

Chapter Four

THE SO-CALLED DEPENDENCY
COMPLEX OF THE COLONIZED

There is not in the world one single poor lynched bastard, one poor tortured man, in whom I am not also murdered and humiliated.

—Aimé Césaire, *Et les chiens se taisaient*

When we began this book Monsieur Mannoni's work consisted of a few studies published in the journal *Psyché*. We were about to write to the author to ask him for his findings when we learned that a collection of his ideas was to be published under the title *The Psychology of Colonization*. This chapter will be devoted to the study of this book.

Before going into detail, let us say that his analysis is intellectually honest. Having experienced firsthand the ambivalence inherent in the colonial situation, Monsieur Mannoni has managed to grasp the psychological phenomena—albeit, unfortunately, too exhaustively—that govern the colonizer-native relationship.

The basic characteristic of current psychological research seems to consist in exhausting every possibility. But we should not lose sight of reality.

We propose to show that Monsieur Mannoni, although he has devoted 225 pages to the study of the colonial situation, has not grasped the true coordinates.

When you tackle a problem as important as the possibilities of mutual understanding between two different peoples, you should be doubly careful.

We are indebted to Monsieur Mannoni for having introduced two elements whose importance cannot escape our attention.

Upon quick analysis, any subjectivity in the field seems to have been avoided. Monsieur Mannoni's research is sincere, since it sets out to prove that man cannot be explained outside the limits of his capacity for accepting or denying a given situation. The problem of colonization, therefore, comprises not only the intersection of historical and objective conditions but also man's attitude toward these conditions.

At the same time we cannot help endorsing that part of Monsieur Mannoni's work which tends to deal with the pathology of the conflict, i.e., to demonstrate that the white colonial is driven only by his desire to put an end to a feeling of dissatisfaction on the level of Adlerian overcompensation.

However, we cannot endorse a sentence such as the following: "The fact that when an *adult* Malagasy is isolated in a different environment he can become susceptible to the classical type of inferiority complex proves almost beyond doubt that the germ of the complex was latent in him from childhood."¹

On reading this passage, we feel something askew, and the author's "objectivity" could mislead us.

1. O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, University of Michigan Press, 1990, p. 40.

We have, however, desperately tried to find the underlying argument of the book as it is stated: "The central idea is that the confrontation of 'civilized' and 'primitive' men creates a special situation—the colonial situation—and brings about the *emergence* of a mass of illusions and misunderstandings that only a psychological analysis can place and define."²

But since this is Monsieur Mannoni's point of departure, why does he want to make the inferiority complex exist prior to colonization? Here we see the mechanism at work in psychiatry, which explains there are latent forms of psychosis that become evident following a traumatic experience. And in surgery, varicose veins in a patient are caused not by having to stand for ten hours, but rather by the constitutional weakness of the vein walls; the work mode merely deteriorates the condition further, and the employer's responsibility is assessed to be very limited.

Before taking up Monsieur Mannoni's conclusions in detail, we would like to clarify our position. Once and for all we affirm that a society is racist or is not. As long as this evidence has not been grasped, a great many problems will have been overlooked. To say, for instance, that northern France is more racist than the south, or that racism can be found in subalterns but in no way involves the elite, or that France is the least racist country in the world, is characteristic of people incapable of thinking properly.

In order to demonstrate that racism is not a reflection of the economic situation, the author reminds us that "in South Africa the white labourers are quite as racist as the employers and managers and very often a good deal more so."³

We are sorry, but we would like all those who under-

2. My italics.

3. Mannoni, op. cit., p. 24.

take to describe colonization to remember one thing: it is utopian to try to differentiate one kind of inhuman behavior from another. We have no intention of adding to the world's problems, but we would simply like to ask Monsieur Mannoni whether he thinks that for a Jew the anti-Semitism of Maurras is any different from that of Goebbels.

At the end of a performance of *The Respectful Prostitute* in North Africa a general remarked to Sartre: "Your play should be shown in black Africa. It's a good illustration of how much happier the black man is on French soil than his counterpart is in America."

I sincerely believe that a subjective experience can be understood by all, and I dislike having to say that the black problem is my problem, and mine alone, and then set out to study it. But it seems to me that Monsieur Mannoni has not endeavored to sense from the inside the despair of the black man confronted with the white man. In this study I have attempted to touch on the misery of the black man—tactually and affectively. I did not want to be objective. Besides, that would have been dishonest: I found it impossible to be objective.

Is there in fact any difference between one racism and another? Don't we encounter the same downfall, the same failure of man?

Monsieur Mannoni believes that the poor Whites in South Africa hate the Blacks irrespective of economics. Apart from the fact that this attitude can be understood from an analogy with the anti-Semite's mentality ("Thus I would call anti-Semitism a poor man's snobbery. And in fact it would appear that the rich for the most part *exploit*⁴ this passion for their own uses rather than abandon themselves to it—they have better things to do. It is propagated mainly among middle

4. My italics.

classes, because they possess neither land nor house nor castle. . . . By treating the Jew as an inferior and pernicious being, I affirm at the same time that I belong to the elite."⁵), we could retort that this shift of the white proletariat's aggressiveness onto the black proletariat is basically a result of South Africa's economic structure.

What is South Africa? A powder keg where 2,530,300 Whites cudgel and impound 13 million Blacks. If these poor Whites hate the Blacks it's not, as Monsieur Mannoni implies, because "racialism is the work of petty officials, small traders and colonials, who have toiled much without great success."⁶ No, it's because the structure of South Africa is a racist structure:

Negrophilism and philanthropy are insults in South Africa. . . . The agenda is to separate the natives from the Europeans, territorially, economically, and politically, and to allow them to set up their own civilization under the control and authority of the Whites, but with minimum contact between the races. The aim is to reserve land for the natives and force the majority of them to live on it. . . . Economic competition would be eliminated and the groundwork would be laid for the rehabilitation of the "poor whites" who make up 50% of the European population.

It is no exaggeration to say that most South Africans feel an almost physical revulsion as regards anything that places a native or a person of color on their level.⁷

To conclude with Monsieur Mannoni's argument let us recall that "economic exclusion results from, among other

5. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, Grove Press, New York, 1960, pp. 26-27.

6. Mannoni, op. cit., p. 24.

7. Father Oswin Magrath of the Dominican Monastery of Saint Nicholas, Stellenbosch, Republic of South Africa, *The Man of Color*, p. 140. My italics.

things, the fear of competition and the desire both to protect the poor white class that forms half the European population and to prevent it from sinking any lower."

Monsieur Mannoni adds: "Colonial exploitation is not the same as other forms of exploitation, and colonial racialism is different from other kinds of racialism."⁸ He speaks of phenomenology, of psychoanalysis, of human brotherhood, but we would like him to consider these aspects in more concrete terms. All forms of exploitation are alike. They all seek to justify their existence by citing some biblical decree. All forms of exploitation are identical, since they apply to the same "object": man. By considering the structure of such and such an exploitation from an abstract point of view we are closing our eyes to the fundamentally important problem of restoring man to his rightful place.

Colonial racism is no different from other racisms.

Anti-Semitism cuts me to the quick; I get upset; a frightful rage makes me anemic; they are denying me the right to be a man. I cannot dissociate myself from the fate reserved for my brother. Every one of my acts commits me as a man. Every instance of my reticence, every instance of my cowardice, manifests the man.⁹ I can still hear Césaire saying:

8. Mannoni, op. cit., p. 27.

9. When we wrote this we had in mind Jaspers's metaphysical guilt: "There exists a solidarity among men as human beings that makes each co-responsible for every wrong and every injustice in the world, especially for crimes committed in his presence or with his knowledge. If I fail to do whatever I can to prevent them, I too am guilty. If I was present at the murder of others without risking my life to prevent it, I feel guilty in a way not adequately conceivable either legally, politically or morally. That I live after such a thing has happened weighs upon me as indelible guilt. That somewhere among men the unconditioned

When I switch on my radio and hear that black men are being lynched in America, I say that they have lied to us: Hitler isn't dead. When I switch on my radio and hear that Jews are being insulted, persecuted, and massacred, I say that they have lied to us: Hitler isn't dead. And finally when I switch on my radio and hear that in Africa forced labor has been introduced and legalized, I say that truly they have lied to us: Hitler isn't dead.¹⁰

Yes, European civilization and its agents of the highest caliber are responsible for colonial racism.¹¹ And once again we resort to Césaire:

prevails—the capacity to live only together or not at all, if crimes are committed against the one or the other, or if physical living requirements have to be shared—therein consists the substance of their being.” (Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt*, translated by E. B. Ashton, Greenwood, p. 32.) Jaspers declares that jurisdiction rests with God alone. It is easy to see that God has nothing to do with the matter, unless one wants to clarify this obligation for mankind to feel co-responsible, “responsible” meaning that the least of my acts involves mankind. Every act is an answer or a question: both, perhaps. By expressing a certain way for my being to excel itself, I am stating the value of my act for others. Conversely, the passivity observed during some of history's troubled times can be read as default on this obligation. Jung in *Essays on Contemporary Events* says that every European must be capable of answering for the crimes committed by Nazi barbarity when confronted by an Asian or a Hindu. Maryse Choisy in *L'anneau de Polycrate* has described the guilt of those who remained “neutral” during the Occupation. In a confused way they felt responsible for all those dead and all the Buchenwalds.

10. Quoted from memory. *Political Speeches*, 1945 electoral campaign, Fort-de-France.

11. “European civilization and its best representatives are not, for instance, responsible for colonial racialism; that is the work of petty officials, small traders and colonials who have toiled much without great success.” (Mannoni, op. cit., p. 24.)

And then one fine day the bourgeoisie is awakened by a terrific boomerang effect: the gestapos are busy, the prisons fill up, the torturers standing around the racks invent, refine, discuss.

People are surprised, they become indignant. They say: “How strange! But never mind—it's Nazism, it will pass!” And they wait, and they hope; and they hide the truth from themselves, that it is barbarism, the supreme barbarism, the crowning barbarism that sums up all the daily barbarisms; that it is Nazism, yes, but that before they were its victims, they were its accomplices; that they tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them, that they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because, until then, it had been applied only to non-European peoples; that they have cultivated that Nazism, that they are responsible for it, and that before engulfing the whole edifice of Western, Christian civilization in its reddened waters, it oozes, seeps and trickles from every crack.¹²

Every time we see an Arab with that hunted, evasive look of distrust, draped in those long, ragged robes that seem to have been made for him, we tell ourselves that Monsieur Mannoni was wrong. How many times have I been stopped in broad daylight by the police, who took me for an Arab, and when they discovered my origins, they hastily apologized: “We know full well a Martinican is different from an Arab.” I would protest violently, but I was told “You don't know them.” Truly, Monsieur Mannoni, you are wrong: “European civilization and its best representatives are not responsible for colonial racism”? Meaning that colonialism is the work of adventurers and politicians, and the “best representatives” keep

12. Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, translated by Joan Pinkham, *Monthly Review*, New York, 2000, p. 36.

themselves above the fray. But, says Francis Jeanson, every citizen of a nation is responsible for the acts perpetrated in the name of that nation:

Day after day, the system weaves around you its pernicious consequences; day after day its instigators betray you, pursuing in the name of France a policy as foreign as possible, not only to your real interests, but also to your greatest expectations. . . . You pride yourself on keeping your distance from a certain order of things; as a consequence you give a free hand to those who thrive in unhealthy atmospheres, a creation of their own behavior. And if, apparently, you manage not to soil your hands, it's because others are doing the dirty work in your place. *You have your henchmen*, and all things considered, you are the real guilty party; for without you, without your blind indifference, such men could not undertake acts that condemn you as much as they dishonor them.¹³

We said earlier that South Africa had a racist structure. We will go farther and say that Europe has a racist structure. It is obvious that Monsieur Mannoni is not interested in this problem, since he says: "France is unquestionably one of the least racist-minded countries in the world."¹⁴ Be glad you're French, you lucky Blacks, even if it is a bit tough, for in America your counterparts are more unfortunate than you are. . . . France is a racist country, for the myth of the bad nigger is part of the collective unconscious. We shall demonstrate this later on in Chapter 6.

Let us continue with Monsieur Mannoni: "In practice, therefore, an inferiority complex connected with the colour

13. Francis Jeanson, "Cette Algérie conquise et pacifiée," *Esprit*, April 1950, p. 624.

14. Mannoni, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

of the skin is found only among those who form a minority within a group of another colour. In a fairly homogenous community like that of the Malagasies, where the social framework is still fairly strong, an inferiority complex occurs only in very exceptional cases."¹⁵

Once again we ask for caution from the author. A white man in the colonies has never felt inferior in any respect whatsoever. As Monsieur Mannoni says so well: "He will be deified or devoured." Although the colonizer is in the "minority," he does not feel he is made inferior. In Martinique there are 200 Whites who consider themselves superior to the 300,000 people of color. In South Africa, there are 2 million Whites to almost 13 million Blacks and it has never occurred to a single Black to consider himself superior to a member of the white minority.

While the discoveries of Adler and the no less interesting findings of Kuenkel explain certain kinds of neurotic behavior, we should not infer laws from them that would necessarily apply to infinitely complex problems. Inferiorization is the native correlative to the European's feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say: *It is the racist who creates the inferiorized.*

With this conclusion we agree with Sartre: "The Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew: that is the simple truth from which we must start. . . . It is the anti-Semite who *makes* the Jew."¹⁶

What of the exceptional cases described by Monsieur Mannoni? They are quite simply instances where the educated black man suddenly finds himself rejected by the civilization he has nevertheless assimilated. As a result the conclusion would be as follows: so long as the author's typi-

15. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

16. Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, p. 69.

cal authentic Malagasy adopts his "dependent behavior," all is for the best; but if he forgets his place, if he thinks himself the equal of the European, then the European becomes angry and rejects the upstart, who on this occasion and in this "exceptional instance" pays for his refusal to be dependent with an inferiority complex.

We detected earlier in some of Monsieur Mannoni's allegations a dangerous misunderstanding. He leaves the Malagasy the choice between inferiority and dependency. Outside these options there is no salvation. "When he [the Malagasy] has succeeded in forming such relations [of dependence] with his superiors, his inferiority no longer troubles him: everything is all right. When he fails to establish them, when his feeling of insecurity is not assuaged in this way, he suffers a crisis."¹⁷

Monsieur Mannoni's primary concern was to criticize the methods currently applied by different ethnographers in their study of primitive peoples. But the author needs to be sent a message.

After having imprisoned the Malagasy in his customs; after having unilaterally analyzed his vision of the world; after having drawn a closed circle around the Malagasy; after having said that the Malagasy has a dependency relation with his ancestors, characterized as being highly tribal, the author, in defiance of all objectivity, applies his findings to a bilateral understanding—deliberately ignoring the fact that since Gallieni the Malagasy has ceased to exist.

What we would like Monsieur Mannoni to do is explain for us the colonial situation—something, oddly enough, he forgot to do. Nothing is lost; nothing is created; we agree. Parodying Hegel, Georges Balandier in a study¹⁸ devoted

to Kardiner and Linton says of the dynamics of the personality: "The last stage is the result of all the preceding stages and should contain all their rudiments." A joke that nevertheless remains the rule for many researchers. The reactions and behavior born out of the arrival of the Europeans in Madagascar were not tacked onto preexisting reactions and behavior. There was no increase in the previous psychic mass. If, for instance, Martians set out to colonize earthlings—not initiate them into Martian culture but *colonize* them—we would doubt that such a personality could survive. Kardiner corrected many opinions when he wrote: "To teach Christianity to the people of Alor would be a quixotic undertaking. . . . [It] would make no sense as long as the personality remains composed of elements that are in complete disharmony with the Christian doctrine. It would certainly be starting at the wrong end."¹⁹ And if Blacks are impervious to the teachings of Christ, it's not because they are incapable of assimilating these teachings. Understanding something new requires us to be inclined, to be prepared, and demands a new state of mind. It is utopian to expect the black man and the Arab to make the effort of including abstract values in their weltanschauung when they have barely enough food to survive. To ask an African from Upper Niger to wear shoes, to say he will never become another Schubert, is no less absurd than wondering why a worker at Berliet doesn't spend his evenings studying lyricism in Hindu literature or stating that he will never be an Einstein.

In fact, in the absolute, nothing stands in the way of such things. Nothing—except that the people in question lack the opportunities.

