty and sexuality are also mocked with her hair disheveled and her clothes falling off her shoulders, not to suggest her body as one to evoke desire but rather to suggest her savagery. The advertisement was paired with that of a traditional image of a white woman bathing. Although she also offers the soap up for the viewers to use, it is positioned to suggest her own consumption too. Her stereotypical image signifying purity, femininity and availability is a format mocked in the image of the black woman, not to question the codes with which women are represented but in order to degrade the black woman (Ramamurthy, 2003:54).

Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* also exposes salient representations of the African woman as the anti-thesis of the Western woman, but in a slightly different way. The African woman (represented by Kurtz's African mistress) is portrayed as a caricature of savage eroticism, and she also raises fear and some degree of respect. Marlow is scared of her, and he respects her in a way that he does not respect Kurtz's intended. Marlow also considers the white women sinister (like the "fates" in the company headquarters), or naïve, like his own aunt and Kurtz's betrothed. Kurtz's African mistress is simply portrayed as a sexual or sexualized ghost, "a wild and gorgeous apparition of a woman" (Conrad, 1902: 99), whose exotic nature appears through the

numerous necklaces, beads and charms that adorn her body. The main contrast between this anonymous woman and Kurtz's European "Intended" lies in the fact that the latter has a voice, which enables her to communicate with Marlow and inquire about the last moments of her fiancé in the Congo. The dominating impression here is that Kurtz's black goddess, who is completely passive, unknown and never utters a word, is nonetheless more desirable sexually than his European "Intended", who looks more like a fading old girl:

She came forward, all in black, with a pale head, floating towards me in the dusk. She was mourning. It was more than a year since his death, more than a year since the news came; she seemed as though she would remember and mourn forever. She took both my hands in hers and murmured, "I had heard you were coming". I noticed she was not very young- I mean not girlish. She had a mature capacity for fidelity, for belief, for suffering. (Conrad, 1902: 118-119).

We would like to mention here that Asians were also victims of Western Modernity's construction of the "others", or of the non-Westerners, or of the Orientals, the category in which Africans and Asians were classified. Daniel Defoe's *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress* shows the reduction of Asian women (represented in the book by a Turkish slave) to exotic sexual people, and the imperialistic intentions of Modern Europe are revealed in *Roxana*. Defoe's protagonist Roxana, a European prostitute, becomes very famous by buying and wearing the clothes, which belonged to Turkish girls, who have been forced into slavery. Roxana recounts her acquisition of these quasi-magical garments:

The *Maltese* man of war had, it seems, taken a *Turkish* Vessel going from *Constantinople* to *Alexandria*, in which were some Ladies bound for *Grand Cairo* in *Egypt*; and as the ladies were made Slaves, so their fine Cloaths were thus expos'd; and with this *Turkish* Slave, I bought the rich Cloaths too: The Dress was extraordinarily fine indeed, I had bought it as a Curiosity, having never seen the like. (Defoe, 1724/1964: 173-174).

By wearing the cloths of the enslaved Turkish women and performing Turkish dances, Roxana, the Western woman, will always be chosen as the most beautiful of all the women dancers. This shows both the exotic and the erotic values that European Modernity associates with Asian culture and the Asian woman; the same associations are also projected onto the

African woman. This phenomenon, seen in an early modern text like John Smith's or Defoe's, persists through the era of high modernity (as in Conrad's text) and into postmodernity.

The stereotypical representations of Africa, Africans and Asians in Western Modernity led to the creation of other important stereotypes: the white woman being the embodiment of beauty, desire, preciousness and purity, there had to be an opposite to those values, which were dear to the West and a feeling of insecurity and danger had to be created around the traits of the Western woman in order to justify her qualities, and the black man was the exact character who could play that role. Previously portrayed as a docile and innocent child, the black man is finally stereotyped in modern writings as the dangerous one, who was always longing for the virginity of the white woman. The black man therefore becomes a phallic symbol, as Frantz Fanon writes in *Black Skin White Masks*.

