

Black Slaves and Religion: Struggle against the Crime of the White Imperialists and Fetish Priests in Maryse Conde's Novels

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Abstract: This study attempts to unravel the complexity of white imperialists' and fetish priests' crimes during capitalism's monopoly era. Since the rise of fetish priests' criminality, the formation of a new class conflict has been a major source of contention. According to the study, African American slaves have been able to develop a counter-hegemonic paradigm for over 300 years, despite intensive and often cruel repression by colonial law enforcement. It also paints a complete picture of the massive destruction caused by imperialist white lords and fetish priests. The purpose of this research is to look at the class structure of African American black slaves concerning imperialist fetish priests and to link the two novels I, Tituba Black Witch of Salem and Who Slashed Celanire's Throat of Maryse Conde over 300 years. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on Religion Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (1927) have been used as the theoretical basis for this study. As a result, the conclusion differs from the assertions of the fetish priests. It's humiliating to realize that dark complexion is a symbol of damnation and that hell is their destination after death. The puritans' engagement with black slavery stems from a twofold economic imperative: the availability of money and the development of labor

KEYWORDS: Black-Slaves, Religion, Struggle, Crime, Fetish-Priest

INTRODUCTION

Religious Intolerance Refers to the ruling Christian majority's systematic subjection of minority religions. The historical heritage of Christian hegemony, as well as unequal power relationships between minority religious groups and the Christian majority have resulted in this

subjugation. Black slaves have been forced out of their native land and compelled to follow their masters' orders. Subjected to mental agony and physical torture they were denied fundamental human rights (Bilal, 2020). These slaves are living under the repressive control of white masters and the religious laws of fetish priests. Individuals' actions (religious prejudice), social institutions' actions (religious discrimination), and cultural and societal norms and values connected with Christian hegemony, all foster religious oppression in the United States. "The controlling, or dominant group, benefits from oppression in the form of greater access to rights and resources, a better quality of life, and overall greater life chances" (Bilal, 2024).

Through, religious oppression, Christianity and its cultural representations marginalize, exclude, and deny religious minority practices and institutions the same rights, privileges, and access that African American slaves enjoyed. Normalize Christian beliefs as fundamental to the white American way of life and political system. Christian norms are referred to as hegemonic because they rely only on the labor, land, and resources of slaves. They are brief and commonplace every day verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities that transmit hostile, disparaging, or negative slights and insults towards a certain group of individuals based on identity, whether deliberate or inadvertent. The time went by and the claim of the white man could not get any positive direction in favor of black slaves. After a long struggle of the fetish priest even they could not change their indigence cultural identity which could not be although "One needs to acknowledge that cultures are also very strongly influenced by religion. Indeed, religion has for centuries been the core of everyone's life, shaping our vision of the difference between what was acceptable and what was not" (Manent, 2006). The American social reformer Frederick Douglass reviews the work of the white churches and says that:

"I consider the widest possible gap between the Christianity of this land and the Christianity of Christ...so large that to receive one as good, pure, and holy, it is appropriate to reject the other as evil and corrupt. It is important that one's friend be the enemy of the other. I love Christ's pure, peaceful, and unbiased Christianity; therefore, I hate this land's crooked, slave-holding, women-whipping, cradle-puritans who still satisfy themselves at night and place their virile seeds in the womb of slaves, how it comes to believe in them and to repeat the Holy words and practice but only to save themselves. Yes, I can see no justification but the most deceitful one to call the religion of this land Christianity". (Douglass, 1998)

RESEARCH QUESTION

What commonalities can we find in the religious conditions of the two protagonists (living 300 years apart) that drove them to launch their struggle against their white imperialist and fetish priests for the crime they committed against the black race?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To highlight and understand commonalities in the religious conditions of the two protagonists (living 300 years apart) that drove them to launch their struggle against their white imperialist masters and fetish priests for the crimes they committed against the black race as well as to illustrate the re-compensation brought about by their struggle to their kindred.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is exploratory in character and qualitative in nature. The textual or close reading method is used to obtain secondary material from various sources, whereas textual analysis is used as a research method for studying the primary text. The theoretical framework for the current research has been chosen as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on religion *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1927). The Theory justifies the existence of socially dominant groups. Since the 1840s, Marxism has viewed unpaid, reproductive 'women's labor' as an integral part of capitalism. To have a deeper understanding of how women are exploited and oppressed in capitalism. Karl Marx's critique of capitalism is at the heart of the social-conflict method. According to Marx, religion serves a key role in sustaining an unequal status quo in a capitalist society, in which certain groups of people have vastly more resources and power than others. The bourgeoisie, according to Marx, exploited religion to keep the less powerful proletariat pacified. Religion, according to Marx, can do this by promising rewards in the afterlife rather than in this life.