17. Mannoni, *op. cit.*, pp. 61–62.

18. "Où l'ethnologie retrouve l'unité de l'homme," *Esprit*, April 1950.

19. Quoted by Georges Balandier, *ibid.*, p. 610.

But they don't complain! And here is proof:

At the brink of dawn, behind my father and my mother, the shack chapped with blisters, like a peach tree* tormented by curl, and the thinned roof patched up with paraffin cans leaking swamps of rust into the squalid stinking grey pulp of straw, and when the wind whistles, these disparates make strange the noise, like the splutter of frying at first, then like a brand plunged into water with the smoke rising off from the twigs. And the bed of boards from which my race stood up, the bed of boards on its paws of kerosene cases, as though it had elephantiasis. That bed, with its kidskin and its dried banana leaves and its rags, a nostalgic excuse for a mattress, was my grandmother's bed (above the bed in a tin full of oil a candle-end whose flame dances like a big cockroach (and on the tin in golden letters, the word THANKS).²⁰

Unfortunately,

This attitude, this behavior, this shackled life caught in the noose of shame and disaster, rebels, takes issue, challenges, howls, and is asked, by God:

"What can you do?"

"Start!"

"Start what?"

"The only thing in the world worth starting: the end of the world, for heaven's sake."²¹

*Translator's note: There are two typographical mistakes in the French text—*péché* (sin) for *pêcher* (peach tree) and *navet* (turnip) for *ravet* (cockroach).

20. Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, translated by Mireille Rosello with Annie Pritchard, Bloodaxe, 1995, pp. 83–85.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 98. Translator's note: Fanon's text does not correspond to the original French text.

What Monsieur Mannoni has forgotten is that the Malagasy no longer exists; he has forgotten that the Malagasy *exists in relation to the European*. When the white man arrived in Madagascar he disrupted the psychological horizon and mechanisms. As everyone has pointed out, alterity for the black man is not the black but the white man. An island like Madagascar, invaded from one day to the next by the "pioneers of civilization," even if these pioneers behaved as best they could, underwent destructuralization. Monsieur Mannoni, moreover, says as much: "The petty kings were all very anxious to get possession of a white man."²² Whether this can be explained by magical-totemic mechanisms, by a need to contact an awesome God, or by the case for a system of dependency, it remains true nevertheless that something new had occurred on the island and this should be taken into account—otherwise the analysis becomes distorted, absurd, and null and void. Since a new element had been introduced, an attempt should have been made to understand the new relations.

The arrival of the white man in Madagascar inflicted an unmistakable wound. The consequences of this European irruption in Madagascar are not only psychological, since, as everyone has said, there are inner relationships between consciousness and social context.

What about the economic consequences? It's colonization that needs to be put on trial!

Let us go on with our study.

In other words, the Malagasy can bear not being a white man; what hurts him cruelly is to have discovered first (by identification) that he is a man and *later* that men are divided into whites and blacks. If the "abandoned" or "betrayed"

22. Mannoni, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Malagasy continues his identification, he becomes clamorous; he begins to demand *equality* in a way he had never before found necessary. The equality he seeks would have been beneficial before he started asking for it, but afterwards it proves inadequate to remedy his ills—for every increase in equality makes the remaining differences seem the more intolerable, for they suddenly appear agonizingly irremovable. This is the road along which the Malagasy passes from psychological dependence to psychological inferiority.²³

Once again we find the same misunderstanding. It is in fact obvious that the Malagasy can perfectly bear not being a white man. A Malagasy is a Malagasy; or rather he is *not* a Malagasy, but he lives his “Malagasyhood.” If he is a Malagasy it is because of the white man; and if, at a certain point in his history, he has been made to ask the question whether he is a man, it’s because his reality as a man has been challenged. In other words, I start suffering from not being a white man insofar as the white man discriminates against me; turns me into a colonized subject; robs me of any value or originality; tells me I am a parasite in the world, that I should toe the line of the white world as quickly as possible, and “that we are brute beasts; that we are a walking manure, a hideous forerunner of tender cane and silky cotton, that I have no place in the world.”²⁴ So I will try quite simply to make myself white; in other words, I will force the white man to acknowledge my humanity. But, Monsieur Mannoni will tell us, you can’t, because deep down inside you there is a dependency complex.

“Not all peoples can be colonized; only those who experience this need.” And further on: “Wherever Europe-

ans have founded colonies of the type we are considering, it can safely be said that their coming was unconsciously expected—even desired—by the future subject peoples. Everywhere there existed legends foretelling the arrival of strangers from the sea, bearing wondrous gifts with them.”²⁵ As we have seen, the white man is governed by a complex of authority, a complex of leadership, whereas the Malagasy is governed by a complex of dependency. Everyone is happy.

When we endeavor to understand why the European, the foreigner, was called *vazaha*, “honorable stranger”; when we endeavor to understand why the shipwrecked Europeans were welcomed with open arms, why the European, the stranger, is never perceived as the enemy, instead of explaining it on the basis of humanity, goodwill, or courtesy, the fundamentals of what Césaire calls “the old courtly civilizations,” we are told it’s quite simply because something was written in “fateful hieroglyphics”—specifically in the unconscious—that made the white man the awaited master. We finally get to the unconscious. But we should not extrapolate. When a black man tells me the following dream: “I have been walking for a very long time and am exhausted, I get the feeling something is going to happen, I climb over fences and walls, I come to an empty room, and behind the door I hear a noise, I think twice about entering, then make up my mind to go in, and in this second room there are white people, I realize that I too am white”; and when I try to understand this dream, to analyze it, knowing that this friend has problems with his job prospects, I conclude that the dream fulfills an unconscious desire. But when I am away from my consulting room

23. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

24. Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, trans. Rosello and Pritchard.

25. Mannoni, *op. cit.*, pp. 85–86.

and attempt to integrate my findings into the context of the world, I conclude:

1. My patient is suffering from an inferiority complex. His psychic structure is in danger of disintegrating. Measures have to be taken to safeguard him and gradually liberate him from this unconscious desire.
2. If he is overcome to such a degree by a desire to be white, it's because he lives in a society that makes his inferiority complex possible, in a society that draws its strength by maintaining this complex, in a society that proclaims the superiority of one race over another; it is to the extent that society creates difficulties for him that he finds himself positioned in a neurotic situation.

What emerges then is a need for combined action on the individual and the group. As a psychoanalyst I must help my patient to "*consciousnessize*" his unconscious, to no longer be tempted by a hallucinatory lactification, but also to act along the lines of a change in social structure.

In other words, the black man should no longer have to be faced with the dilemma "whiten or perish," but must become aware of the possibility of existence; in still other words, if society creates difficulties for him because of his color, if I see in his dreams the expression of an unconscious desire to change color, my objective will not be to dissuade him by advising him to "keep his distance"; on the contrary, once his motives have been identified, my objective will be to enable him to *choose* action (or passivity) with respect to the real source of the conflict, i.e., the social structure.

Monsieur Mannoni, anxious to consider the problem from every angle, has made numerous inquiries into the Malagasy's unconscious.

To do this, he has analyzed seven dreams: seven stories that reveal the unconscious, six of which show a domi-

nant theme of terror. Children and one adult tell us their dreams, and we picture them trembling, evasive, and unhappy.

The cook's dream. "I was being chased by an angry *black*²⁶ bull. Terrified, I climbed up into a tree and stayed there till the danger was past. I came down again, trembling all over."

Dream of a thirteen-year-old, Rahevi. "While going for a walk in the woods, I met two *black*²⁷ men. 'Oh,' I thought, 'I am done for!' I tried to run away but couldn't. They barred my way and began jabbering in a strange tongue. I thought they were saying, 'We'll show you what death is.' I shivered with fright and begged, 'Please, sirs, let me go, I'm so frightened.' One of them understood French but in spite of that they said, 'We are going to take you to our chief.' As we set off they made me go in front and they showed me their rifles. I was more frightened than ever, but before reaching their camp we had to cross a river. I dived deep into the water and thanks to my presence of mind found a rocky cave where I hid. When the two men had gone I ran back to my parents' house."

Josette's dream. The dreamer, a young girl, got lost and sat down on a fallen tree trunk. A woman in a white dress told her that she was in the midst of a band of robbers. The account goes on: "I am a schoolgirl," I said, trembling, "and I lost my way here when I was going home from school," and she replied: "Follow this path, child, and you will find your way home."

Dream of a fourteen-year-old boy, Razafi: He is being chased by (Senegalese) soldiers who "make a noise like

26. My italics.

27. My italics.

galloping horses as they run" and "show their rifles in front of them." The dreamer escapes by becoming invisible; he climbs a stairway and finds the door of his home.

Dream of Elphine, a girl of thirteen or fourteen. "I dreamed that a fierce *black*²⁸ ox was chasing me. He was big and strong. On his head, which was almost mottled with white (sic), he had two long horns with sharp points. 'Oh, how dreadful,' I thought. The path was getting narrower. What should I do? I perched myself in a mango tree, but the ox rent its trunk. Alas, I fell among the bushes. Then he pressed his horns into me; my stomach fell out and he devoured it."

Raza's dream. In his dream the boy heard someone say at school that the Senegalese were coming. "I went out of the school yard to see." The Senegalese were indeed coming. He ran home. "But our household had been dispersed by them too."

Dream of a fourteen-year-old boy, Si. "I was walking in the garden and felt something like a shadow behind me. All around me the leaves were rustling and falling off, as if a robber was in hiding among them, waiting to catch me. Wherever I walked, up and down the alleys, the shadow still followed me. Suddenly I got frightened and started running, but the shadow took great strides and stretched out his huge hand to take hold of my clothes. I felt my shirt tearing, and screamed. My father jumped out of bed when he heard me scream and came over to look at me, but the big *shadow* had disappeared and I was no longer afraid."²⁹

Some years ago we were astonished to see for ourselves that the North Africans despised black men. We found it

impossible to have any contact with the native Arab population. We left Africa for France without understanding the reason for this animosity. Certain facts, however, were food for thought. The Frenchman does not like the Jew, who does not like the Arab, who does not like the black man. The Arab is told: "If you are poor it's because the Jew has cheated you and robbed you of everything." The Jew is told: "You're not of the same caliber as the Arab because in fact you are white and you have Bergson and Einstein." The black man is told: "You are the finest soldiers in the French empire; the Arabs think they're superior to you, but they are wrong." Moreover, it's not true; they don't say anything to the black man; they have nothing to say to him; the Senegalese infantryman is an infantryman, the good soldier who only obeys his captain, the good soldier who obeys orders.

"You not pass."

"Why not?"

"Me no know. You not pass."

Unable to confront all these demands, the white man shirks his responsibility. I have a phrase for this: the racial allocation of guilt.

We said earlier that some incidents had surprised us. Every time there was a rebellion, the military authorities sent only the colored soldiers to the front line. It is the "peoples of color" who annihilated the attempts at liberation by other "peoples of color," proof that there were no grounds for universalizing the process: if those good-for-nothings, the Arabs, got it into their heads to rebel, it was not in the name of reputable principles, but quite simply to get their "towelhead" unconscious out of their system.

From an African viewpoint, a colored student said at the Twenty-Fifth Congress of Catholic Students, during a discussion on Madagascar, "I object to sending Senegalese troops and protest against the way they are mistreated over

28. My italics.

29. Mannoni, op. cit., dreams, pp. 89-92.

there." We know, moreover, that one of the torturers at the police headquarters in Tananarive was a Senegalese. As a result of knowing all that, and knowing what the Senegalese stereotype might be for a Malagasy, Freud's discoveries are of no use to us whatsoever. We must put this dream *in its time*, and this time is the period during which 80,000 natives were killed, i.e., one inhabitant out of fifty; and *in its place*, and the place is an island with a population of 4 million among whom no real relationship can be established, where clashes break out on all sides, where lies and demagoguery are the sole masters.³⁰ In some circumstances, we

30. We refer to the testimonies given at the trial in Tananarive.

Session of August 9. Rakotovao states:

"Monsieur Baron told me, 'Since you refuse to accept what I have just said, I'm sending you to a room where you can think.' I went into the next room. The room in question was already covered in water and there was also a drum full of dirty water, not to mention other things. Monsieur Baron told me, 'This will teach you to accept what I have just asked you to say.' A Senegalese received the order from Monsieur Baron 'to do me over like the others.' He made me kneel down, wrists apart, and with wooden pincers he pressed down on both hands, then placed his foot on the back of my neck and forced my head into the drum. Seeing I was about to faint, he lifted his foot so that I could come up for air. And this went on until I was utterly exhausted. He then said: 'Take him away and whip him.' The Senegalese therefore used a bullwhip, but Monsieur Baron came into the torture room and personally took part in the whipping. This lasted for about fifteen minutes, I think, after which I said I couldn't bear it any longer for despite my young years it was unbearable. He then said, 'Admit then what I have just told you!'

"No, sir, it's not true."

"He then sent me back into the torture room; called another Senegalese, since one was not enough; and gave the order to hang me by my feet and lower me into the drum up to my chest. And they repeated that several times. In the end I said, 'I can't take it anymore! Let me speak to Monsieur Baron,' to whom I said, 'I ask at least to be

must recall, the *socius* is more important than the individual. I am thinking of what P. Naville wrote:

treated in a manner worthy of France, sir'; and he answered 'Here is how France treats you!' Unable to take it any longer I said to him, 'I agree then to the first part of your statement.' Monsieur Baron answered, 'I don't want the first part; I want it all.' 'I shall be lying then?' 'Lie or no lie, you must agree to what I am telling you.'"

The testimony goes on:

"Suddenly Monsieur Baron said: 'Subject him to another type of torture.' They then took me into the adjacent room, where there was a small cement stairway. With my two arms tied behind my back, the two Senegalese held both my feet in the air and dragged me up and down the stairs. It was beginning to become unbearable, and even had I been strong enough, I couldn't have endured it. I said to the Senegalese, 'Tell your boss I agree to say what he wants me to say.'"

Session of August 11. Robert testifies:

"The gendarme grabbed me by my jacket collar and kicked me from behind and punched me in the face. Then he had me kneel down, and Monsieur Baron started hitting me again. Without my knowing, he got behind me and I began to feel little hot pricks on the back of my neck. Reaching up to protect myself, my hands too got burned.

"The third time I was on the ground I lost consciousness and can't remember what happened. The next thing I knew Monsieur Baron was telling me to sign a paper already drafted. I shook my head. The director then called back the Senegalese, who dragged me into another torture room. 'You must agree, otherwise you'll die,' the Senegalese said. 'That's just too bad for him,' the director said. 'Get on with it, Jean.' They tied my hands behind my back, made me kneel down, and forced my head into a drum full of water. Just when I was about to suffocate they pulled me out. And they repeated that several times until I collapsed."

Let us recall, so that everyone knows, that the witness Rakotovao was sentenced to death.

When you read such things it seems obvious that one aspect of the phenomena he analyzes escapes Monsieur Mannoni: that the black bull and the black man are nothing more nor less than the Senegalese in the criminal investigation department.

To speak of society's dreams as one speaks of an individual's dreams, to speak of collective will as one speaks of individual sexual instinct, is once again to reverse the natural order of things, since, on the contrary, it is the economic and social conditions of the class struggle that explain and determine the actual conditions in which individual sexuality is expressed, and the contents of an individual's dreams depends also in the end on the general conditions of civilization in which he lives.³¹

The fierce black bull is not the phallus. The two black men are not the two fathers—one representing the actual father, the other the ancestor. Here is what an in-depth analysis might have been on the basis of Monsieur Mannoni's conclusions in the previous paragraph, "The Cult of the Dead and the Family."

The Senegalese soldier's rifle is not a penis, but a genuine Lebel 1916 model. The black bull and robber are not *lolos*, "substantial souls," but genuine irruptions during sleep of actual fantasies. What else can this stereotype, this central theme of dreams represent except putting the individual back in line? Sometimes there are *black* infantrymen; sometimes there are *black* bulls speckled with white on the head; sometimes there is actually a very kind white woman. What do we find in all these dreams if not this central idea: "To depart from routine is to wander in pathless woods; there you will meet the bull who will send you running helter-skelter home again."³²

Malagasies, keep quiet, remain in your place.