5. *Jungle Fever* (1991), *Ethnic Notions* (1986), *Chocolat* (1988) and *Diva* (1981): Three Movie that Revisit Modern Europe's Portrayal of the Dark Race (Blacks and Asians)

Several movies have captured that transformation of the black man into a constant danger for Western civilization in general and the white woman in particular. Spike Lee's *Jungle Fever* (1991) and Marlon Riggs's *Ethnic Notions* (1986) engage the complexities associated with the relationships between the black man and the white woman. The first movie dwells on the taboo around a biracial relationship, between a successful Black married architect, Flipper, and his Italian secretary Angie. The second one traces the deeply rooted stereotypes, which have fuelled anti-black prejudice in Jim Crow America, and it allocates a special room to the representation of the black man as a potential rapist of the white woman. Claire Denis's *Chocolat* (1988) deserves a special place in this discussion because it captures almost all the complexities around the relations between Africa and 19th century Europe, Blacks and Whites and tensions around sex and race. In the movie, a French young lady named France returns to Cameroon, the country where she lived as a child with her parents in the 1950s, where her father was a colonial administrator. *Chocolat* is the recollection or narration of France's experience growing up in Cameroon and it emphasizes the sexual tension between Protée, the black male servant of the family, and Aimée, France's mother. The attraction between them constitutes a real "push and

pull", with a lot of attraction and suppression from both of them, especially from Aimée, since such a relationship would have been an abomination in the eyes of the whole community. The white woman's desire for the black man is clearly illustrated in it. So *Chocolat* as a movie demonstrates that the "beast-like" nature of the black male often led, in more recent eras or this postmodern era to the attraction of the white woman to the black man. Aimée's desire for the black male servant Prothée can be explained by several factors: the urge to taste the defended fruit, or it can also be justified by the fact her husband, the "*commandant*", the local French administrator, was always absent, travelling inside the country in colonial Cameroon. Aimée cannot control her desire in *Chocolat*; she betrays her feelings and emotions when she makes a pass and he squelches it immediately. The fact that Protée, the black male servant, does not succumb to Aimée's attempts to seduce him could be explained or justified by several reasons. One of them might be that he is married and sticks to the traditional values of fidelity in marriage in traditional Cameroonian society. His behavior could also be due to the fact that he is afraid of the consequences that such a relationship might heap on him. He will be accused of a double crime: a black man having a relationship with a white woman, and a servant sleeping with his boss's wife.

Chocolat also succeeds in rendering the racial and sexual stereotypes associated with the white woman and the black man through an allegorical symbolism. The young white girl, who returns to Cameroon to revisit the place of her childhood is named "France", reminding us that Europe remains the center of beauty, leisure and wealth, since beside all her physical traits she could also afford the expenses of such an exotic trip. The black male servant's name, Protée, also confirms the stereotype of the black hypersexual man. Protée seems to be a version of Proteus, the emasculated yet hypersexual Greek god, the sea bull at the center of the harem. One of Proteus's characteristics in Greek mythology is that he is constantly changing and adopting new shapes and forms. Like Proteus, Protée is both hypersexual and emasculated: he looks attractive to Aimée because he is muscular, strong and dark but he does not become the sexual partner whom she expected him to be. The stereotype of the black man as a boy – a feature which also confirms the mutative or protean nature associated with Protée, a man who is also treated as a child – is one of the striking features of the movie; France the little girl is the only white person who interacts (beyond giving orders) with Protée the servant. Claire Denis ponders the incongruity of that alliance:

I had the feeling that a boy, a guy who works for a French family in my memory would only have contact with the children. He was treated himself, being a man who is not called a man, but a boy - the only normal relationship is with the children. I thought of that as something important in that perverse relationship (Denirs, interviewed in *The Guardian*, June 2000 online source).