RESEARCH STATEMENT

The study focuses on two books, set in the 1600s to the 1880s and published in 1986 and 2004, respectively, that deal with slaves and slaveholders from the plantation system to the present. Conde's representations depict the humiliating situations of African slaves in the hands of imperialists and fetish priests, as well as their inequitable treatment of women, resulting in conscience against so-called white solipsism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the research investigates a variety of scholarly works that have investigated the chosen issue and its secondary features. The review covers topics such as Burnette (2015) published a report on the unduly high rates of intimate partner abuse that has consistently been encountered by native women in the United States. The goal of this article is to understand the historical injustice in the lives of Southeastern tribal members and the lack of empirical study into the causes of abuse. This historical injustice reveals and gives rise to an increase in the probability of violence against native women and uncovers five themes: experiences of oppression, historical and current losses, cultural destruction, forms of oppression, dehumanizing attitudes and values that are practiced in Conde's work.

Kima (2006) explores the intersections of the Feminist, the forms in which Native American and African Feminists challenge the assumption of patriarchy. Orthodox Western Feminism is the consequent subordination of women to male domination. Louise reflects Ojibwa's history of oppression by women, and believes that most Native American women have been marginalized by racism, classism, and misogyny. This is more apparent in the novel that the protagonist of the novel Tituba's mother is brought up in a slave ship in an unknown land by colored people, where she is subjugated, raped and hanged.

Knowles (2000) published a protest-to-process analysis of pacifism and post-1970 women's novels. These Battlefront novels also teach pacifism and demonstrate the horrors of war. These novels are based on feminist pacifism, which recognizes aggression on the war front. Such novels speculate the reciprocal relationship between the oppression of the battle front and the oppression of the home front, a setting characteristic of the literature of war. The novels demonstrate this harsh experience of African-American women that they not only put Negress to cook in their kitchen, but also to work for them in the field as a male and attempt to satisfy their lustful desires at nightfall. This supremacy and submissiveness is born of independence, of freedom, of the persevering pursuit of greater pleasure. The impulse behind them is joy and their land of liberation, which compels Black Women to raise their voices against the oppression of their White masters, which triggers horror.

Chapman (1996) notes that female character in *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Handmaid's Story* fictions symbolize the opposition to male domination. And various sources of female inequality, such as vigorous involvement and emphasis on sexual distinctions, signal more

nuanced male and female relationships. Women's victims are responsible for gender opposition either through will or through violent resistance, but some rebellious women resist separation through self-martyrdom, nihilism, and patriarchal domination revenge. These distinctions are visible in Conde's book, from the age of seven Tituba's life of degradation to her grey hair. She became a toy in the White Masters' hand, brutally assaulted, and often in the hands of a black male for sexual gratification. Black women go in the hand of one man to another, harshly handled, causing resistance and vengeance.

Fifer (2005) analyses the sexual agency and patriarchal expectations of black women in six Francophone sub-Saharan novels, regulating female sexuality in order to preserve male dominance. Most novels contest that both white and black males imagine social justice for the appropriation of black female sexuality by their communities. Women are not subject to racial, gender or class discrimination, whether black or white, in such alternative cultures. The topic of internal and external oppression in Conde's novel is shown to a woman. All the time, in all cultures, both white and black are handled with animals as a source of pleasure.

Gross (2007) focuses on the *Blood Lines* and tries to tell the story of the African-American family's struggle with oppression and the psycho-spiritual history of oppression that has been described as the 'curse' in the book. Gross family memories document daily events and a stirring turning point in the lives of three generations. The curse starts with the grandma's declaration and concludes with her last thoughts and feelings. As Tituba witnesses the cruelty of American masters from the age of three, and helplessly wonders in an unfamiliar land to take a breath of their wish, and the elderly Mama Yaya declares it a curse as the black color of the slaves. The cruelty of the plantation forces even black women to take a weapon against them.