31. Pierre Naville, *Psychologie, Marxisme, Matérialisme*, 2nd ed., Marcel Rivière et Cie, p. 151.

32. Mannoni, op. cit., p. 70.

* * *

After having described the Malagasy psychology, Monsieur Mannoni goes on to explain the *raison d'être* for colonialism. In doing so he adds a new complex to the previous list—the Prospero complex—defined as the sum of those unconscious neurotic tendencies that delineate at the same time "the picture of colonial paternalism" and "the portrait of the racist whose daughter has suffered an [imaginary] attempted rape at the hands of an inferior being."³³

Prospero is, as we know, the main character in Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. Opposite him we have Miranda, his daughter, and Caliban. Prospero adopts an attitude toward Caliban that the Americans in the South know only too well. Don't they say that the niggers are just waiting for the chance to jump on a white woman? In any case, what is interesting in this part of the book is the intensity with which Monsieur Mannoni gives us the sense of the ill-resolved conflicts that seem to be at the root of the colonial vocation. He tells us, in fact,

What the colonial in common with Prospero lacks, is awareness of the world of Others, a world in which Others have to be respected. This is the world from which the colonial has fled because he cannot accept men as they are. Rejection of that world is combined with an urge to dominate, an urge which is infantile in origin and which social adaptation has failed to discipline. The reason the colonial himself gives for his flight—whether he says it was the *désire* to travel, or the desire to escape from the cradle or from the "ancient parapets," or whether he says that he simply wanted a freer life—is of no consequence. . . . It is always

33. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

a question of compromising with the desire for a world without men.³⁴

If we add that many Europeans set off for the colonies because they can get rich over there in a very short time, and that, with rare exceptions, the colonial is a trader or rather a trafficker, you will have grasped the psychology of the man who produces the "feeling of inferiority" in the native. As for the "dependency complex" of the Malagasy, at least in the sole form in which we can understand and analyze it, it too originates with the arrival on the island of the white colonizers. Concerning its other form, the original complex, in its pure state, which might have characterized the Malagasy mentality throughout the precolonial period, Monsieur Mannoni seems to us to lack the slightest basis on which to ground any conclusion concerning the situation, the problems, or the potential of the Malagasy in the present time.

Chapter Five

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE BLACK MAN

"Dirty nigger!" or simply "Look! A Negro!"

I came into this world anxious to uncover the meaning of things, my soul desirous to be at the origin of the world, and here I am an object among other objects.

Locked in this suffocating reification, I appealed to the Other so that his liberating gaze, gliding over my body suddenly smoothed of rough edges, would give me back the lightness of being I thought I had lost, and taking me out of the world put me back in the world. But just as I get to the other slope I stumble, and the Other fixes me with his gaze, his gestures and attitude, the same way you fix a preparation with a dye. I lose my temper, demand an explanation. . . . Nothing doing. I explode. Here are the fragments put together by another me.

As long as the black man remains on his home territory, except for petty internal quarrels, he will not have to experience his being for others. There is in fact a "being for other," as described by Hegel, but any ontology is made impossible in a colonized and acculturated society. Apparently, those who have written on the subject have not taken this sufficiently into consideration. In the *weltanschauung* of a colonized people, there is an impurity or a flaw that

34. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

Chapter Six

THE BLACK MAN AND
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

Psychoanalytical schools have studied neurotic reactions born out of certain environments and certain sectors of civilization. In response to a dialectical demand we should now ask ourselves to what extent the findings by Freud and Adler can be applied in an attempt to explain the black man's vision of the world.

Psychoanalysis—and this can never be stressed enough—sets out to understand a given behavior within a specific group represented by the family. And in the case of an adult's neurosis, the analyst's job is to find an analogy in the new psychic structure with certain infantile elements, a repetition or a copy of conflicts born within the family constellation. In every case, the family is treated as the "psychic object and circumstance."¹

Here, however, certain phenomena will seriously complicate matters. In Europe the family represents the way the world reveals itself to the child. The family structure and the national structure are closely connected. Militarization

1. Jacques Lacan, "Le complexe, facteur concret de la psychologie familiale," *Encyclopédie française*, 8.40–45.

and a centralized authority in a country automatically result in a resurgence of the father's authority. In Europe and in every so-called civilized or civilizing country the family represents a piece of the nation. The child leaving the family environment finds the same laws, the same principles, and the same values. A normal child brought up in a normal family will become a normal adult.² There is no disproportion between family life and the life of the nation. Conversely, if we take a closed society—i.e., one protected from the onslaught of civilization—we find the same structures as those just described. For example, *L'âme du Pygmée d'Afrique*, by Father Trilles, is a case in point: although the reader is constantly reminded of the need to Christianize the souls of the Pygmies, the description of their religious schemata, the persistence of rites, and the survival of myths has nothing of the artificiality of *La philosophie bantoue*.

In both cases, the characteristics of the family environment are projected onto the social environment. Although it's a fact that children of thieves or bandits, used to a certain law laid down by the clan, are surprised to discover that the rest of the world behaves differently, education of another sort—except in cases of perversion or retardation (Heuyer)³—should be able to moralize their vision and socialize them.

2. We would like to believe that we will not be taken to task for this last sentence. However much the skeptics ask: "What do you mean by normal?" for the time being, this is not the place to answer such a question. So as to satisfy those who insist, let us refer them to the extremely instructive work by G. Canguilhem, *Le normal et le pathologique*, though it focuses solely on the biological. Let me just add that in the psychological field the abnormal is he who demands, appeals, and begs.

3. Even though this reservation is debatable. See, for example, the paper by Mademoiselle Juliette Boutonnier: "Might not perversion be

In all these cases it can be seen that morbidity is located in the family environment.

The authority of the state for the individual is the reproduction of the family authority which has fashioned his childhood. The individual assimilates every authority encountered at a later date with parental authority: he perceives the present in terms of the past. Like every aspect of human behavior, behavior toward authority is something to be learned. And it is learned within a family that can be psychologically distinguished by its specific organization, i.e., by the way in which its authority is allocated and exercised."⁴

However—and this is a most important point—we observe the opposite in the black man. A normal black child, having grown up with a normal family, will become abnormal at the slightest contact with the white world. This argument may not be immediately understandable. Let us proceed therefore by going backward. In recognition of Dr. Breuer, Freud writes:

In almost every case, we could see that the symptoms were, so to speak, like residues of emotional experiences, to which for this reason we gave the name of psychic traumas. Their individual characters were linked to the traumatic scenes that had provoked them. According to the classic terminology, the symptoms were determined by "scenes" of which they were the mnemonic residues, and it was no longer necessary to regard them as arbitrary and enigmatic effects of the neu-

rosis. In contrast, however, to what was expected, it was not always a single event that was the cause of the symptom; most often, on the contrary, it arose out of multiple traumas, frequently analogous and repeated. As a result, it became necessary to reproduce chronologically this whole series of pathogenic memories, but in reverse order: the latest at the beginning and the earliest at the end; it was impossible to make one's way back to the first trauma, which is often the most forceful, if one skipped any of its successors.

It could not be said more positively: there is a determined *Erlebnis* at the origin of every neurosis. Farther on, Freud adds:

This trauma, it is true, has been quite expelled from the consciousness and the memory of the patient and as a result he has apparently been saved from a great mass of suffering, but the repressed desire continues to exist in the unconscious; it is on watch constantly for an opportunity to make itself known and it soon comes back into consciousness, but in a disguise that makes it impossible to recognize; in other words, the repressed thought is replaced in consciousness by another that acts as its surrogate, its *Ersatz*, and that soon surrounds itself with all those feelings of morbidity that had been supposedly averted by the repression.

The *Erlebnis* is repressed in the unconscious.

What do we see in the case of the black man? Unless we use Jung's postulate of the *collective unconscious*, so vertiginous it unhinges us, we can understand absolutely nothing. A drama is played out every day in the colonized countries. How can we explain, for example, that a black guy who has passed his baccalaureate and arrives at the Sorbonne to study for his degree in philosophy is already on his guard before there is the sign of any conflict? René Ménéil accounted for this reaction in Hegelian terms. In his view it was "the consequence of the replacement of the repressed 'African' spirit

a deep emotional retardation entertained or engendered by the conditions in which the child has lived, at least as much as by the formative elements that are obvious factors, but not probably the only ones." (*Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, no. 3, 1949, pp. 403-404.)

4. Joachim Marcus, "Structure familiale et comportements politiques," *L'autorité dans la famille et dans l'État*, *Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, April-June 1949.

in the consciousness of the slave by an authority symbol representing the Master, a symbol planted in the core of the collective group and charged with maintaining order in it as a garrison controls a conquered city."⁵

We shall see in our chapter on Hegel that René Ménéil was right. We are entitled, however, to ask how total identification with the white man can still be the case in the twentieth century? Very often the black man who becomes abnormal has never come into contact with Whites. Has some former experience been repressed in his unconscious? Has the young black child seen his father beaten or lynched by the white man? Has there been a real traumatism? To all these questions our answer is *no*. So where do we go from here?

If we want an honest answer, we have to call on the notion of *collective catharsis*. In every society, in every community, there exists, must exist, a channel, an outlet whereby the energy accumulated in the form of aggressiveness can be released. This is the purpose of games in children's institutions, of psychodramas in group therapy, and more generally speaking, of the weekly comics for the young—every society naturally requiring its own specific form of catharsis. The Tarzan stories, the tales of young explorers, the adventures of Mickey Mouse, and all the illustrated comics aim at releasing a collective aggressiveness. They are written by white men for white children. And this is the crux of the matter. In the Antilles—and there's no reason to believe the situation is any different in the other colonies—these same magazines are devoured by the local youth. And the Wolf, the Devil, the Wicked Genie, Evil, and the Savage are always represented by

5. Quotation borrowed from Michel Leiris, "Martinique-Guadeloupe-Haïti," *Temps Modernes*, February 1950.

Blacks or Indians; and since one always identifies with the good guys, the little black child, just like the little white child, becomes an explorer, an adventurer, and a missionary "who is in danger of being eaten by the wicked Negroes." They'll tell us it's not that important, precisely because they haven't given any thought to the role of these comics. Here is what G. Legman says of them:

With only very rare exceptions, the average American child who was six in 1938 has now seen at least eighteen thousand scenes of violent torture and bloody violence. The Americans are the only modern nation, except for the Boers, in living memory who have totally eliminated the native population from the territory where they have settled.⁶ Only America, then, could have the need to appease the national conscience by forging the myth of the "Bad Injun"⁷ so as to later introduce the historical figure of the noble Redskin unsuccessfully defending his territory against the invaders armed with Bibles and rifles; the punishment we deserve can be averted only by denying responsibility for the wrong and throwing the blame on the victim: by proving—at least in our own eyes—that striking the first and only blow we are simply acting in legitimate defense.

Envisaging the repercussions of these comic books on American culture, the author continues:

The question remains whether this maniacal obsession with violence and death is the substitute for a repressed sexuality or whether its function is rather to channel along the path left open by sexual repression both the child's and the adult's desire to aggress against the economic and social structure that with their free consent corrupts them. In both cases, the

6. We should note in passing that the Caribs experienced the same fate at the hands of French and Spanish adventurers.

7. Translator's note: In English in the original.

cause of the corruption, whether sexual or economic, is essential; that is why as long as we are unable to tackle this fundamental repression, any attack waged against simple escape devices such as comic books will remain futile.⁸

In the Antilles, the black schoolboy who is constantly asked to recite "our ancestors the Gauls"⁹ identifies himself with the explorer, the civilizing colonizer, the white man who brings truth to the savages, a lily-white truth. The identification process means that the black child subjectively adopts a white man's attitude. He invests the hero, who is white, with all his aggressiveness—which at this age closely resembles self-sacrifice: a self-sacrifice loaded with sadism. An eight-year-old child who is giving something, even to an adult, cannot tolerate a refusal. Gradually, an attitude, a way of thinking and seeing that is basically white, forms and crystallizes in the young Antillean. Whenever he reads stories of savages in his white schoolbook he always thinks of the Senegalese. As a schoolboy I spent hours discussing the supposed customs of the Senegalese savages. In our discussions, there was a lack of awareness that was paradoxical to say the least. The fact is that the Antillean does not see himself as Negro; he sees himself as Antillean. The Negro lives in Africa. Subjectively and intellectually the Antillean behaves like a white man. But in fact he is a black man. He'll realize that once he gets to Europe, and when he hears Europeans mention "Negroes"

he'll know they're talking about him as well as the Senegalese. So what can we conclude on this question?

To impose the same "wicked genies" on both the white child and the black child is a serious educational mistake. If we take the meaning of the "wicked genie" to be an attempt at humanizing the id, you will understand our point of view. Strictly speaking, nursery rhymes are subject to the same criticism. It is already clear that we would like nothing better than to create magazines and songs specially designed for black children, and, to go to an extreme, special history books, at least up to the end of elementary school, because, until there's proof to the contrary, we believe that if there is a traumatism it occurs here. The young Antillean is a French child required to live every moment of his life with his white compatriots. This tends to be forgotten a little too often.

The white family is the guardian of a certain structure. Society is the sum of all the families. The family is an institution, precursor of a much wider institution: i.e., the social group or nation. The main lines of reference remain the same. The white family is the educating and training ground for entry into society. "The family structure is internalized in the superego," Marcus says, "and projected into political [though I would say social] behavior."

As long as the black child remains on his home ground his life follows more or less the same course as that of the white child. But if he goes to Europe he will have to rethink his life, for in France, his country, he will feel different from the rest. We said rather too quickly that the black man feels inferior. The truth is that he is made to feel inferior. The young Antillean is a Frenchman required to live every moment of his life with his white compatriots. The Antillean family, however, has virtually no ties with the French or European national structure. The Antillean,

8. G. Legman, "Psychopathologie des comics," *Temps Modernes*, no. 43, pp. 916ff.

9. This aspect of teaching in Martinique always causes a smile. Although its comical character is readily accepted, the long-term consequences are never mentioned. Yet these are important, since the young Antillean elaborates his vision of the world after repeating such a phrase three or four times.

then, has to choose between his family and European society; in other words, the individual who *climbs up* into white, civilized society tends to reject his black, uncivilized family at the level of the imagination, in keeping with the childhood *Erlebnis* we described earlier.

In this case, Marcus's schema becomes:

Family ← Individual → Society

since the family structure is relegated to the id.

The black man realizes that many of the assertions he had adopted regarding the subjective attitude of the white man are unreal. He then begins his real apprenticeship. And reality proves extremely tough. But, it will be argued, you are merely describing a universal phenomenon, since the criterion for masculinity is precisely how it adapts to society. Our answer is that such a remark is out of place, for we have just demonstrated that the black man has to confront a myth—a deep-rooted myth. The black man is unaware of it as long as he lives among his own people; but at the first white gaze, he feels the weight of his melanin.¹⁰

10. Let us recall what Sartre said on the subject: "Some children, at the age of five or six, have already had fights with schoolmates who call them 'Yids.' Others may remain in ignorance for a long time. A young Jewish girl in a family I am acquainted with did not even know the meaning of the word *Jew* until she was fifteen. During the Occupation there was a Jewish doctor who lived shut up in his home in Fontainebleau and raised his children without saying a word to them of their origin. But however it comes about, some day they must learn the truth: sometimes from the smiles of those around them, sometimes from rumor or insult. The later the discovery the more violent the shock. Suddenly they perceive that others know something about them that they do not know, that people apply to them an ugly and upsetting term that is not used in their own families." (*Anti-Semite and Jew*, p. 75.)

Then there is the unconscious. Since the racial drama is played out in the open, the black man has no time to "unconsciousnessize" it. The white man manages it to a certain degree because a new factor emerges: i.e., guilt. The black man's superiority or inferiority complex and his feeling of equality are *conscious*. He is constantly making them interact. He lives his drama. There is in him none of the affective amnesia characteristic of the typical neurotic.

Whenever we have read a work on psychoanalysis, discussed the matter with our professors, or conversed about it with European patients, we have been struck by the incongruity between the corresponding schemata and the reality presented by the black man. We have gradually come to the conclusion that there is a dialectical substitution when we switch from the psychology of the white man to that of the black man.

The basic values which Charles Odier describes¹¹ differ between the white man and the black man. The socializing actions do not refer to the same intentions. We are in completely different worlds. An in-depth study ought to be conducted as follows:

Psychoanalytic interpretation of the black man's lived experience

Psychoanalytic interpretation of the black myth

But reality, which is our sole recourse, prevents us from doing so. The facts are much more complicated. So what are they?