In *Diva*, Jean Jacques Beineix presents the aftermath or repercussion of the Western European racist views we have analyzed so far, on the white European men. For the first time, a work of art shows the Caucasian man falling in love with the Black and Asian woman. Instead of sticking to the prescribed romance between the white male and the white female Jules, a young French white postman is obsessed with Cynthia Hawkins, a beautiful African American opera singer. He attends her performance, secretly and illegally records it, and steals a gown from her dressing room. In danger from Taiwanese gangsters seeking the Hawkins tape, Jules seeks refuge with his new friends, the mysterious bohemian Serge Gorodish and his young muse Alba (another dark woman). Meanwhile a romantic relationship between Jules and Cynthia develops, emphasized by the piano instrumental 'Promenade Sentimentale' of Vladimir Cosma as they walk around Paris early one morning. Jules ultimately holds her and the two dance together. This movie presents white European men who flee the routine, strength, resistance and worry that the Caucasian woman displays everyday, and they tend to look for beauty, art, comfort, trust and friendship among dark women. Another interpretation of the *Diva* could be that although it is set in a postmodern context, it continues the sexualization or eroticization of the black woman and the Asian woman by Western societies. Cynthia the black woman and Alba the Asian woman are the center of all the love and the attention of two French white men: Jules and Gorodish. Unfortunately Westerners are not the only ones to believe those stereotypes. Some Blacks still defend and uphold them as the literature shows, and those Blacks are the Francophone Caribbeans.

6. The Caribbean Blacks' Permanent Enslavement by Eurocentrism

As a preliminary note, it should be reminded that the geography of France includes European and overseas parts. Within this article, the former, in its reduced form (e.g., without

Corsica), will be called "mainland France" in order to preserve the dialectical articulation between "mainland France" and "France" as a whole. Due to the tight hold that France had on its colonies in the Caribbean, through the policy of DOM/TOM (*Département Français d'Outre Mer/Territoire Français d'Outre Mer*), which means 'French Overseas Territories', the Francophone Caribbean felt superior to the overage Black on the African continent or in America. As a result, the Francophone Caribbeans keep identifying themselves with French white people and, by doing that, they distance themselves from Blacks. The French assimilation policy in the Caribbean was more debilitating and alienating than their colonial policy in continental Africa: that explains the Francophone Caribbean's adherence to France, and to Western values in general. In *Black Skin White Masks*, Frantz Fanon helps us to understand the deeply seated self-hatred and assimilation that inhabit the Francophone Caribbean when he portrays Caribbean black children saying that they like summer because during that season they run in the fields and come back home with rosy cheeks. Fanon continues the same debate further in *Black Skin White Masks* through the case of the Black Caribbean watching a movie, in which Tarzan lives among native black savages. The author writes that if the Francophone Caribbean watches that movie on his island, he will associate himself with Tarzan and will look at the native savages as continental Africans. But if he watches the same movie in mainland France (according to Fanon) in a white French audience, the Black Caribbean will be surprised to see that these white French associate him with the native savages. This partly explains why the Francophone Caribbean still perpetuates Western Europe's views and treatment of its colonies and that considerably mines the relations between continental Africans and the Francophone Caribbeans. As it is shown in my book titled *Intersecting PanAfricanisms*, African Americans (that I call the Anglophone Diaspora) interact and identify with each other (despite misunderstandings and frictions once in a while) more than what happens between the continental Africans (both Francophones and Anglophones) and the Francophone Diaspora (Blacks in the Caribbean). In other words, the Francophone Caribbeans see themselves as Whites or at least as people who are superior to Blacks.

Several Caribbean Francophone novels conform to these stereotypical representations of Africa and Africans constructed by Modern Europe. René Maran's *Un homme pareil aux autres* is one of such works. The novel presents Africa as a jungle and it also eroticizes the African man and the African woman. The representation of Africa as a primitive land in the works of the