Ranft (2013) is undertaking a study of female science fiction writers that exposes complex bodily problems impacting Black women in the United States. These authors highlight issues directly linked to racial identification, sexuality and reproduction, and use it as a science fiction convention to construct literature that depicts Black Women's resistance to physical oppression. These elements are evident in the novel *I, Tituba Black Witch by Salem*. As Tituba and Hester are the protagonists of the book, they are the victims of physical oppression, and their masters place babies in their womb through their viral seeds, which causes their lives to deteriorate.

RELIGIOUS EXPLOITATION OF AMERICAN SLAVES

One wonders how slaveholders can manage to reconcile their moral values with the brutal reality of the peculiar institution during the time of American slavery. The following passage demonstrate which is taken from Noel Rae's (2018) latest book *The Great Stain*, which uses first-hand accounts to tell the story of American's slavery. The explanation is right in the Bible for some to them. If Christian slaveholders are asked, most slaveholders would have described themselves as Christian. It has two favorite texts, one from the beginning of the Old Testament and the other from the end of the New Testament, out of more than three quarters of a million words in the Bible. First of all, these are Genesis ix, 18-27, in the words of the King James Bible, which are the versions then existing manuscripts. Ultimately, it became the fundamental text for those who wish to justify slavery on Biblical grounds. As in the popular version of Bible Cannan drops from the story in its boiled-down, regard as "The Curse of Ham" Ham is made black, and his descendants became Africans. That is the truth behind the black slaves and now these Christians are trying to make them civilize by their religious beliefs, that's why John Indian forcefully stick Tituba's hand together to make her repeat the words that "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only son, Our Lord...what matters for the slave is to survive. Repeat my angel. You don't think that I believe in their story of the Holy Trinity? One God in three distinct persons? But it doesn't matter. You just need to pretend. Repeat!" (Conde, 1992, p. 25)

John Indian enters and takes Tituba's hand aggressively and repeats after him that "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth... But these words meant nothing to me. They have nothing in common with what Mama Yaya has taught me... recite my catechism lessons and to explain the words of her Holy Bible" (Conde, 1992, p. 25-26). African cultural beliefs and traditions are a complex group of beliefs that include different ethnic religions. In general, these are oral traditions that are passed down from generation to generation. Speech or song is used for transmission. They believe in a number of higher and lower gods, as well as a supreme creator or force, and even in spirits, the use of witchcraft, and traditional African medicine. Most of religions are animistic, with different polytheistic and pantheistic components. Humanity's position is generally regarded as one of integrating nature with the supernatural. As it is evident in the character of Mama Yaya an elderly woman teaches Tituba about traditional herbs and spirits to heal the sick.

Rosenthal (1973) focuses on Cotton Mather a New England Puritan minister and prolific author's words that "Slaves are likely to come from orthodox puritans and counted among these are none other than the archetype of puritan orthodoxy". Puritan politicians seek to curtail not only the black slave's civil rights, but also their personal rights as well. Later, slave laws reflect a body of laws of repression aiming at restricting the black slave's actions and social behavior.

The Act of 1703 represents a denial of personal freedom by preventing them from being outside home after 9 pm. on the penalty of being sent to the house of correction or on the penalty of whipping not to exceed ten stripes. The 1705 Act prevents Negro from hitting a Christian on a whipping penalty. The Act of 1708 denied the Negro the right to marry a white. A fine of \$5 will be levy on the white joining such a marriage; a fine of \$50 will be levy on the clergyman contracting such a marriage; and the Negro will be "ordered to be sold out of the province". The above references clearly illustrate the actions of puritans in African American territory. John Indian belongs to Susanna Endicott. He teaches prayers and is sure that one day he will be released, but instead he is sold to an unknown person such is the responsibility of God chosen people. John Indian while sobbing expresses his feeling that "The duty of a master in such cases is to think of the future of those God has put in his charge: his children and his slaves... Yes, he's a man of God who will take care of your souls. He's a minister by the name of Samuel Parris" (Conde, 1992, p. 35). These slaves are treated violently in Christian land and forced to say prayers by the puritan masters under their roof. New England's Puritan punishments also include the Bilbo, the cleft stick, the brand, the ear crop, scarlet etc. and most frequently include whippings. Even the community children are afraid to not say their prayers. As Abigail tells Tituba, "What are you talking about? She hasn't said her prayers yet. Do you want my uncle to whip her?" (Conde, 1992, p. 40)