The black man is a "phobogenic" object, provoking anxiety. From the patient treated by Sérieux and Capgras¹²

11. *Les deux sources consciente et inconsciente de la vie morale.*

12. *Les folies raisonnantes*, cited by A. Hesnard, *L'univers morbide de la faute*, p. 97.

to the girl who admitted to us that she would be terrified to sleep with a black man, we encounter every stage of what we shall call black "phobogenesis." Much has been said about psychoanalysis and the black man. Wary of how it can be applied¹³ we preferred to call this chapter "The Black Man and Psychopathology," seeing that neither Freud nor Adler nor even the cosmic Jung took the black man into consideration in the course of his research. And each was perfectly right. We too often tend to forget that neurosis is not a basic component of human reality. Whether you like it or not the Oedipus complex is far from being a black complex. It could be argued, as Malinowski does argue, that the matriarchal regime is the only reason for its absence. But apart from wondering whether the anthropologists, steeped in their civilization's complexes, have not done their best to find copies in the people they study, it would be fairly easy for us to demonstrate that in the French Antilles ninety-seven percent of families are incapable of producing a single oedipal neurosis. And we have only to congratulate ourselves for that.¹⁴

Apart from a few hiccups that occurred in a closed environment, any neurosis, any abnormal behavior or affective erethism in an Antillean is the result of his cultural

13. We are thinking here in particular of the United States; see, for example, *Home of the Brave*.

14. Psychoanalysts might hesitate to share our opinion on this point. Dr. Lacan, for example, talks of the "fecundity" of the Oedipus complex. But even if the young boy must kill his father, the father still has to agree to die. We are reminded of Hegel saying: "The cradle of the child is the tomb of the parents." And of Nicolas Calas's *Foyer d'incendie* and Jean Lacroix's *Force et faiblesses de la famille*. The collapse of moral values in France after the war was perhaps the result of the defeat of that natural person represented by the nation. We know what such traumatism can cause at a family level.

situation. In other words, a host of information and a series of propositions slowly and stealthily work their way into an individual through books, newspapers, school texts, advertisements, movies, and radio and shape his community's vision of the world.¹⁵ In the Antilles this vision of the world is white because no black manifestation exists. Martinique is poor in folklore, and in Fort-de-France few children know the stories of "Compè Lapin," the counterpart of Louisiana's Uncle Remus stories.* For example, a European familiar with the current trends in black poetry would be amazed to learn that as late as 1940 no Antillean was capable of thinking of himself as black. It was only with Aimé Césaire that we witnessed the birth and acceptance of negritude and its demands. The most visible proof of this is the impression the young generations of students get when they arrive in Paris: it takes a few weeks for them to realize that their contact with Europe compels them to face a number of problems which up till then had never

15. We recommend the following experiment for those who are not convinced: Attend the showing of a Tarzan film in the Antilles and in Europe. In the Antilles the young black man identifies himself de facto with Tarzan versus the Blacks. In a movie house in Europe things are not so clear-cut, for the white moviegoers automatically place him among the savages on the screen. This experiment is conclusive. The black man senses he cannot get away with being black. A documentary film on Africa shown in a French town and in Fort-de-France causes similar reactions. I will even go so far as to say that the Bushmien and the Zulus trigger much more hilarity from the young Antilleans. It would be worthwhile demonstrating that this exaggerated response betrays a hint of recognition. In France the black man who watches this documentary is literally petrified. Here there is no escape: he is at once Antillean, Bushman, and Zulu.

*Translator's note: Joel Chandler Harris was from Georgia. But it is interesting for Fanon scholars to know that Fanon was not very rigorous in his scholarship.

crossed their mind. And yet these problems were not exactly invisible.¹⁶

Whenever we had discussions with our professors or conversed with European patients, the possible differences between the two worlds became clear to us. Talking recently with a doctor who had always practiced in Fort-de-France, we informed him of our findings; he went farther, telling us that this was true not only in psychopathology but also in general medicine. And, he added, you never have a pure textbook case of typhoid; there is always a latent case of malaria grafted onto it. It would be interesting, for example, to study schizophrenia in the case of the black experience—provided this disorder exists over there.

So what are we getting at? Quite simply that when Blacks make contact with the white world a certain sensitizing action takes place. If the psychic structure is fragile, we observe a collapse of the ego. The black man stops behaving as an *actional* person. His actions are destined for “the Other” (in the guise of the white man), since only “the Other” can enhance his status and give him self-esteem at the ethical level. But there is something else.

We have said that the black man is phobogenic. What is phobia? Our answer will be based on the latest book by Hesnard: “Phobia is a neurosis characterized by the anxious fear of an object (in the broadest sense of anything outside the individual) or, by extension, of a situa-

16. In particular, they realize that their line of self-esteem has to be inverted. We have seen earlier that the Antillean arriving in France perceives this journey as the final stage of his personality. We can safely say that the Antillean who goes to France to convince himself he is white literally discovers his true face.

tion.”¹⁷ Naturally such an object must take on certain aspects. It must, says Hesnard, arouse fear and revulsion. But here we encounter a problem. Applying the genetic method to the understanding of phobia, Charles Odier writes: “All anxiety derives from a certain subjective insecurity linked to the absence of the mother.”¹⁸ This occurs, according to Odier, somewhere around the second year.

Investigating the psychic structure of the phobic he comes to this conclusion: “Before attacking the adult beliefs, all the elements of the infantile structure which produced them must be analyzed.”¹⁹ The choice of the phobic object is thus *overdetermined*. Such an object does not come out of the void of nothingness; in some situations it has previously evoked an affect in the patient. The phobia is the latent presence of this affect on the core of his world; there is an organization that has been given a form. For the object, naturally, need not be there, it is enough that somewhere the object *exists*: is a possibility. Such an object is endowed with evil intentions and with all the attributes of a malefic power.²⁰ In the phobic, affect has a priority that defies all rational thinking. As we can see, the phobic is a person governed by the laws of prelogical rationality and affectivity: a process of thinking and feeling recalling the age when the accident made him insecure. The problem mentioned earlier is the following: Was there a traumatic event that made the young woman I described feel insecure? Was there an attempt to abduct on the

17. Hesnard, *L'univers morbide de la faute*, P.U.F., 1949, p. 37.

18. Charles Odier, *L'angoisse et la pensée magique*, p. 38.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 58, 78.

majority of negrophobic men? Or an attempt at fellatio? Strictly speaking, this is what we would come up with if we analyzed our findings: if a very frightening object, such as a more or less imaginary attacker, arouses terror, it is also and above all a fear mixed with sexual revulsion, especially as most of the cases are women. When we elucidate what prompted the fear, "I'm afraid of men" really means: they might do all sorts of things to me, but not the usual ill-treatment: sexual abuses—in other words, immoral and shameful things.²¹

"Contact alone is enough to arouse anxiety. For contact is at the same time the typical schema at the start of the sexual act (touching, fondling—sexuality)."²² Since we are familiar with all the tricks the ego uses to defend itself, we know that we should avoid taking its denials literally. Are we not in presence of a complete transitivity? Basically, isn't this *fear* of rape precisely a call for rape? Just as there are faces that just ask to be slapped, couldn't we speak of women who just ask to be raped? In *If He Hollers Let Him Go* Chester Himes describes this mechanism very well. The big blonde faints every time the black man comes near her. Yet she has nothing to fear, since the factory is full of white men. . . . In the end, they sleep together.

When we were in the army we were able to observe how white women from three or four European countries behaved in the presence of black men who had asked them to dance. Most of the time, the women made evasive, shrinking gestures, their faces expressing a genuine fear. Yet even if they had wanted to, the black men

21. Hesnard, op. cit., p. 38.

22. Ibid., p. 40.

who had invited them to dance would have been incapable of doing them any harm. The behavior of these women is clearly understandable from the standpoint of imagination because a negrophobic woman is in reality merely a presumed sexual partner—just as the negrophobic man is a repressed homosexual.

As regards the black man everything in fact takes place at the genital level. Some years ago, in a discussion with friends, we were of the opinion that generally speaking the white man behaves toward the black man like an older brother reacting to the birth of a younger sibling. Since then, we have learned that in the United States Richard Sterba thinks along the same lines. At a phenomenological level a dual reality needs to be studied. Jews are feared because of their potential to appropriate. "They" are everywhere. The banks, the stock exchanges, and the government are infested with them. They control everything. Soon the country will belong to them. They do better in competitive examinations than the "real" French. Soon they'll be laying down the law. Recently, a colleague who was studying for the elite school of administration told us: "Say what you like, they stick together. When Moch was in power, for example, the number of kikes appointed was appalling." The situation is no different in the medical profession. Any Jewish student who passes the entrance exam "pulled strings." As for the Negroes, they are sexually promiscuous. Not surprisingly, running around like that in the bush! Apparently they fornicate just about everywhere and at all times. They're sexual beasts. They have so many children they've lost count. If we're not careful they'll inundate us with little mulattoes.

Everything's going to the dogs.

The government and the civil service are overrun by Jews.

Our women are mobbed by the Negroes.

For the Negro has a hallucinating sexual power. That's the right word for it, since this power *has to be* hallucinating. Psychoanalysts who study the question soon discover the mechanisms for every neurosis. Here sexual anxiety prevails. All the negrophobic women we met had abnormal sexual lives. Their husbands had left them; they were widows and did not dare replace the deceased; or they were divorced and reluctant to invest in a new relationship. All of them bestowed on the black man powers that others such as husbands or occasional lovers did not possess. And then there occurs an element of perversity, a surviving element of infantile structure: God only knows how they must make love! It must be terrifying.²³

There is one expression that with time has become particularly eroticized: the black athlete. One woman confided in us that the very thought made her heart skip a beat. A prostitute told us that early on the idea of having sex with a black man gave her an orgasm. She went in search of black men and never asked for money from them. But she added, "Having sex with them was no more

23. J. Marcus is of the opinion that social neurosis, or, if you like, abnormal behavior in contact with "the Other," whoever he may be, is closely tied with the individual situation: "Going through the questionnaires showed that the most strongly anti-Semitic persons came from highly conflictual family structures. Their anti-Semitism was a reaction to the frustrations experienced in the family environment. The fact that fully proves the Jew is an object of substitution in anti-Semitism is that the same family situations, depending on local circumstances, produce a hatred of Blacks, anti-Catholicism or anti-Semitism. Contrary to current thinking we can safely say it is the attitude that finds the content and not the latter that creates the attitude." (Op. cit., p. 282.)

remarkable than having sex with a white man. It was before I did it that I had the orgasm. I used to think about (imagine) all the things he could do to me; and that was what was so great."

Still on the genital level, isn't the white man who hates Blacks prompted by a feeling of impotence or sexual inferiority? Since virility is taken to be the absolute ideal, doesn't he have a feeling of inadequacy in relation to the black man, who is viewed as a penis symbol? Isn't lynching the black man a sexual revenge? We know how sexualized torture, abuse, and ill-treatment can be. You only have to read a few pages of the marquis de Sade to be convinced. Is the black man's sexual superiority real? Everyone *knows* it isn't. But that is beside the point. The prelogical thought of the phobic has decided it is.²⁴ Another woman had a phobia about the black man after reading *Jirai cracher sur vos tombes*. We endeavored to show her the irrationality of her position by pointing out that the white victims were just as morbid as the black man. Furthermore, we added, this was not a case of black vengeance, as the title suggests, since Boris Vian was the author. Our effort was futile. The young woman would have none of it. Anyone who has read the book will easily understand the ambivalence this phobia expresses. We knew a black medical student who didn't dare do a vaginal examination in his gynecological unit. He admitted one day overhearing a patient say: "There's a Negro in

24. To remain with Charles Odier's terminology it would be more exact to say "paralogical": "The term 'paralogical' might be suggested for the regression of the neurotic adult." (*L'angoisse et la pensée magique*, p. 95.)

there. If he touches me I'll slap him. You never know with them. He must have great big hands and is probably a brute."

If we want to understand the racial situation psychoanalytically, not from a universal viewpoint, but as it is experienced by individual consciousnesses, considerable importance must be given to sexual phenomena. Regarding the Jew, we think of money and its derivatives. Regarding the black man, we think of sex. Anti-Semitism is likely to be rationalized from the angle of land ownership. It's because the Jews commandeer a country that they are dangerous. Recently a friend told us that although he wasn't anti-Semitic, he was forced to admit that most of the Jews he had known during the war had been real bastards. We vainly tried to get him to admit that such a statement was the result of willful determination to detect the Jewish essence wherever it might exist.

At a clinical level, we recall the story of a young woman who was delirious about being touched and was constantly washing her hands and arms, ever since she had been introduced to a Jew.

Since Jean-Paul Sartre has masterfully studied the question of anti-Semitism, let us try to see what we can find out about negrophobia. This phobia is located at an instinctual, biological level. Going to the extreme, we would say that the body of the black man hinders the closure of the white man's postural schema at the very moment when the black man emerges into the white man's phenomenal world. This is not the place to report on our findings regarding the influence one body has when irrupting onto another. (Let us take, for example, a group of four fifteen-year-old boys, all more or less athletes. One of them does the high jump at one meter forty-eight centimeters. A fifth boy arrives who jumps one meter fifty-two centimeters,

and the four other bodies are destructuralized.) What is important to us here is to show that the *biological cycle* begins with the black man.²⁵

25. On the basis of Lacan's concept of the *mirror stage* it would be certainly worthwhile investigating to what extent the imago that the young white boy constructs of his fellow man undergoes an imaginary aggression with the appearance of the black man. Once we have understood the process described by Lacan, there is no longer any doubt that the true "Other" for the white man is and remains the black man, and vice versa. For the white man, however, "the Other" is perceived as a bodily image, absolutely as the non ego, i.e., the unidentifiable, the unassimilable. For the black man we have demonstrated that the historical and economic realities must be taken into account. "The subject's recognition of his image in the mirror," Lacan says, "is a phenomenon that is doubly significant for the analysis of this stage: the phenomenon appears after six months and the study of it at that time shows in convincing fashion the tendencies that currently constitute reality for the subject; the mirror image, precisely because of these affinities, affords a good symbol of that reality: of its affective value, illusory like the image, and of its structure as it reflects the human form." (*Encyclopédie française*, 8.40, 9, and 10.)

We shall see that this discovery is fundamental: every time the subject sees his image and recognizes it, it is always "the inherent mental unity" that is recognized. In mental pathology, for example, if we take into consideration hallucinatory or interpretative delusions, this image of self is always respected. In other words, there is a certain structural harmony, a totality of the individual and his constructions that he conveys, at every stage of the delusional behavior. Apart from the fact that this fidelity can be attributed to the affective content, it nevertheless remains evidence that it would be unscientific to ignore. Every time there is delusional conviction there is a reproduction of self. It is above all in the period of anxiety and suspicion described by Dide and Guiraud that "the Other" intervenes. So it is not surprising to find the black man in the guise of a satyr or murderer. But at the stage of systematization, when conviction is being elaborated, there is no longer room for a stranger. Moreover, we would go so far as to say that the subject of the

No anti-Semite, for example, would ever think of castrating a Jew. The Jew is killed or sterilized. The black man, however, is castrated. The penis, symbol of virility, is eliminated; in other words, it is denied. The difference

black man in certain delusions (when it is not central) ranks with other phenomena such as zoopsia. Lhermitte has described the liberation of the body image. This is what is clinically called autoscopy. The suddenness with which this phenomenon occurs, says Lhermitte, is inordinately strange. It occurs even among normal persons such as Goethe, Taine, etc. We can say that the autoscopic hallucination in the Antillean is always neutral. To those who told us they have experienced it, we would ask the same question: "What color were you?" and get the response: "I was colorless." What is more, in hypnagogic visions, and especially what we call "salavinizations," after a Georges Duhamel character, the same process repeats itself. It is not I as a black person who acts, thinks, or is cheered.