Caribbean Francophone writers is the consequence of the education system that the (white) French brought to their Caribbean territories, and it is also the result of the fact that the French colonial administration needed some colonial administrators, whom mainland France could not provide. That led the French government to use the service of the Francophone Caribbeans overseas for the administration of the colonial territories. As a result, the Francophone Caribbeans found themselves ruling over African populations, on behalf of the French colonial master. In René Maran's *Un homme pareil aux autres*, Jean Veneuse, a Martinican, is urged to reach his administrative post in colonial Africa as soon as possible, because there is a lack of administrators, and he portrays the ship on which he travels to Africa as a "un cercueil"/"a coffin" (Maran, 1947: 16; translation of the author); its destination is "un sale pays où l'on s'ennuie à mort"/"a dirty country where one gets bored to death" (id.: 33; idem). The contrast that the book poses between life in Africa and life in Europe is as Eurocentric as Conrad's representation of Africa in *Heart of Darkness*. *Un homme pareil aux autres* associates Europe with books, sport and healthy life, and it associates Africa with ferocious animals and coconut trees: "les livres et le sport – escrime et rugby – parmi les cocotiers, le sable, les bêtes féroces, les chameaux, les fonctionnaires coloniaux et un tas de bestiaux de même farine"/"books and sport – escrime and rugby – among coconut trees, the sand, wild animals, camels, colonial civil servants, and a whole bunch of beasts of the same kind" (ibid.: 32; idem). European education and the elevation of the Francophone Caribbean to the level of colonial administrator contributed to the negative representations of Africa in the works of Caribbean Francophone writers, and it also contributed to the mistrust between Africans and the Caribbeans. The Africans saw in the Caribbean an ally to the French colonizer. In *Identité Antillaise*, Julie Lirus analyses the Francophone Caribbean's identity crisis by conducting a clinical study among some Antillean students living in Paris. Her study contributes in a significant way to the clarification and understanding of the distance and the hostility which exist between continental Africans and Antilleans, or Francophone Caribbeans in general. Some of the conclusions that Julie Lirus arrived at were the aggressivity with which Caribbeans were trying to escape "blackness", in general, and Africa, in particular. She points out that in his effort to run away from "blackness", the Antillean man develops a "negrophobia":

"En associant tout ce qui est pouvoir, richesse, puissance, à ce qui est blanc (échelle de valeur imposée), elle l'a rendu "négrophobe". A force de lui montrer qu'il est important socialement d'être blanc, elle lui a appris à avoir en horreur son épiderme foncé et à apprécier un individu en fonction de sa pâleur épidermique." (Lirus, 1979: 31).

"By associating everything that is power and wealth to whiteness (the yard stick requires it), he (the Antillean) developed "negrophobia". He has been taught over and over again that it is socially important to be white and that led the Antillean to see horror in his dark skin, and to judge individuals, based on the lightness of their skin." (Lirus, 1979: 31; translation of the author).

In *Identité Antillaise*, the distance between the African and the Antillean is illustrated by the use of the term "étranger"/"foreigner" that the Antilleans use to refer to the Africans: "Qualitativement, les Antillais étudiants rejettent aussi l'Africain, surtout les femmes. Ce rejet est illustré par l'usage du mot étranger"/ "Qualitatively, the Antillean students, especially the women also reject Africa. That rejection is illustrated by the use of the word foreigner" (Lirus, 1979: 95; translation of the author). Lirus recalls a conversation with two students, who categorically reject all connections with Africa: "Nous sommes différents en tout, c'est pour moi un étranger avec lequel je ne cherche même pas à voir ce qui nous rapproche" says one of them/" we are different at all levels, I see them (Africans) as foreigners with whom I do not try to see what we have in common" (id.: 95; idem). Negrophobia leads the Francophone Caribbean to reject himself and his compatriots in self-denial. Those with pronounced black features are called "nèg kongo" (ibid.: 24), which means someone who is a complete Black without a drop of white blood, and that term also refers to African slaves, whom they consider as the image of the servitude they were subjected to. Furthermore, Lirus provides the following statistics: 86% of the respondents openly state that they do not have any connection with Africa, 66% of them state that there is a cultural difference between the Antillean and the African, 13% of them stress the difference that exists between the personality of the African and that of the Antillean, and 10% of the respondents (all women) state that they cannot get along with African men because they are too possessive and too authoritarian (ibid.: 94). One of the main conclusions of Lirus' research is that Caribbean Francophone men and women typically distance themselves from Africans and that the percentage of that rejection is higher among women.

7. Conclusion

This paper showed that Modern Europe devised derogatory stereotypes around Africa, the Americas and Asia and the inhabitants of those areas in order to explain and justify her adventure into those areas. The European public of that time bought into those fallacies and lent its support to the European powers, who then went ahead and established a new world order based on the inferiority, vulnerability and sometimes dangerous nature (hence the need to tame) of those races. The article showed that the reason behind the "White man's Burden" was simply the desire to amass the resources needed for the industrial development of Europe. The last part of the paper engaged the fact that Francophone Caribbeans continue to perpetuate, serve and defend those racist stereotypes through a blatant display of Europhilia and Afrophobia, which mines the relations between the Francophone Caribbeans and the continental Africans.

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