It is humiliating to know that the symbol of damnation is black skin/color and their place of punishment after death is in hell. In the land of white masters, the black skin deserves nothing even they have no share in their religion (Christianity) because they are eternally damned creatures for their white masters, they are born only for mean tasks on motherland, and they must neglect their indigenous faith as long as they live under white men's roof. They must act upon white men's religious beliefs that their damn skin may not pollute master's religious activities. When a Puritan Samuel Parris sees Tituba sets with Goodwife Parris, he screams spitefully saying that "I know, the color of your skin is the sign of your

damnation, but as long as you are under my roof you will behave as Christians. Come and say your prayers!” (Conde, 1992, p. 41). This exposes the double standards and vague beliefs of the puritans, if the blacks are damned creatures who will profit from their prayers. Here one is liable to question the reality of prayers. Are they simple words with no real meanings, or just a chant which is more near to a spell sound which again brings a question of meaning? If by prayers Samuel Paris means that Tituba’s chanting of certain words will bring him salvation, then it is questionable too. If the difference between good Christian and bad Christian is saying prayers, then Tituba is not a damned soul for her prayers may bring her salvation like it will be the other Chesham whatever be the color of their skin. The Bible encourages believers to confess their sins as “He is true and just, if we confess our sins, to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” 1 John 1: 9. In Christianity, it does not assume that one has lost salvation if he has not confessed his sins. The black slaves are religiously oppressed and the puritan showed their authority over them to forcefully accept their religion by becoming Christian the blacks deserve equal treatment; however, their part of the belief is totally ignored while express puritan hypocrisy. The Puritan involvement in black slavery is a response to a twofold economic stipulation: first, to provide capital and second, to develop a labor force. A dichotomy in the Puritan attitude toward black slavery arises from considering the slave as an economic unit and at the same time an element in the divine plan. In early New England culture, the Puritan economic view and the theocratic concepts contribute to the peculiar position that the slave occupies. The culture of Tituba and her religious faith are dissimilar and she immediately raises her voice to say that “Why should I confess? What goes on in my head and my heart is my business. He struck me. His dry, knifelike hand struck my mouth and made it bleed. At the sight of this red trickle Goodwife Parris regains her strength, sat up, and said in a rage: Samuel, you have not right... He struck her in turn. She too bled.” (Conde, 1992, p. 41)

The slave trade is prevalent in American society due to Christianity. The Christian disarm them through their religious faith and use them in the field as a cheap laborer and put to everyday chores. For many decades, it became a tradition in the field of agriculture, and the white colonial masters take great economic advantage of it, using their land and wealth. It is a great shock for unfortunate Tituba who spends the drudgery life wherever she is sold to a new lord and she claims that “I catch sight of a lot of faces the same color as mine and I understand that here

too the children of Africa are paying their tribute to misfortune.” (Conde, 1992, p. 44)

Since 1619 onwards the Black-Africans have been directed to American land. They brought various indigenous religious practices with them. Before moving to America some have heard about Christianity but many have followed African native practices. Early on, many slaveholders were not concerned with the spiritual well-being of Africans but few had doubt about using Christianity to justify slavery. Some theologians claim, it is providence that has brought Africans to America as slaves, as their enslavement allow them to experience the Christian message and thus save their eternal souls, says Mark Noll, an American Christian historian. Some preachers persuade slave owners to allow their slaves to attend worship services but only in separate gatherings led by white preachers of proslavery. They have to sit in the back of a segregated church or on the balcony. Those men of God argue that in Ephesians and Colossians, the sermons on the injunction, “slaves, obey your earthly lord” would inspire docility among enslaved workers. Tituba’s race is put into practice by coercion, and the protagonist acknowledges that she is being poisoned in this putrefying setting, and she has found herself reciting incantations and performing ceremonial motions at the slightest opportunity and she admits that:

“I had not realized the full extent of the ravages that Samuel Parris’s religion was causing nor even understood its real nature before coming to live in Salem. Imagine a small community of men and women oppressed by the presence of Satan and seeking to hunt him down in all his manifestations.” (Conde, 1992, p. 65)

As such even the black slaves became one of the manifestations of Satan for they are considered damned due to their black skin. Their spirit as a result is also considered black the color of damnation. This raises the question of a colored spirit if there is any. If it is the body that will suffer damnation, then the soul a colorless concept can achieve salvation. However, we do not hear any discussion on the subject. Perhaps the internal guilt of the puritans does not allow them to talk or even think about this fact. Goodwife Paris feels bondage with Tituba being a women and being harshly treated. As such she is more human but whenever she tries to bring sense or ask for justification for the ill treatment of slaves she is brutally treated.