Furthermore, for those who are interested in these findings, we recommend reading the French compositions by ten- to fourteen-year-old Antilleans. On the subject "impressions before going on vacation" they reply like genuine little Parisians and time and again the following phrase is repeated: "I like going on vacation as I can run through the fields, breathe in the fresh air, and come home with *pink* cheeks." It is obvious we are hardly mistaken when we say that the Antillean cannot recognize the fact of being black. We were perhaps thirteen when we saw the Senegalese for the first time. It was the veterans of the 1914 war who told us about them: "They attack with bayonets, and when the going gets tough they charge through the hail of machine gun fire brandishing their cutlasses. . . . They cut off heads and make a collection of ears." They were passing through Martinique, coming from French Guiana. We eagerly scoured the streets for a sight of their uniforms, the red tarboosh and belt, that we had heard so much about. Our father even went so far as to pick two of them up and bring them back home, much to the delight of the family. At school, the situation was no different. Our math teacher, a lieutenant in the reserve who had been in command of a unit of Senegalese troopers in 1914, used to make us shudder with his descriptions: "When they pray, they must

between the two attitudes is apparent. The Jew is attacked in his religious identity, his history, his race, and his relations with his ancestors and descendants; every time a Jew is sterilized, the bloodline is cut; every time a

never be disturbed, because then the officers just cease to exist. They fight like lions, but you have to respect their customs." Not surprisingly, Mayotte Capécia saw herself as pink and white in her dreams; it would even appear normal.

It might be argued that if the white man elaborates an imago of his fellow man, the same should be the case for the Antillean, since it is based on a visual perception. But we would be forgetting that in the Antilles perception always occurs at the level of the imagination. One's fellow man is perceived in white terms. People will say of someone, for instance, that he is "very black"; it is not surprising to hear the mother of a family remark: "X . . . is the darkest of my children." In other words, the least white. We can but repeat the remark made by a European colleague when we mentioned it to him: humanly speaking, it's a genuine mystification. Let us say it one more time: it is in reference to the essence of the white man that every Antillean is destined to be perceived by his fellows. In the Antilles as well as in France we encounter the same stories. In Paris, they say he is black but very intelligent. In Martinique, they say the same. During the war teachers came from Guadeloupe to Fort-de-France to correct the baccalaureate exams, and driven by curiosity, we even went to the hotel where Monsieur B, a philosophy teacher, was staying. He was said to be excessively black; as they say in Martinique, not without a certain irony, he was "blue." One family was highly regarded: "They're very black, but decent people." One of them is in fact a piano teacher, a former student at the Conservatoire; another is a teacher of natural science at the girls' lycée; etc. As for the father, who would walk up and down on his balcony at dusk, there came a certain moment, it was said, when he disappeared from sight. There was the story of another family living in the country whose children, on nights when the electricity went out, had to laugh so that their parents would know where they were. On Mondays, well scrubbed in their white linen suits, certain Martinican officials, according to local symbolism, look like "prunes in a bowl of milk."

Jew is persecuted, it is the whole race that is persecuted through him.

But the black man is attacked in his corporeality. It is his tangible personality that is lynched. It is his actual being that is dangerous. The Jewish peril is replaced by the fear of the black man's sexual power. In *Prospero and Caliban* O. Mannoni writes:

An argument widely used by racialists against those who do not share their convictions is worthy of mention for its revealing character. "What," they say, "if you had a daughter, do you mean to say that you would marry her to a Negro?" I have seen people who appeared to have no racist bias lose all critical sense when confronted with this kind of question. The reason is that such an argument disturbs certain uneasy feelings in them (more exactly, incestuous feelings) and they turn to racialism as a defense reaction.²⁶

Before we go on, I think it is important to ask the following questions: Admitting that such unconscious tendencies to incest exist, why do they manifest themselves more particularly with respect to the black man? In the absolute, in what way does a black son-in-law differ from a white one? In both cases, isn't there an emergence of unconscious tendencies? What is to stop us from thinking, for example, that the father violently objects because, in his opinion, the black man will introduce his daughter into a sexual universe for which the father has neither the key nor the weapons nor the attributes?

Every intellectual gain calls for a loss of sexual potential. The civilized white man retains an irrational nostalgia for the extraordinary times of sexual licentiousness,

26. Mannoni, op. cit., p. 111, note 1.

orgies, unpunished rapes, and unrepressed incest. In a sense, these fantasies correspond to Freud's life instinct. Projecting his desires onto the black man, the white man behaves as if the black man actually had them. As for the Jew, the problem is more clear-cut: people don't trust him, because he wants to possess wealth and be in a position of power. The black man is fixated at the genital level, or rather he has been fixated there. Two different spheres: the intellect and the sexual. Rodin's *Thinker* in erection—now there's a shocking image. One cannot decently have a hard-on everywhere. The black man represents the biological danger; the Jew, the intellectual danger.

To have a phobia about black men is to be afraid of the biological, for the black man is nothing but biological. Black men are animals. They live naked. And God only knows what else. . . . Mannoni goes on: "In his urge to identify the anthropoid apes, Caliban, the Negroes, even the Jews with the mythological figures of the satyrs, man reveals that there are sensitive spots in the human soul at a level²⁷ where thought becomes confused and where sexual excitement is strangely linked with violence and aggressiveness."²⁸

The author includes the Jew. We have no objection. But here the black man rules. He is the specialist in the matter: whoever says rape says black man.

Over a three- or four-year period, we questioned about 500 individuals from France, Germany, England, and Italy who were all white. We managed to create a certain trust,

27. When considering the responses given in daydreams, we shall see that these mythological figures or "archetypes" are indeed rooted deep in the human soul. Whenever the individual descends to that level we find the black man, physically or symbolically.

28. Mannoni, op. cit., p. 111.

a relaxed air in which our subjects would not be afraid to confide in us or were convinced they would not offend us. Or else during free association tests we would insert the word Negro among some twenty others. Almost sixty percent gave the following answers:

Negro = biological, sex, strong, athletic, powerful, boxer, Joe Louis, Jesse Owens, Senegalese infantrymen, savage, animal, devil, sin.

The mention of *Senegalese infantrymen* produced "fearsome, bloody, sturdy, and strong."

It is interesting to note that one in fifty reacted to the word Negro with "Nazi" or "SS." Knowing the affective charge of the image of the SS, we can see that there is not much difference from the previous answers. We should add that some Europeans helped us and put the question to their colleagues: the percentage increased sharply. The reason must be attributed to our being black; unconsciously, there was a certain self-restraint.

The Negro symbolizes the biological. First of all, Negroes' puberty begins at the age of nine, and by age ten they have children. They are highly sexed, hot-blooded; they have great stamina. As a white man said to us recently, with a slight bitterness in his voice: "You have strong constitutions." It's a handsome race; just look at the Senegalese infantrymen. Weren't they called our Black Devils during the war? But they must be brutes. I couldn't bear to have their big hands touch my shoulders. It would give me the shivers. Knowing that in certain cases we should read between the lines, we should conclude that this fragile little woman basically sees her frail shoulders being pummeled by the powerful black man. Sartre says that when the expression "young Jewish woman" is uttered, the imagination senses rape and plunder. Conversely, we could say that

in the expression "a handsome black man" there is a "possible" allusion to similar phenomena. I have always been struck by how quickly we switch from "handsome young black man" to "young colt or stud." In the film *Mourning Becomes Electra* a good deal of the intrigue is based on sexual rivalry. Orin rebukes his sister for having admired the magnificent naked natives of the South Seas. He cannot forgive her for it.²⁹

Analyzing the real is always a delicate task. A researcher can choose to adopt either of two attitudes toward his subject. First, he can be content with a description—like the anatomist who, in the middle of a description of the tibia, is surprised to be asked how many fibular depressions he has. This is because his research always focuses on others and never on himself. In our early days as a medical student, after several nauseating sessions of dissection, we

29. Note that the situation is ambiguous. Orin is also jealous of his sister's fiancé. On a psychoanalytical level the plot is as follows: Orin, who suffers from the abandonment neurosis, is obsessed with his mother and is incapable of achieving a genuine object cathexis of his libido. See, for example, his behavior toward his so-called fiancée. Vinnie, who, for her part, is obsessed with their father, proves to Orin that his mother is unfaithful. But let there be no mistake about it. She acts as an agent of indictment (a process of introjection). Confronted with proof of the betrayal, Orin kills the rival. In reaction the mother commits suicide. Orin's libido, which needs to be invested in the same manner, turns toward Vinnie, who in behavior and even appearance takes the place of their mother. Consequently—and this is beautifully handled in the film—Orin lives an oedipal incest with his sister. So it is understandable that Orin fills the air with his lamentations and reproach at the announcement of his sister's marriage. But in his conflict with the fiancé, it is emotion and affectivity he encounters; with the black man, the magnificent native, the conflict is located at the genital and biological level.

asked an old hand how we could avoid the malaise. He replied quite simply: "My dear fellow, pretend you're dissecting a cat and everything will be OK."

Or, second, after having described the real, the researcher can set out to change it. In theory, moreover, the descriptive method seems to imply a critical approach and, consequently, the need to go farther toward a solution. There are too many official and unofficial stories about black people that cannot be swept under the carpet. But putting them all together gets us nowhere as regards the real job, which is to demonstrate their mechanism. What is essential to us is not to accumulate facts and behavior, but to bring out their meaning. For that we can claim to adhere to what Jaspers wrote: "Close contemplation of an individual case often teaches us of phenomena common to countless others. What we have once grasped in this way is usually encountered again. It is not so much the number of cases seen that matters in phenomenology but the extent of the inner exploration of the individual case, which needs to be carried to the furthest possible limit."³⁰ The question that arises is the following: can the white man behave in a sane manner toward the black man and can the black man behave in a sane manner toward the white man?

A pseudo argument, some will say. But when we assert that European culture has an imago of the black man that makes him responsible for every possible conflictual situation, we have kept within reality. In the chapter on language we demonstrated that the black man faithfully reproduces this imago on-screen. Even serious writers, such as Michel Cournot, have subscribed to it:

30. Karl Jaspers, *General Psychopathology*, vol. 1, translated from the German by J. Hoenig and Marian W. Hamilton, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, p. 56.

The black man's prick is a sword. When he has thrust it into your wife, she really feels something. It comes as a revelation. In the chasm it has left, your little bauble is lost. Pump away until the room is awash with your sweat; you might as well be singing. This is good-bye. . . . Four black men with their dicks out in the open would fill a cathedral. In order to get out, they will have to wait for things to shrink to normal; and in such close quarters it won't be a simple matter.

In order to feel comfortable and make things easier for them, they have the open air. But a hard affront lies in store for them; that of the palm tree, the breadfruit, and so many other proud temperaments that would not lose their hard-ons for an empire, erect as they are for eternity and soaring to heights difficult to reach.³¹

When we read this passage a dozen times and we let ourselves be carried away by the movement of its images, no longer do we see the black man; we see a penis: the black man has been occulted. He has been turned into a penis. He *is* a penis. We can easily imagine what such descriptions can arouse in a young woman from Lyon. Horror? Desire? Not indifference, in any case. So what is the truth? The average length of the African's penis, according to Dr. Palès, is seldom greater than 120 millimeters (4.68 inches). Testut in his *Traité d'anatomie humaine* gives the same figure for a European. But nobody is convinced by these facts. The white man is convinced the black man is an animal; if it is not the length of his penis, it's his sexual power that impresses the white man. Confronted with this alterity, the white man needs to defend himself, i.e., to characterize "the Other," who will become the mainstay of his preoccupations and his

31. *Martinique*, Collection Métamorphoses, Gallimard, pp. 13-14.

desires.³² The prostitute we mentioned earlier told us that her search for black men can be traced back to the day when she was told the following story. One night a woman who was having sex with a black man lost her mind; she remained insane for two years, but once she was cured, she refused to sleep with another man. The prostitute did not know what had driven the woman mad, but in a frenzy tried to simulate the situation and discover the ineffable secret. It must be understood that what she wanted was

32. By accepting the notion of prejudice (in its etymological sense) some authors have tried to show why the white man has difficulty understanding the black man's sexuality. This is a passage by Dr. Pédrals which, although it conveys the truth, ignores the deep causes of the white man's "opinion": "The black child feels neither surprise nor shame at the display of sexuality, because he is told whatever he wants to know. It is fairly obvious, without resorting further to the subtleties of psychoanalysis, that this difference cannot fail to have an effect on his way of thinking and consequently, acting. Since the sexual act is presented to him as being the most natural, even the most commendable, thing, with regard to the end result of reproduction, the African will always keep this notion in mind throughout his life, whereas the European will, as long as he lives, unconsciously retain a guilt complex that neither reason nor experience will ever manage to dissipate. In this way the African is inclined to view his sexuality as a mere part of his physiological life, just like eating, drinking, and sleeping. A conception of this type is, we imagine, outside the realm of convolutions in which the European mind is trained to conciliate the tendencies of a tortured conscience, a wavering reason, and a fettered instinct. Hence a fundamental difference, not in the order of nature or constitution, but of conception; hence also the fact that the sexual instinct, stripped of the aura given it by our literary masterpieces, is not at all the dominant element in the life of the African as it is in our own, contrasting sharply with the statements of *too many observers who are inclined to explain what they have seen by the sole method of self-analysis.*" (*La vie sexuelle en Afrique noire*, pp. 28-29. My italics.)

to break with her being and to volatilize at a sexual level. Every time she experimented with a black man, the experience consolidated her limitations. The delirium of orgasm escaped her. She was unable to experience it, so she took her revenge by losing herself in speculation.

One thing should be mentioned in this connection: a white woman who has had sex with a black man is reluctant to take a white lover. At least this is the belief we encountered, especially among white men: "Who knows what 'they' do to them?" Yes, *who* knows? Certainly not black men. On this subject we cannot overlook a remark by Etiemble:

Racial jealousy is an incitement to crimes of racism: for many white men, the black man is precisely that magic sword which, once it has transfixed their wives, leaves them forever transfigured. My statistical sources have been unable to provide me with figures on this topic. Yet I have known a number of black men, and white women who knew black men, and black women who knew white men. I have been confided in enough to regret that Monsieur Cournot applies his talent to reviving the fable in which the white man will always find a specious argument: shameful, dubious, and therefore doubly effective.³³

Cataloging reality is a colossal task. We accumulate facts; we comment on them; but with every line we write, with every proposal we set forth, we get the feeling of something unfinished. Attacking Jean-Paul Sartre, Gabriel d'Arbousier writes:

This anthology that puts Antilleans, Guyanese, Senegalese, and Malagasies on the same footing creates a regrettable confusion. It thus poses the cultural problem of overseas

33. "Sur le *Martinique* de Michel Cournot," *Temps Modernes*, February 1950.

territories by detaching the cultural issue from the historical and social reality of each country as well as the national characteristics and different conditions imposed on each of them by imperialist exploitation and oppression. So when Sartre writes: "Simply by plunging into the depths of his memory as a former slave, the black man asserts that suffering is man's lot and that it is no less undeserved on that account," does he realize what this might mean for a Hova, a Moor, a Tuareg, a Fula, or a Bantu from the Congo or the Ivory Coast?³⁴

The objection is valid. It concerns us too. At the start, we wanted to confine ourselves to the Antilles. But dialectics, at all cost, got the upper hand and we have been forced to *see* that the Antillean is above all a black man. Nevertheless, we should not forget that there are Blacks of Belgian, French, and British nationality and that there are black republics. How can we claim to grasp the essence when such facts demand our attention? The truth is that the black race is dispersed and is no longer unified. When Il Duce invaded Ethiopia, there were signs of solidarity among people of color. But although one or two airplanes were sent by America to help those under attack, no single black person made a move. The black man has a homeland and takes his place within a union or a commonwealth. Any description must be located at the phenomenal level, but here again this refers us back to unlimited perspectives. The universal situation of the black man is ambiguous, but this is resolved in his physical existence. This in a way puts him alongside the Jew. In order to counter the alleged obstacles above, we shall resort to the obvious fact that *wherever he goes, a black man remains a black man.*

34. Gabriel d'Arbousier: "Une dangereuse mystification: La théorie de la négritude," *La Nouvelle Critique*, 1949.

The black man has penetrated the culture of certain countries. As we indicated above, we cannot attach enough importance to the way white children come into contact with the black man's reality. In the United States, for example, the white child, even if he does not live in the South, where the Blacks are a visible presence, knows them through the stories of Uncle Remus. In France, it would be through *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Miss Sally's and Marse John's little boy listens to the tales of Brer Rabbit with a mixture of fear and admiration. For Bernard Wolfe this ambivalence of the white man is the dominant factor in white Americans' psychology. Using evidence from the life of Joel Chandler Harris, he even goes so far as to demonstrate that his admiration corresponds to a certain identification of the white man with the black man. We know full well what these stories are about. Brer Rabbit enters into conflict with practically every animal under the sun, and naturally he always wins. These stories belong to the oral tradition of the Blacks on the plantation. Therefore it is relatively easy to recognize the black man in his extraordinarily ironical and artful disguise as the rabbit. In order to protect himself from his unconscious masochism, which obliges him to go into raptures over the (black) rabbit's prowess, the white man has endeavored to remove any potential aggressiveness from these stories. As a result, he has convinced himself that the black man makes the animals act *like an inferior order of human intelligence, the kind the black man himself can understand*, and that the black man naturally feels *in closer contact with the "inferior animals" than with the white man who is so superior to him in every respect*. Others have argued in all seriousness that these stories were not a response to the conditions imposed on the Blacks in the United States, but merely *relics from the African past*. Wolfe provides the key to this interpretation:

In all evidence, Brer Rabbit is an animal because the black man must be an animal. The rabbit is an outsider because the black man must be branded as an outsider down to his chromosomes. Ever since slavery began, his Christian and democratic guilt as slave owner has led the Southerner to define the black man as an animal, an unshakeable African whose nature is fixed in his protoplasm by "African" genes. The black man has been assigned to human limbo not because of America but because of the constitutional inferiority of his ancestors in the jungle.