In Christianity, witchcraft is portrayed as threat to the life and well-being of people because it is closely correlated with black color and the detrimental influence of witchcraft practices along with experiences

among many African people, including Christians and knowledgeable white masters. It is a common idea that witches do odd and malicious activities whose purpose is to exploit nature in order to bring particular change and to hurt others. The nature of witches is evil and cannot perform true miracles. Thus, it may be wrong connotation to use the term for right, help, console and heal but on the other hand it's only the duty of the saints who accomplish virtues deeds for their Lord consider themselves superior and pious. But Hester knows such offences in the eyes of God's chosen people (Puritans) whom she is the victim and he is responsible to put the child in her womb which she carries from so many months. He has a free will, god chosen person, who comes to her only to please himself. It may also be a wrong connotation of wrongs, hinders and distress. Tituba and Hester are both in prison, Hester is accused of Adultery and Tituba solemnly declare about witchcraft, of which she is put in jail and declared that "It's not my society. Aren't I am outcast like yourself? Locked up between these walls? ...for I know the seriousness of such an offence in the eyes of the Puritans" (Conde, 1992, p. 96). Nathaniel Hawthorne an American novelist makes a verdict on such a controversial subject as adultery in *The Scarlet Letter*, his nineteenth-century novel of *seventeenth-century sexual repression and hypocrisy*. Rhode (2016) reveals a fragile yet shifting atmosphere of infidelity. Historically, traditional values are not taken lightly to carry on an adulterous affair back in such an age of Puritanism. Infidelity is still viewed in the United States as an incredibly negative event, and is frequently blamed for questions of trust, psychologically harming the partner and their children, breaking apart marriages, families and more. The Puritans see in those days that such a crime is "punishable by death." Hester acknowledges and understands the severity of this crime in the eyes of the puritans, but what hypocrisy of the people chosen by God on the mother's earth that the infant in her womb is the infant of the hypocritical puritan, who likes himself and moves freely around. Tituba turns Benjamin Cohen d'Azevedo (the Jew merchant) conversation into ironical and intellectual comments about God and Jesus Christ. Tituba does not perceive African Americans as human in the land of white master because of their masters' moral deterioration. On the plantations, Jesus is squarely on the oppressor's side and opposes their independence. This impression is not one that is neutral. The slavers and planters are simply using it to pacify the slaves and justify their enslavement. He specifically anoints and named the oppressors, not for the ministry of peace, but for their "subjugation ministry." He is the "Jesus of the White Man." With these claims, Tituba sadly and subtly proclaims that witches are approved by their God and "our God knows neither race nor color. You can become one of us if you like and can pray

with us” (Conde, 1992, p.131). Men and women from other cultures with different skin tones posed a more complicated dilemma. Africans embodied a spiritual threat. For example, during the Salem witch trials, Tituba an African American slave becomes a significant subject. Many leaders of Puritan distinguish her blackness as a sign of devil, and proclaim her as a witch. Wherever she moves with her masters she is inadequately handled because of her color. When she walks outside and sees men and women dresses in a sinister puritan fashion and then brand a witch and “A hail of stones run down on me. I continue to advance madden with anger and light of lim. Suddenly, someone shouts: Don’t you recognize her? It’s Tituba, one of the witches of Salem. The stones fly thick and fast” (Conde, 1992, p. 132). It is interesting to note that the rich puritans themselves preferred to wear black overalls or gowns to look sober and pure and yet damned black skin color.

RELIGIOUS MANIPULATION OF AMERICAN SLAVES

Celanire’s skin is not absolutely black but it is a combination of colors. She wears dark grey clothing and a scarf with a ribbon around her throat, from which a large gold cross emerges from her side. She is not dressed in religious garb because she has not taken her vows yet. She is regarded, however, as an oblate who is dedicated to God and the Catholic faith, but not to the point of becoming a nun, but rather to the support and elevation of her race. She has no other choice but to fight for her identity and self-discovery in the cruel world of white people. She is a mulatto, by the way. Both native and white people do not support her and only use her to fulfill their own desires. She persists in her quest to learn about her identity. She has concentrated her energies as an oppressed race on her struggle. Conde’s text shows her true life story from childhood to adulthood as, “...She was an orphan raised by the Sisters of Charity in Paris whose desire to do missionary work in Africa had made her join the nuns of Our Lady of the Apostles in Lyons the previous year.” (Conde, 2004, p. 2)

According to tradition, the white master’s mission is to civilize the black Africans. The white masters are now responsible for teaching the natives through a number of methods. They do, however, see a variety of methods, including schooling, language, religion, and the use of force. They choose religion to civilize African Americans, and at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they attempted to create African missionaries in white masters’ colonized territories forcefully. Celanire, a homeless child who a slashed throat, is one of the black community missionaries who has been raised and is ready to serve, claiming

that "...the mission now numbered three priests bursting with health and two buildings made of bamboo, one of which was the school for thirty-two children. A group of African women catechists..." (Conde, 2004, p. 4)

According to American historian Frederick Cooper, enslavement's social history, as well as the struggles that led to historical revolutions, offers a neat cultural logic but does little to illuminate enslavement's social past life. African-American slaves have no social involvement in the human world at the end of the nineteenth century, and they are at the mercy of the wealthy. In her text, Conde portrays the mindset of influential priests, as well as all they have done in the name of faith. Following the plantation system, which the white masters believed they were being taught in the name of faith. As salves, social issues emerge and they remain toys in the hands of the hegemonic power. They embrace the jumble of social phenomena that arises after social death. The black race is now selling its young girls to the wealthy, who have previously exploited them for their own pleasure. And as such, in Maryse Conde's letter, Tanella is provided as a pleasure toy and as it is said that Mawourouou, "was still so troubled by the desires of the flesh that he had employed an army of fetish priests to concoct his aphrodisiacs" (Conde, 2004, p. 26). One example of modern slavery is found in Africa. It is explicitly mentioned in Conde's text as an illustration of a fetish priest who holds thousands of teenage girls as unpaid servants and sex slaves by West African fetish priests as payment for their families' sins against traditional gods and spirits. Celanire is an evil spirit and the strongest, according to the fetish priests of white Creole culture. She is attempting to rescue and empower young African girls in order to free them from the grasp of white masters, whom the fetish priests have declared an evil spirit. Thousands years of history demonstrate the religious practice of making offerings such as livestock, money, and liquor to appease angry gods, but fetish priests modernize it by turning it into human psychological torture and rape and sacrifice. The fetish priests try to humiliate Celanire among the white Creoles, but when Koffi Nidize confronts her for the first time, he glances openly at her beautiful body and "...even declared that the fetish priests had been wrong and such a lovely individual could never be the "horse" of the aawabo, the evil spirit." (Conde, 2004, p. 33)

The removal of slave ownership in 1807 and the slave trade in the British Empire in 1834 proved to be two major turning points. Outlawing the slave trade and converting free slaves becomes a strong reason for the creation of Christian European missions. In Europe, human sympathy is for the plight of slaves mean so that funds can be collected to the significant costs of setting up a mission. Protestants spare the Christian

gospel by releasing slaves from slave ships along the West Coast after 1834. Many people in Africa lack literacy, so missionaries teach people to read so they can learn God's word. The excerpt vividly depicts the sociopolitical distinctions that exist between slaves and their owners.