Thus the Southerner refused to see in these stories the aggressiveness the black man instilled in them. But, says Wolfe, Harris, the compiler, was a psychopath:

He was particularly suitable for this work because he was filled to bursting with pathological racial obsessions in addition to those that were eating away at the South and, to a lesser degree, all of white America. . . . In actual fact, for Harris as well as for many other white Americans, the black man seemed to be in every respect the negation of his own anxious ego: carefree, sociable, eloquent, muscularly relaxed, never a victim of boredom, or passive, a shameless exhibitionist, devoid of self-pity in a situation of intense suffering, and exuberant.

But Harris always had the feeling of being handicapped. So Wolfe sees in him a frustrated man—not according to the classic schema, but in his essence, wherein lay the impossibility of living the black man's "natural" mode of existence. No one has forbidden him; it is just impossible. Not forbidden, but unachievable. And it is because the white man feels frustrated by the black man that he in turn seeks to frustrate the black man, hemming him in with taboos of all sorts. Let us listen to Wolfe again:

The Uncle Remus stories are a monument to the ambivalence of the South. Harris, the archetypal Southerner, went

in search of the black man's love and claimed he found it (Remus's *grin*).³⁵ But at the same time he was searching for his hatred of the black man (Brer Rabbit) and reveled in it in an orgy of unconscious masochism, very possibly punishing himself for not being the black man, the black stereotype, the prodigious "donor." Is it not possible that the white South and perhaps the majority of white America often acts likewise in its relations with the black man?

There is a quest for the black man. He is yearned for; white men can't get along without him. He is in demand, but they want him seasoned a certain way. Unfortunately, the black man demolishes the system and violates the agreements. Will the white man revolt? No, he'll come to an arrangement. This fact, says Wolfe, explains why so many books dealing with racism become *best sellers*.³⁶

"Nobody is certainly *obliged* to read stories of black men making love to white women (*Deep Are the Roots, Strange Fruit, Uncle Remus*), of Whites discovering they are black (*Kingsblood Royal, Lost Boundary, Uncle Remus*) and Whites strangled by Blacks (*Native Son, If He Hollers Let Him Go, Uncle Remus*). We can package the black man's *grin* and market it on a grand scale in our popular culture as a cloak for this masochism: the caress sweetens the attack. And as *Uncle Remus* demonstrates, the race game is here largely unconscious. The white man is no more conscious of his masochism when he is titillated by the subtle content of the

35. Translator's note: In English in the original. The character of Uncle Remus was created by Harris. The figure of this ingratiating, melancholic old slave with his eternal grin is one of the most typical images of the American Black.

36. Translator's note: In English in the original. See also the number of black films over the last ten years. And yet all the producers are white.

stereotyped *grin* than the black man is aware of his sadism when he converts the stereotype into a cultural bludgeon. Perhaps less so.³⁷

As we can see, in the United States the black man creates stories where he has a possibility of exerting his aggressiveness; the white man's unconscious justifies and enhances this aggressiveness by shifting it to himself, thus reproducing the classic schema of masochism.³⁸

We can now plant a milestone. For the majority of Whites the black man represents the (uneducated) sexual instinct. He embodies genital power out of reach of morals and taboos. As for white women, reasoning by induction, they invariably see the black man at the intangible gate leading to the realm of mystic rites and orgies, bacchanals and hallucinating sexual sensations. We have demonstrated that reality invalidates all these beliefs, which are based in the imagination, or at least in illogical reasoning. The white man who endows the black man with a malefic influence regresses intellectually, since we have shown (in the analysis of comic books) that his perception is based on a mental age of eight. Aren't there, concurrently, regression and fixation at the pregenital stages of sexual development? Self-castration? (The black man is imagined

37. Bernard Wolfe, "L'Oncle Rémus et son lapin," *Les Temps Modernes*, no. 43, May 1949.

38. The usual response in the United States when there is a call for equality of the Blacks is: they are just waiting for that moment to throw themselves on our women. Since the white man behaves in an insulting manner toward the black man, he realizes that if he were black he would have no mercy for his aggressors. So it is not surprising to see him identify with the black man: white hot jazz bands and blues and spirituals singers, white authors writing novels where the black hero airs his grievances, and whites in blackface.

to have a gigantic member.) Passivity, explained by acknowledging that the black man is superior in terms of virility? You can see the number of questions that would be interesting to raise. There are men, for example, who go to brothels to be whipped by black men; there are passive homosexuals who insist on black partners.

Another solution would be the following. There is first of all sadistic aggressiveness toward the black man, then a guilt complex because of the sanction by the democratic culture of the country in question that weighs heavily against such behavior. Such aggressiveness is suffered by the black man—hence masochism. But, it will be argued, your schema is false: there are no signs of conventional masochism. Perhaps, in fact, the situation is not conventional. In any case, it's the only way to explain the masochistic behavior of the white man.

From a heuristic point of view, without basing it on reality, we would like to offer an explanation of this fantasy: "A black man is raping me." Ever since the research by Helen Deutsch³⁹ and Marie Bonaparte,⁴⁰ both of whom followed up and in a way carried to their ultimate conclusion the ideas of Freud on female sexuality, we know that alternately clitoral, clitoral-vaginal, then purely vaginal, the female—keeping more or less interlinked both her libido as a passive concept and her aggressiveness, having surmounted her double Oedipus complex—arrives at the end of her biological and psychological development by accepting her role achieved by neuropsychic integration. We cannot, however, ignore certain failures or certain fixations.

39. *The Psychology of Women*.

40. *De la sexualité de la femme*.

There is an active Oedipus complex that corresponds to the clitoral stage, although, according to Marie Bonaparte, it is not a sequence but a coexistence of the active and the passive. The desexualization of aggressiveness is less complete in a girl than in a boy.⁴¹ The clitoris is seen as a truncated penis, but going beyond the concrete, the girl retains only the quality. It is in qualitative terms that she apprehends reality. As in the boy, there are instincts in her directed at the mother; she too would like to tear open the mother.

We wonder, however, whether alongside the finality of femininity, this infantile fantasy does not survive. "Too strong an aversion to the rough games of men is, moreover, a suspicious sign of male protest and excessive bisexuality. Such a woman has every chance of being clitoral."⁴² Here is what we think. The little girl sees her father, a libidinal aggressive, beat a rival sibling. The father, now the focus of her libido, refuses in a way to assume the aggressiveness that at this stage (between the ages of five and nine) the girl's unconscious demands of him. At this point, this unfounded, liberated aggressiveness is seeking a cathexis. Since the girl is at the age when children plunge into their culture's stories and legends, the black man becomes the predestined depositary of this aggressiveness. If we penetrate the labyrinth farther, we discover that when a woman lives the fantasy of rape by a black man, it is a kind of fulfilment of a personal dream or an intimate wish. Accomplishing the phenomenon of turning around upon the subject's own self, it is the woman who rapes herself. We can find clear proof of this in the fact that it is not

41. Marie Bonaparte, "De la sexualité de la femme," *Revue Française de Psychanalyse*, April-June, 1949.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 180.

unusual for women to cry to their partner during coitus: "Hurt me!" They are merely expressing the idea: "Hurt me as I would do if I were in your place." The fantasy of rape by the black man is a variant of this: "I want the black man to rip me open as I would do to a woman." Those who grant us our findings on the psychosexuality of the white woman may well ask us what we have to say about the black woman. We know nothing about her. What we can suggest, nevertheless, is that for many Antillean women, whom we shall call the almost white, the aggressor is represented by the typical Senegalese or in any case by a so-called inferior.

The black man is genital. Is this the whole story? Unfortunately not. The black man is something else. Here again, our paths cross with the Jew. Sex separates us, but we do have one thing in common. Both of us stand for evil. The black man more so, for the good reason that he is black. Doesn't white symbolize justice, truth, and virginity? We knew an Antillean who, speaking of a fellow islander, said: "His body is black; his tongue is black; his soul must be black too." The white man practices this logic daily. The black man is the symbol of evil and ugliness.

In his latest essay on psychiatry⁴³ Henri Baruk describes what he calls the anti-Semitic psychoses.

In one of our patients the vulgarity and obscenity of his ravings transcended all that the French language could furnish and took the form of pederastic allusions⁴⁴ with which the

43. Masson, 1950, p. 371.

44. Let us mention in passing that we have never observed the overt presence of homosexuality in Martinique, the reason being the absence of the Oedipus complex in the Antilles. The schema of homosexuality is well known to us. There are, nevertheless, what they call "men dressed as women" or *makoumè*. They mainly wear a jacket and skirt. But we

patient deflected his inner hatred in transferring it to the scapegoat of the Jews, calling for them to be slaughtered. Another patient, suffering from a fit of delirium aggravated by the events of 1940, had such violent anti-Semitic feelings that one day in a hotel, suspecting the man in the next room to be a Jew, he broke into his room during the night to beat him.

A third patient, with a physically weak constitution, suffering from chronic colitis, was humiliated by his poor health and ultimately ascribed it to poisoning by a "bacterial soup" given to him by one of the male nurses in an institution where he had been earlier—nurses who were anticlerical and Communists, he said, and who had wanted to punish him for his Catholic convictions and beliefs. Once he had arrived in our unit, safe from "those left-wingers," he felt he was between Scylla and Charybdis, since he found himself in the hands of a Jew. By definition this Jew could only be a thief, a monster, a man capable of every crime imaginable.

Confronted with this rising aggressiveness, the Jew will have to take a stand. Here is all the ambiguity that Sartre describes. Certain pages of *Anti-Semite and Jew* are some of the finest we have ever read. The finest, because the problem they raise moves us to the very core.⁴⁵

The Jew, be he authentic or inauthentic, is labeled a *salaud*. Such is the situation that anything he does is

are convinced that they lead a normal sexual life. They drink rum punch like any other guy, and are not insensitive to the charms of women, be they fishwives or vegetable sellers. In Europe, on the other hand, we have known colleagues who have become homosexuals, though always passive. But there was nothing neurotic in their homosexuality and for them it was an expedient, as pimping is for others.

45. We are thinking in particular of this passage: "Such then is this haunted man, condemned to make his choice of himself on the basis of false problems and in a false situation, deprived of the metaphysical sense by the hostility of the society that surrounds him, driven to a

bound to turn against him. For naturally the Jew can decide who he wants to be, and he can even forget his Jewishness, hide it or hide it from himself. He thus recognizes the validity of the Aryan system. There is good and there is evil. The evil is Jewish. Everything that is Jewish is ugly. Let us no longer be Jews. I am no longer a Jew. Down with the Jews. As it happens, the Jews who reason thus are the most aggressive. Like that patient of Baruk's with a persecution complex, who, seeing him one day wearing a yellow star, eyed him scornfully and shouted with contempt: "Well, I, sir, am French!" And this other patient: "Being treated by our colleague, Dr. Daday, I found myself in a ward where one of his Jewish patients had been taunted and insulted by the other patients. A non-Jewish patient had gone to her defense. The Jewish patient thereupon turned on the woman who had defended the Jews, hurling every

rationalism of despair. His life is nothing but a long flight from others and from himself. He has been alienated even from his own body; his emotional life has been cut in two; he has been reduced to pursuing the impossible dream of universal brotherhood in a world that rejects him. Whose is the fault? It is our eyes that reflect to him the unacceptable image that he wishes to dissimulate. It is our words and our gestures—all our words and all our gestures, our anti-Semitism, but equally our condescending liberalism—that have poisoned him. It is we who constrain him to choose to be a Jew *whether through flight from himself or through self-assertion*; it is we who force him into the dilemma of Jewish authenticity or inauthenticity. . . . This species that *bears witness for essential humanity* better than any other because it was born of secondary reactions within the body of humanity—this quintessence of man, disgraced, uprooted, destined from the start to either inauthenticity or martyrdom. In this situation there is not one of us who is not totally guilty and even criminal; the Jewish blood that the Nazis shed falls on all our heads. (Pp. 135–136.)

possible anti-Semitic slander at her and demanding they get rid of the Jewess."⁴⁶

Here we have a good example of a reactional phenomenon. In reaction against anti-Semitism, the Jew becomes an anti-Semite. This is what Sartre shows in *The Reprieve*, when Birnenschatz manages to live his renunciation with an intensity bordering on delirium. We shall see that the word is not too strong. Americans staying in Paris are amazed to see the number of white women accompanied by black men. In New York, while Simone de Beauvoir was walking with Richard Wright, she was reprimanded by an old lady. Sartre said: Here it's the Jew; elsewhere it's the Black. What is needed is a scapegoat. Baruk says the same: "We shall only be free of hate complexes once mankind has learned to repudiate the complex of the scapegoat."

Transgression, guilt, denial of guilt, paranoia: we are back in homosexual territory. To sum up, what others have said about the Jew applies perfectly to the black man.⁴⁷

Good-evil, beauty-ugliness, black-white: such are the characteristic pairings of the phenomenon that, using an expression by Dide and Guiraud, we shall call "delirious Manichaeism."⁴⁸

Seeing only one type of black man and equating anti-Semitism with negrophobia seem to be the errors of analy-

46. Baruk, op. cit., pp. 372-373.

47. This is what Marie Bonaparte writes: "The anti-Semite projects onto the Jew, attributes to the Jew all his own more or less unconscious bad instincts. . . . Thus, by shifting them onto the shoulders of the Jew, he has purged himself of them in his own eyes and sees himself in shining purity. The Jew thus lends himself magnificently as a projection of the Devil. . . . The black man in the United States also assumes the same function of fixation." (*Mythes de guerre*, no. 1, p. 145.)

48. Masson, *Psychiatrie du médecin praticien*, 1922, p. 164.

sis committed in these arguments. I was talking about my work to someone who asked me what I expected the outcome to be. Since Sartre's authoritative essay "What is Literature?" (*Situations II*), literature increasingly involves itself in its only real task, which is to get society to reflect and mediate. My book is, I hope, a mirror with a progressive infrastructure where the black man can find the path to disalienation.

When there is no longer the "human minimum," there is no culture. I have little interest in knowing that "Muntu is Force" among the Bantus⁴⁹—or at least it might have interested me, except that certain details bother me. What is the point of meditating on Bantu ontology when we read elsewhere:

When 75,000 black miners went on strike in 1946, the state police forced them back to work with the barrel of the gun and bayonets. Twenty-five were killed and thousands wounded.

At the time Smuts was the head of government and a delegate at the Peace Conference. On the white farms, the black workers live almost like serfs. They are allowed to bring their families with them, but no man can leave the farm without permission from his master. If he does, the police are notified and he is brought back by force and whipped.

Under the Act for Native Administration, the governor-general, as the supreme authority, has autocratic powers over the Africans. He can, by proclamation, arrest and detain any African considered a threat to disturbing the peace. He can prohibit meetings of more than ten people in any native sector. There is no habeas corpus for the Africans. Mass arrests without warrants are made at any moment.

49. Reverend Tempels, *La philosophie bantoue*.

The nonwhite population of South Africa is at an impasse. Every modern form of slavery prevents them from escaping this scourge. In the case of the African, in particular, white society has crushed his old world without giving him a new one. It has destroyed the traditional tribal foundations of his existence and bars the road to his future after having closed the road of his past . . .