"As for Koffi Ndizi, he had repudiated his thirty-nine wives and concubines, keeping only his first love, Queen Tadjó, provided she too "converted." He was taking catechism classes and was preparing to become a Christian, to the great joy of the mission, since conversions by a chief were exceptionally rare. The Church only attracted wretches lured by a pair of shorts and an undershirt that the priests gave to the baptize." (Conde, 2004, p. 42)

Africans arrive with few belongings with them in the land of white masters. They carried their cultural skills and indigenous theological worldviews with them. Africans and their descendants have changed and adapted their belief systems to local circumstances and influences wherever the New World took root in African indigenous religions belief. Individuals expressed their religious ideas, what they believed, and how important religion is to them in their lives under a variety of circumstances. African indigenous beliefs have been traditionally shunned away by native peoples so as to live more freely in their personal and social lives. They find no way to survive and transform to Christianity by force to survive. The importance of these religious practices for people whose lives are governed by oppressive owners cannot be overstated. Millions of Indigenous populations in the New World converted to Christianity, but there are significant differences between slave societies, especially in those dominated by the Catholic and Protestant churches. Catholics tended to embrace and convert Africans as quickly as possible. Protestant churches usually require preparation and conversion before baptizing Africans into the church. Because of the opposition and hostility of prominent colonial planters, the Anglican Church in British colonies is notorious for refusing to convert enslaved people. Conde mentions a simple picture in her text that "Queen Tadjó, sitting in the front row, seemed to be in agony. Koffi Ndizi's had given her three months to become a Christian. Otherwise, despite all her lineage, he would repudiate her as well. The church, which dated back to the early days of the colony was a reminder that the missionaries had followed in the steps of the traders" (Conde, p. 44). It paints a vivid image of the fetish priests that the world cannot accept. Religion is a concept that cannot be forced to be understood, but the fetish priests do the contrary. Another way of hating white people is the widespread conversion to Christianity by force in white areas. Conde's interpretations of historical

facts are a clear rebuke to African fetish priests whose goal is to civilize them through peace and love, but a compelling act of conversion to Christianity is not a step toward peace, but rather disgust, as in the case of Kwame Aniedo whose “father had ordered him to convert, swearing he would disinherit him if he refused, for his mentor had forbidden him to bequeath his estate to a heathen. As a consequence, Kwame Aniedo had not attended the ceremony and was locked up in his hut” (Conde, 2004, p. 45-46). It is clear that the white masters penetrated various colonies by various means, such as education, language, religion and leaving a strong impression of hegemony in various territories. Conde’s sources vividly show the faces of the fetish priests as they attempted to forcefully baptize them, which the subjugated population considers unacceptable for the French administration’s selected citizenry. While the king has locked his son in the hut, Thomas de Brabant arrives in full uniform and delivers a grand speech about the conversion to Christianity so that “The king’s conversion to the True God was an event of paramount importance with promising consequences for the future as well as a productive collaboration for prospective relations between Africa and Europe.” (Conde, 2004, p. 46)

Another event that clearly demonstrates the dual nature of God’s men is Charlotte, the wife of Thomas de Brabant’s arrival in Africa. She is disturbed by the densely polluted atmosphere in African i.e. the twofold appearance of the fetish priest, the colonizers and the Creole. Her husband claims to be working himself to death for France, but she notices he is driving himself to death by making love to a black female. Africa steals her husband, her child, and possibly her life. Her husband hosted senior officials to a luncheon during which she observed that “...priests never tired of naming the name of God and martyring Africans in the name of the same God...” (Conde, 2004, p. 49). She claims that there was nothing fascinating to say except about black Africans girls and they drank too much and made jokes cruelly. Even in modern times, Conde’s text clearly depicts the nasty face of the white masters and clerics. Dossous, a well-known family in Adjame-Santey, converts to Christianity and provides the mission with two catechists to serve Africa in the name of religion. Rose is Azilin Dossou’s new name. The priests acclaim her as the mission’s priceless pearl in this regard. She is sent to learn to sew, read, and write, and “...she had also been one of the first to enter a Frenchman’s bed.” (Conde, 2004, p. 77)

Another mind-blowing occurrence occurs, causing the black woman to lose faith in life. Tanella is referred to as a “lady of letters.” She was selected as a schoolmistress for the mission because she could readily read and write in white man’s language. However, this aroused

Chief Bogui Yesso's interest, and she became one of her spouses, with the goal of adding only a woman of letter to his female servants. He treats her like a valuable diamond in the beginning, but she is subsequently abandoned in one of the huts and disregarded. This treatment shows her the only way to turn to Catholicism and become deeply religious because in those days "Churches sprang up like mushrooms" (Conde, 2004, p. 85). In this regard, "Africa is the most rapidly growing part of the church," said Sean Callahan, the president of Catholic Relief Services, "In the past, it was Europe sending priests to Africa," he noted. "Now it's Africa sending priests to Europe." According to Conde in 1906 Grande-Anse, the residential district is composed of "the boys' school for Christian instruction runs by the monks, the girls' day school run by the sisters of Saint-Joseph-de-Cluny" (Conde, 2004, p. 96). If we think about the above mentioned situation it looks appreciable but on the other hand, they are compelled by circumstances and they were left with no other choice. They had little to eat after being freed from the cane fields and white masters' large houses, so they were compelled by circumstance to flock to white masters. It is the only way left by the white master intentionally as Desmond Mpilo Tutu a South African Anglican cleric and theologian says that "...from the very beginning, this mission of Christianity has been to disarm us so that we can stop seeing what is actually happening to us in real time..." Among the nobility, Zulefi, Madestka's oldest son, wears a white robe and takes his place with his wife and children, certain that the black race is cursed because he was one of the members of the horrific crime of slitting a black infant's neck. He revels the suffering of the black race on slave ships. They have endured in the sugarcane farms, and their blood has stained the ground with red. Neither the freeing of slaves nor the missionaries has altered much. According to Zulefi, this is because they are paying for horrible crimes such as human sacrifices, animal fornication, and other forms of immorality. Zulefi preaches that "The good Lord knows no curse. God forgives. He forgives everyone, even those who are black of skin, vile, and crouching in the gutter. If they learned to ask for forgiveness, the black race would be rewarded with a wondrous thing. In the afterlife they would be equal among nations." (Conde, 2004, p. 151)

In this sense, there are a dozen stories in Guadeloupe African community, each one more unexpected than the others, in which ignorance, religion, and magic fought each other. One of these accounts, a female from Vieux-Habitants who "had given birth to a baby boy on December 25 demanded he be called Jesus" (Conde, 2004, p. 194). Many individuals believe that missionary work and colonialism are closely intertwined, and that colonial rulers brought Christianity with them to

disarm slaves and put an end to resistance, and then took it away when they departed. Regardless of its political entanglements, the truth of the gospel has persisted; striking a resonance in the hearts of people all over Africa, and Christianity is generally embraced. African Christians created their own leadership and worship God in their own unique style, making their faith uniquely theirs. Perhaps they behave that the religion of the rulers will empower them as it had done to the white masters.

CONCLUSION

The fetish priests in Africa whose mission is to civilize the slaves through peace and love because a powerful act of conversion to Christianity is not a step towards peace but rather towards disgust. Modern slavery is found in Africa among fetish priests who hold thousands of teenage girls as unpaid servants and sex toys. The Puritans used their power over the black slaves to force them to adopt their faith by becoming Christians. While black slaves deserve equal treatment, their share of the doctrine is completely neglected, demonstrating puritan hypocrisy. Consideration of the slave as an economic unit and an element in the divine plan creates a duality in the Puritan perspective toward black slavery. These slaves are treated harshly in Christian lands, and they are forced to recite prayers by their Puritan masters beneath their roof, and they are made to act on white men's religious convictions that their damn skin should not defile their masters' religious activities. As a result, black slaves became one of Satan's incarnations, as they were thought to be cursed due to their dark color. As a result, their spirit is likewise regarded as black, the color of damnation. It raises the question of whether or not there is a colored spirit. If the body is doomed then salvation is possible for the soul, which is a colorless idea. The religious tradition of making gifts such as animals, money, and liquor to pacify angry gods may be traced back thousands of years, but fetish priests modernize it by converting it into human psychological torture, rape, and sacrifice.

It is embarrassing to learn that dark skin color is a sign of damnation and that their abode of punishment after death is hell. They have no place in Christianity in this land because they are perpetually cursed individuals, restating that the black skin race is unworthy. They are born merely to perform manual labor on Earth for their white rulers, and they must disregard their indigenous religion practices as long as they remain under their roof. They must carry out their religious obligations for their cursed skin not to pollute their religious activities. Slaves of color are religiously marginalized, and puritans have demonstrated their lack of authority in enforcing their faith. The Puritans' involvement in black

slavery is a reaction to a dual economic imperative: first, the provision of money, and second, the establishment of labor. In this regard, the notion of the slave as an economic unit and a component of the divine system created duality in the Puritan attitude towards black slaves.

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