Apartheid aspires to banish the black man from participating in modern history as a free and independent force.⁵⁰

We apologize for this long extract, but it allows us to show how black men have possibly erred. Alioune Diop, for example, in his introduction to *La philosophie bantoue*, notes that the metaphysical misery of Europe is unknown in Bantu ontology. What he infers is nevertheless dangerous:

The double-sided question is to know whether black genius should cultivate its originality, i.e., that youth of spirit, that inherent respect for man and creation, this joie de vivre, this peace which is not the disfigurement man is subjected to by moral hygiene, but a natural harmony with the radiant majesty of life. We may ask ourselves too what the black man can contribute to the modern world. What we can say is that the very notion of culture as a revolutionary intention is contrary to our genius as is the very notion of progress. Progress would have haunted our consciousness only if we had grievances against life, a gift of nature.

Beware, reader! There is no question of finding "being" in Bantu thought when Bantus live at the level of nonbeing and the imponderable.⁵¹ Of course Bantu philosophy does not let itself to being interpreted on the basis of revolutionary intention. But it is precisely insofar as Bantu society is a closed society that we do not find the exploiter substituting

50. I. R. Skine, "Apartheid en Afrique du Sud," *Les Temps Modernes*, July 1950.

51. See, for example, Alan Paton, *Cry, the Beloved Country*.

for the ontological relations of "force." We know full well that Bantu society no longer exists. And there is nothing ontological about segregation. Enough of this outrage.

For some time now there has been much talk about the black man. A little too much. The black man would like to be forgotten, so as to gather his force, his authentic force.

One day he said: "My negritude is neither a tower . . ."

And then they came to hellenize him, to Orpheusize him . . . this black man who is seeking the universal. Seeking the universal! But in June 1950 the hotels in Paris refused to take in black travelers. Why? Quite simply because their American guests (who are rich and negrophobic, as everyone knows) threatened to move out.

The black man aims for the universal, but on-screen his black essence, his black "nature" is kept intact:

Always at your service
Always deferential and smiling
Me never steal, me never lie,
Eternally grinning *y a bon Banania*.*

The black man is universalizing himself, but at the lycée Saint-Louis in Paris, they threw one out: had the cheek to read Engels.

There is a problem here, and black intellectuals risk getting caught in it.

How come I have barely opened my eyes they had blindfolded, and they already want to drown me in the universal? And what about the others? Those "who have no mouth," those "who have no voice." I need to lose myself in my negritude and see the ashes, the segregation, the

*Translator's note: This was the poster of a grinning black colonial infantryman eating a breakfast cereal that was a familiar sight in France in the 1940s and 1950s. The Senegalese poet Leopold Sedar Senghor wanted to rip it down from all the walls of France.

repression, the rapes, the discrimination, and the boycotts. We need to touch with our finger all the wounds that score our black livery.

We can already imagine Alioune Diop wondering what will be the place of the black genius in the universal chorus. We claim, however, that a genuine culture cannot be born under present conditions. Let us talk of black genius once man has regained his true place.

Once again we call upon Césaire; we would like a lot of black intellectuals to get their inspiration from him. I too must repeat to myself: "And above all, beware, my body and my soul too, beware of crossing your arms in the sterile attitude of the spectator, because life is not a spectacle; because a sea of sorrows is not a proscenium, because a man who screams is not a dancing bear."

Continuing my catalog of reality, endeavoring to determine the moment of symbolic crystallization, I found myself quite naturally at the threshold of Jungian psychology. European civilization is characterized by the presence, at the heart of what Jung calls the collective unconscious, of an archetype: an expression of bad instincts, of the darkness inherent in every ego, of the uncivilized savage and the black man who slumbers in every white man. And Jung claims to have found in primitive peoples the same psychic structure that his diagram portrays. Personally, I think Jung is deluding himself. Moreover, all the peoples he studied—Pueblo Indians from Arizona or the Blacks from Kenya in British East Africa—have had more or less traumatic contact with the white man. We said earlier that in his "salavinizations,"* the young Antillean is never black; and we have attempted

*Translator's note: Although Fanon does not explain this term, we would add as footnote: Salavin is a character created by Georges Duhamel, who is an alienated individual failing to find his niche in society.

to show what this phenomenon corresponds to. Jung locates the collective unconscious in the inherited cerebral matter. But there is no need to resort to the genes; the collective unconscious is quite simply the repository of prejudices, myths, and collective attitudes of a particular group. It is generally agreed, for example, that the Jews who settled in Israel will give birth in less than 100 years to a collective unconscious different from the one they had in 1945 in the countries from which they were expelled.

A philosophical discussion would raise the old issue of instinct and habit: instinct, which is innate (we know how this "innateness" should be considered), invariable, and specific; habit, which is acquired. We need quite simply to demonstrate that Jung confuses instinct and habit. According to him, the collective unconscious is part of the psyche; the myths and archetypes are permanent engrams of the species. We hope we have shown that this collective unconscious is nothing of the sort and that, in fact, it is cultural, i.e., it is acquired. Just as a young country fellow from the Carpathians, under the physicochemical conditions of the region, shows symptoms of myxedema, so a black man like René Maran, who has lived in France, breathed in and ingested the myths and prejudices of a racist Europe, and assimilated its collective unconscious, can, if he splits his personality, but assert his hatred of the black man. We need to move slowly, and the problem lies in having to gradually expose mechanisms that reveal themselves in their totality. Can this statement be fully understood? *In Europe, evil is symbolized by the black man.* We have to move slowly—that we know—but it's not easy. The perpetrator is the black man; Satan is black; one talks of darkness; when you are filthy you are dirty—and this goes for physical dirt as well as moral dirt. If you took the trouble to note them, you

would be surprised at the number of expressions that equate the black man with sin. In Europe, the black man, whether physically or symbolically, represents the dark side of the personality. As long as you haven't understood this statement, discussing the "black problem" will get you nowhere. Darkness, obscurity, shadows, gloom, night, the labyrinth of the underworld, the murky depths, blackening someone's reputation; and on the other side, the bright look of innocence, the white dove of peace, magical heavenly light. A beautiful blond child—how much peace there is in that phrase, how much joy, and above all how much hope! No comparison with a beautiful black child: the adjectives literally don't go together. Nevertheless, I won't go into the stories of black angels. In Europe, i.e., in all the civilized and civilizing countries, the black man symbolizes sin. The archetype of inferior values is represented by the black man. And it is precisely the same antinomy that we find in Desoille's *waking dreams*. How can we explain, for example, that the unconscious, representing base and inferior characteristics, is colored black? In Desoille's work, the situation is (no pun intended) clearer, since it is always a question of going up or down. When I go down, I see caves and caverns where savages dance. Above all, be careful not to mix things up. For example in one of Desoille's waking-dream sessions, we encounter some Gauls in a cave. But—need we say it?—the Gaul is a simple soul. A Gaul in a cave: it's like a family likeness, perhaps because of "our ancestors the Gauls." I believe we need to become a child again to understand certain psychic realities. This is why Jung is an innovator: he wants to reach out to the childhood of the world. But he makes a big mistake: he reaches out only to the childhood of Europe.

Deep down in the European unconscious has been hollowed out an excessively black pit where the most im-

moral instincts and unmentionable desires slumber. And since every man aspires to whiteness and light, the European has attempted to repudiate this primitive personality, which does its best to defend itself. When European civilization came into contact with the black world, with these savages, everyone was in agreement that these black people were the essence of evil.

Jung regularly assimilates the outsider with darkness and baser instincts. He is quite right. This mechanism of projection or, if you prefer, transitivity, has been described in conventional psychoanalysis. Whenever I discover something out of the ordinary, something reprehensible in me, I have no other alternative but to get rid of it and attribute its paternity to someone else. Thereby I put an end to a circuit of high tension that threatened to compromise my equilibrium. We must be careful during the first sessions of waking-dream therapy not to descend too quickly. The patient must come to understand the mechanisms of sublimation before coming into contact with the unconscious. If a black man appears during the first session, he must be removed at once. In order to do this, suggest a stairway or a rope, or some means for the patient to be propelled away. The black man will, unfailingly, remain in his hole. In Europe the black man has a function: to represent shameful feelings, base instincts, and the dark side of the soul. In the collective unconscious of *Homo occidentalis* the black man—or, if you prefer, the color black—symbolizes evil, sin, wretchedness, death, war, and famine. Every bird of prey is black. In Martinique, which is a European country in its collective unconscious, when a jet-black person pays you a visit, the reaction is: "What misfortune brings him?"

The collective unconscious is not governed by cerebral heredity: it is the consequence of what I shall call an impulsive cultural imposition. It is not surprising, then, that

when an Antillean is subjected to waking-dream therapy he relives the same fantasies as the European. The fact is that the Antillean has the same collective unconscious as the European.

If you have understood this, then you are likely to come to the following conclusion: it is normal for the Antillean to be a negrophobe. Through his collective unconscious the Antillean has assimilated all the archetypes of the European. The anima of the Antillean male is always a white woman. Likewise, the animus of the Antilleans is always a white male. The reason is that there is never a mention in Anatole France, Balzac, Bazin, or any other of "our" novelists of that ethereal yet ever-present black woman or of a dark Apollo with sparkling eyes. But I have betrayed myself; here I am talking of Apollo! It's no good: I'm a white man. Unconsciously, then, I distrust what is black in me, in other words, the totality of my being.

I am a black man—but naturally I don't know it, because I am one. At home my mother sings me, in French, French love songs where there is never a mention of black people. Whenever I am naughty or when I make too much noise, I am told to "stop acting like a nigger."

A little later on we read white books and we gradually assimilate the prejudices, the myths, and the folklore that come from Europe. But we don't accept everything, since certain prejudices do not apply to the Antilles. Anti-Semitism, for example, does not exist, because there are no Jews or very few. Without resorting to the notion of collective catharsis it is easy for me to demonstrate that the black man impulsively chooses to shoulder the burden of original sin. For this role, the white man chooses the black man, and the black man who is a white man also chooses the black man. The Antillean is a slave to this cultural imposition. After having been a slave of the white man, he enslaves himself.

The black man is, in every sense of the word, a victim of white civilization. It is not surprising that the artistic creations of Antillean poets bear no specific mark: they are white men. To return to psychopathology, we can say that the black man lives an ambiguity that is extraordinarily neurotic. At the age of twenty—i.e., at the time when the collective unconscious is more or less lost or at least difficult to bring back to the realm of the conscious—the Antillean realizes he has been living a mistake. Why is that? Quite simply because (and this is very important) the Antillean knows he is black, but because of an ethical shift, he realizes (the collective unconscious) that one is black as a result of being wicked, spineless, evil, and instinctual. Everything that is the opposite of this black behavior is white. This must be seen as the origin of the Antillean's negrophobia. In the collective unconscious black = ugliness, sin, darkness, and immorality. In other words, he who is immoral is black. If I behave like a man with morals, I am not black. Hence the saying in Martinique that a wicked white man has the soul of a nigger. Color is nothing; I don't even see it. The only thing I know is the purity of my conscience and the whiteness of my soul. "Me white as snow," as the saying goes.

Cultural imposition is easily at work in Martinique. The ethical shift encounters no obstacle. But the real white man is waiting for me. He will tell me on the very first occasion that it is not enough for the intention to be white; whiteness has to be achieved in its totality. It is only then that I become aware of the betrayal. Let us conclude. An Antillean is white through the collective unconscious, through a large part of the personal unconscious, and through virtually the entire process of individuation. The color of his skin, which Jung does not mention, is black. All the incomprehension stems from this misunderstanding.

While he was in France studying for his degree Césaire “discovered his cowardice.” He knew it was cowardice but he could never say why. He felt it was ridiculous, absurd, even unhealthy I shall say, but none of his writings indicate the mechanism of this cowardice. What needed to be done was reduce the actual situation to nought and attempt to apprehend reality with the mind of a child. The black man in the streetcar was comical and ugly. Sure, Césaire was having fun. The fact is that there was nothing in common between this real black man and himself. A handsome black man is introduced to a group of white Frenchmen. If it is a group of intellectuals, rest assured the black man will try to assert himself. He is asking them to pay attention not to the color of his skin, but to his intellectual powers. Many twenty- or thirty-year-olds in Martinique go to work on Montesquieu or Claudel for the sole purpose of being able to quote him. The reason is that they hope their blackness will be forgotten if they become experts on such writers.

Moral consciousness implies a kind of split, a fracture of consciousness between a dark and a light side. Moral standards require the black, the dark, and the black man to be eliminated from this consciousness. A black man, therefore, is constantly struggling against his own image.

If likewise we accord M. Hesnard his scientific conception of morality and if the morbid universe is to be understood on the basis of transgression and guilt, a normal individual will be someone who has unloaded this guilt or in any case has managed not to suffer from it. More directly, each individual must lay the blame for his base agencies and instincts on the wicked genie of the culture to which he belongs (we have seen that this is the black man). This collective guilt is borne by what is commonly called the scapegoat. However, the scapegoat for white society, which is based on the myths of progress, civilization,

liberalism, education, enlightenment, and refinement, will be precisely the force that opposes the expansion and triumph of these myths. This oppositional brute force is provided by the black man.

In the Antilles, where the myths are the same as in Dijon or Lyon, the black child, identifying himself with the civilizing authority, will make the black man the scapegoat for his moral standards.

It was at the age of fourteen that I first understood the meaning of what I now call cultural imposition. I had a friend, now dead, whose father, an Italian, had married a Martinican girl. This man had lived in Fort-de-France for over twenty years. He was treated like an Antillean, although, underneath, his origins were never forgotten. Now in France the Italian is considered worthless from a military point of view; a French soldier is worth ten Italians; the Italians are cowards. My friend was born in Martinique and all his friends were Martinicans. On the day when Montgomery routed the Italian army at Benghazi I wanted to see for myself the Allies' progress on the map. Ascertaining the considerable territorial gains, I cried out enthusiastically: “You're really getting hammered!” My friend, who was not oblivious of his father's origins, was extremely embarrassed. For that matter, so was I. Both of us had been victims of cultural imposition. I am convinced that the person who has understood this phenomenon and all its consequences will know exactly where to go to look for the answer. Listen to Césaire's Rebel:

It rises . . . it rises from the depths of the earth . . . the black flood rises . . . waves of howling . . . marshes of animal smells . . . the storm frothy with human feet . . . and still more are pouring in a swarm down paths of the morne, climbing the escarpments of ravines, obscene and savage torrents swollen with chaotic streams, rotted seas, convulsive oceans, in

the coal-black laughter of cutlasses and cheap booze.⁵²

Is it clear? Césaire *went down*. He agreed to see what was happening at the very bottom, and now he can come back up. He is ripe for the dawn. But he does not leave the black man down below. He carries him on his shoulders and lifts him up to the skies. In his *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land* he had already prepared us. He chose the upward psyche, to use Bachelard's term.⁵³

And for this, Lord,
Fragile-necked men
Receive and perceive fatal triangular calm
Come to me my dances
My bad nigger dances
Come to me my dances
The breaking-the-yoke dance,
The jump-jail dance
The it-is-beautiful-and-good-and-legitimate-to-be-
a-nigger dance
Come to me my dances and may the sun jump on
the racquet of my hands
But no I will not be content with the unequal sun
any more
Wind, coil yourself around my new growth, land
on my measured fingers
I give you my conscience and its rhythm of flesh
I give you the fires where my weakness glows like
embers
I give you the chain-gang
I give you the swamp

52. Aimé Césaire, *Lyric and Dramatic Poetry 1946–1982*, translated by Clayton Eshleman and Annette Smith, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1990.

53. *L'air et les songes*.

I give you the Intourist triangular circuit
Devour, wind
I give you my abrupt words
Devour and coil around me
And coiling embrace me with a wide shudder
Embrace me into furious we
Embrace, embrace US
But also having bitten us
Bitten to the blood of our blood
Embrace, my purity will bond with your purity
alone
But then embrace
Like a field of wise filaos
In the evening
Our multicolored purities
And bind me, bind me without remorse
Bind me with your vast arms to the luminous clay
Bind my black vibration to the very navel of the
world
Bind me, bind me, bitter brotherhood
Then strangling me with your lasso of stars
Rise, Dove
Rise
Rise
Rise
I follow you, imprinted on my ancestral white
cornea
Rise sky-licker
And the great black hole where I wanted to drown
a moon ago
This is now where I want to fish the night's ma-
levolent tongue in its immobile revololution!⁵⁴

54. Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, trans. Rosello and Pritchard, pp. 133–135.

Translator's note: the word "filaos," which appears on line 12 of this page, can also be translated as "casuarina."

We can understand why Sartre sees in the black poets' Marxist stand the logical end to negritude. What is happening is this. Since I realize that the black man is the symbol of sin, I start hating the black man. But I realize that I am a black man. I have two ways of escaping the problem. Either I ask people not to pay attention to the color of my skin; or else, on the contrary, I want people to notice it. I then try to esteem what is bad—since, without thinking, I admitted that the black man was the color of evil. In order to put an end to this neurotic situation where I am forced to choose an unhealthy, conflictual solution, nurtured with fantasies, that is antagonistic—inhuman, in short—there is but one answer: skim over this absurd drama that others have staged around me; rule out these two elements that are equally unacceptable; and through the particular, reach out for the universal. When the black man plunges, in other words goes down, something extraordinary happens.

Listen to Césaire again:

Ho ho
 Their power is firmly anchored
 Acquired
 Required
 My hands bathe on heaths of clairin. In rice fields
 of roucou.
 And I have my calabash of pregnant stars. But I
 am weak. Oh I am weak.
 Help me.
 And here I find myself again in the rush of
 metamorphosis
 Drowned blinded
 Afraid of myself, frightened by myself. . . .
 Gods . . . you are not gods. I am free.

REBEL: I have a pact with this night, for the last
 twenty years I have felt it softly hail me.⁵⁵

Once that night has been rediscovered, i.e., the meaning of his identity, Césaire ascertains first of all: "No matter how white one paints the base of the tree, the strength of the bark screams underneath."

Then once he has discovered the white man in himself, he kills him:

We forced the doors.

The master's bedroom was wide open. The master's bedroom was brilliantly lit, and the master was there, very calm . . . and all of us stopped . . . he was the master . . . I entered. It's you, he said, very calmly. . . . It was me, it was indeed me, I told him, the good slave, the faithful slave, the slave slave, and suddenly his eyes were two cockroaches frightened on a rainy day . . . I struck, the blood spurted: it is the only *baptism* that today I remember.⁵⁶

Through an unexpected and beneficent inner revolution I now honor my repulsive ugliness.⁵⁷

What more can we say? After having driven himself to the limits of self-destruction, the black man, meticulously or impetuously, will jump into the "black hole" from which will gush forth "the great black scream with such force that it will shake the foundations of the world."

The European knows and does not know. At an introspective level, a black man is a black man; but in his unconscious, the image of the black savage is firmly fixed. I could give a thousand examples. Georges Mounin says in

55. *And the Dogs Were Silent*, pp. 27, 20.

56. Césaire, op. cit., p. 41.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

Présence Africaine: "I had the good fortune not to discover the black man through reading Lévy-Bruhl's *Mentalité primitive* in our sociology class; I had the good fortune to discover the black man otherwise than through books—and I am grateful for it every day."⁵⁸

Mounin, who could not be taken for an average Frenchman, adds, and here he jumps with both feet into our way of thinking:

I profited perhaps from learning, at an age when one's mind has not yet been prejudiced, that the black man is a man like ourselves. . . . I, a white man, profited perhaps from always being able to behave naturally toward a black man—and never to consider myself stupidly or artfully as an anthropologist in his presence that is too often our unbearable way of putting him in his place.

In the same issue of *Présence Africaine* Émile Dermenghem, who cannot be suspected of being a negrophobe, writes: "One of my childhood memories is a visit to the 1900 World's Fair where my sole objective was to see a black man. My imagination had naturally been stimulated by reading *Captain at Fifteen*, *The Adventures of Robert*, and *Livingstone's Travels*."

Émile Dermenghem tells us that this signified his taste for the exotic. Although I am quite prepared to clasp both my hands in his and believe the Dermenghem who wrote the article, I would ask his permission to doubt the Dermenghem at the World's Fair of 1900.

I refuse to take up the themes that have been bandied around for fifty years. To write about the feasibility of a black friendship is a generous undertaking, but unfortu-

58. Initial responses to the survey on the myth of the black man, *Présence Africaine*, no. 2.

nately the negrophobes and other prince consorts are impervious to generosity. When we read: "A nigger is a savage, and there is only one way to get a savage to work: kick him in the ass," we sit at our desk and think, "All these idiocies should not be allowed to exist." But everyone is in agreement about that. To quote *Présence Africaine* (number 5) again, Jacques Howlett writes:

Two things, furthermore, contributed, it seems, to this estrangement of the black man to the world of the other where there was no possible comparison with me: the color of his skin and his nakedness, since I imagined the black man naked. Of course some superficial factors (although we cannot be sure to what extent they continue to haunt our new ideas and revised conceptions) sometimes masked this remote, almost nonexistent, black and naked being, such as the jolly Negro wearing a fez with his wide Fernandel-like grin advertising a chocolaty breakfast cereal, or the gallant young Senegalese soldier "a slave to his orders," the Don Quixote without the glory, the "good-natured hero" of the "colonial era," or the black man "ripe for conversion," the "docile child" of a bearded missionary.

In the rest of his paper, Jacques Howlett tells us how, as a reaction, he made the black man a symbol of innocence. He explains why, but we cannot believe he was only eight, since he talks of his "bad conscience about sexuality" and "solipsism." Moreover, I am convinced that Jacques Howlett has left his "innocence for grown-ups" far, far behind him.

Without any doubt, the most interesting testimony is that of Michel Salomon. Although he swears the contrary, he stinks of racism. He is a Jew who has had a "thousand years of experience of anti-Semitism," and yet he is a racist. Just listen to him: "To deny that his skin, his hair, and that aura of sensuality he [the black man] exudes does

not spontaneously generate a certain embarrassment, whether of attraction or revulsion, would be to deny the obvious in the name of a ridiculous prudishness that has never solved anything." Later on he goes to the extreme of telling us about the "extraordinary stamina of the black man."

Monsieur Salomon's essay tells us he is a doctor. He should be wary of such literary viewpoints, which are unscientific. The Japanese and the Chinese are ten times more prolific than the black population; are they any more sensual? And then, Monsieur Salomon, I have a confession to make: I could never bear hearing a *man* say of another man "How sensual he is!" without feeling nauseated. I don't know what the sensuality of a man is. Imagine a woman saying of another woman: "The girl's so terribly sexy." Monsieur Salomon, the black man exudes sensuality neither through his skin nor through his hair. Simply, for many long days and long nights, you have been subjected to the image of the biological-sexual-sensual-genital nigger, and you have no idea how to get free of it. The *eye* is not only a mirror, but a correcting mirror. The *eye* must enable us to correct cultural mistakes. I do not say the eyes; I say the *eye*—and we know what the eye reflects: not the calcarine fissure, but the even glow that wells up out of van Gogh's reds, that glides from a Tchaikovsky concerto, that clings desperately to Schiller's "Ode to Joy," and lets itself be carried away by Césaire's vermiculate howl.

The black problem is not just about Blacks living among Whites, but about the black man exploited, enslaved, and despised by a colonialist and capitalist society that happens to be white. You ask yourself, Monsieur Salomon, what you would do "if there were 800,000 black people in France"; because for you there is a problem, the problem of the rising black tide, the problem of the black peril. The

Martinican is a French citizen; he wants to remain within the French Union; he asks only one thing, this Martinican: that the imbeciles and the exploiters let him live like a human being. I can see myself happily lost, submerged by the white flood composed of men like Sartre and Aragon; I should like nothing better. Monsieur Salomon, you say we gain nothing from being prudish, and we totally agree. But I don't get the feeling I have given up my personality by marrying some European woman; I can assure you I am not making a "fool's bargain." If they come sniffing around my children, if they examine the lunule of their nails, it's quite simply because society hasn't changed and, as you put it so well, has kept its mythology intact.

What's all this about black people and a black nationality? I am French. I am interested in French culture, French civilization, and the French. We refuse to be treated as outsiders; we are well and truly part of French history and its drama. When an army of men who were basically not bad but rather mystified occupied France to subjugate her, my duty as a Frenchman told me that my place was not on the sidelines, but at the very heart of the problem. I take a personal interest in the destiny of France, the French nation, and its values. What am I supposed to do with a black empire?

Georges Mounin, Dermenghem, Howlett, and Salomon all responded to the survey on the origins of the myth of the black man. All of them convinced us of one thing: that a genuine understanding of the black man's reality must be achieved to the detriment of a cultural crystallization.

Recently, I read in a children's comic book this caption to a picture of a young black scout showing an African village to three or four white scouts: "Here is the pot where my ancestors cooked yours." We will gladly concede that cannibals are a thing of the past, but, nevertheless, let us

remember. Strictly speaking, however, I believe the writer did a service to the black man, without realizing it, because the white child who reads it will see the black man not as eating the white man, but as having eaten him. Undeniably, this is progress.

Before concluding this chapter, we would like to describe a case study which we owe to the head doctor of the women's ward at the psychiatric hospital in Saint-Ylie. This case illustrates our point of view. It demonstrates that at an extreme the myth of the black man, the idea of the black man, can cause genuine insanity.

Mademoiselle B was nineteen years old when she entered the ward on March 19. Her admission sheet reads as follows:

I the undersigned, Dr. P, former intern at the Hôpitaux de Paris, certify having examined Mademoiselle B, who is afflicted with a nervous disorder consisting of fits of agitation, motor instability, facial tics, and conscious spasms which she cannot control. These disorders have been increasing and prevent her from leading a normal social life. Her admission for observation to a hospital governed by the law of 1838 is required as a voluntary admission.

Twenty-four hours later the report by the head doctor read as follows: "Afflicted with neurotic tics that began at the age of ten and worsened with puberty and her first jobs away from home. Brief depression with anxiety accompanied by a fresh outbreak of the symptoms. Obesity. Requests treatment. Feels reassured in company. Open ward patient. Accepted for treatment."

She had no previous history of a pathological process. Simply puberty at sixteen. A physical examination turned up nothing except adiposity and a minimal infiltration of

the integuments indicating a slight endocrine insufficiency. Regular menstrual periods.

An interview brought out the following points:

"It's mainly when I work that the tics appear" (the patient had been placed in domestic service and as a result lived away from home).

The tics affect the eyes and forehead; the patient pants and yells. Sleeps soundly, no nightmares, eats well. Was not irritable during her period. Numerous facial tics while in bed before falling asleep.

Opinion of the head nurse: It's mainly when she's alone. It's less noticeable when she's with company or in conversation. The tic depends on what she's doing. She begins by tapping both feet, then goes on to raise her feet, her legs, her arms, and her shoulders symmetrically.

Articulates sounds. We have never been able to understand what she says. Then the sounds end in very loud, inarticulate shouts. As soon as we call her she stops.

The head doctor began waking-dream therapy. A prior interview indicated hallucinosis in the shape of terrifying circles, and the patient was asked to describe them.

Here is an extract of the report from the first session:

Deep and concentric, they grow and diminish to the rhythm of a black drum. This drum symbolized the threat of losing her parents, especially her mother.

So I asked her to make the sign of the cross over these circles, but they did not disappear. I told her to take a cloth and rub them out and they disappeared.

Turns toward the drum. She is surrounded by half-naked men and women who dance in a frightening way. I told her not to be afraid and join them, which she does. The dancers immediately change in appearance. It is a dazzling ball. The men and women are well dressed and waltz to the *Étoile des neiges*.

I told her to draw closer to the circles; she could no longer see them. I asked her to describe them; they appeared but were broken. I told her to go through the opening. I'm no longer completely surrounded, she said spontaneously. I can get out again. The circle breaks in two and then into several pieces. There were only two pieces left; then they disappeared. Frequent tics of the throat and eyes while she was talking.

A series of sessions sedated the motor agitation.

The following is a summary of another session:

I told her to remember the circles. She doesn't see them at first; then they appear. They are broken. She enters them. They break, rise up, then gently collapse one after the other into the void. I told her to listen to the drum. She doesn't hear it. She calls out to it. Hears it on her left side.

I suggested an angel could accompany her to the drum. She wants to go on her own. Yet someone is coming down from the sky. It's an angel. It's smiling and takes her close to the drum. There are only black men dancing around a large fire and they look evil. The angel asks her what are they going to do; they're going to burn a white man. Looks for him in all directions. Cannot see him.

"Ah, I see him! It's a white man about fifty. He's half undressed."

The angel negotiates with the black chief (for she's afraid). The black chief says that the white man is not from the region, so they're going to burn him. But he hasn't done anything wrong.

They set him free and start dancing for joy. She refuses to join the dance.

I send her to talk with the chief, who is dancing alone. The white man has disappeared. She wants to leave and seems to have no desire to know the black men. She wants to leave with her angel somewhere where she would feel at home with her mother, her brothers and sisters.

Once the tics had disappeared we stopped the treatment. A few days later we again saw the patient, who had had a relapse. Observations from the session:

The same circles get closer together. She takes a stick. They break into pieces. It's a magic wand. It changes these bits of iron into beautiful, shiny pieces.

Goes toward a fire. It's the fire around which the black men were dancing. Wants to meet the chief. Goes toward him.

One black man who had stopped dancing starts up again, but to a different rhythm. She dances around the fire hand in hand with the black dancers.

These sessions have clearly improved her condition. She writes to her parents, receives visits, and attends the hospital's film shows. She takes part in group games. While another patient plays a waltz on the ward's piano, she invites a friend of hers to dance. She is very popular with her friends.

This is an extract from another session:

Thinks about the circles again. They are broken in one piece, but a bit is missing on the right side. The smaller circles remain intact. She would like to break the smaller circles. She picks them up and twists them until they break. One, however, still remains. Goes through it. Finds herself in the dark on the other side. Is not afraid. Calls out to someone; her guardian angel flies down, friendly and smiling. He will lead her into the light on the right.

In the present case, the waking-dream therapy produced appreciable results. But as soon as the patient found herself *alone*, the tics reappeared.

We do not want to elaborate on the substructure of this psychoneurosis. The interview by the head doctor brought to light a fear of imaginary black men—a fear experienced at the age of twelve.

We had a great many conversations with the patient.

When she was ten or twelve, her father, "a veteran of the French colonial army," used to listen to black music on the radio. The drums echoed through the house every evening while she was in bed.

Furthermore, as we have pointed out, it is at this age that the Negro as savage and cannibal makes his appearance.

It is easy to make the connection.

In addition, her brothers and sisters, who had discovered her weak spot, had fun scaring her.

Lying in bed with the drums beating in her ears, she actually *saw* black men. She would take cover under the sheets, trembling.

Then increasingly smaller circles appeared and scotomized the black men.

These circles can thus be seen as a defense mechanism against her hallucinosis.

Today the circles appear without the black men—the defense mechanism asserts itself by ignoring its determinism.

We met the mother, who corroborated what her daughter had said. The girl had been very high-strung, and at the age of twelve was often seen to tremble in bed. Our presence in the ward produced no visible change to her mental condition.

Today, *only* the circles trigger the motor phenomena of shouts, facial tics, and uncoordinated gesticulations.

Even if we attribute a part to her constitution, it is obvious that her insanity is the result of a fear of the black man, a fear aggravated by predetermined circumstances. Although her condition has greatly improved, we doubt she is ready to resume a normal social life.

Chapter Seven

THE BLACK MAN AND RECOGNITION

A. *The Black Man and Adler*

No matter where one begins with the analysis of psychogenic disorders, one and the same phenomenon forces itself upon one's attention after the briefest observation, namely, that the entire picture of the neurosis as well as all its symptoms are influenced by, nay, even wholly provoked by an imaginary fictitious goal. This final purpose has a creative, directive and adjustive power. The potency of this "goal idea" is revealed to us by the trend and evaluation of the pathological phenomena and should one attempt to dispense with this assumption there remains nothing but a confusing mass of impulses, trends, components, debilities and anomalies which has made the obscurity of the neurosis impenetrable to some, while others have taken bold exploratory journeys into this field.¹

It is on the basis of similar theoretical positions that the most staggering mystifications of our time are, as a rule, elaborated. Let us apply the psychology of behavioral disorders to the Antilleans.

The black man is *comparaison*.² That is the first truth. He is *comparaison* in the sense that he is constantly pre-

1. Alfred Adler, *The Neurotic Constitution*, translated by Bernard Glueck and John E. Lind, Ayer, Salem, N.H., 1926.

2. Translator's note: *Comparaison* is a Creole term.