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## **DECODING THE IMPACTS OF SLAVERY ON THE PSYCHE OF SOME WHITE FOLKS IN THE SELECTED WORKS OF *FREDERICK DOUGLASS, KWAKUVI AZASU AND EQUIANO OLAUDAH***

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### **Résumé**

Cet article vise à démontrer l'impact psychologique innombrable que la pratique de l'esclavage a exercé sur le psychisme de certains Blancs dans les œuvres de Frederick Douglass, Kwakuvi Azasu et Olaudah Equiano. L'impact de l'esclavage sur les Noirs réduits en esclavage a été largement documenté dans des ouvrages; cependant, peu de travaux ont abordé l'impact de la pratique de l'esclavage sur les Blancs. Les résultats obtenus sur la base de l'analyse à travers la perspective psychanalytique ont montré que l'institution de l'esclavage avait été une destruction mentale pour les esclavagistes blancs dû un certain nombre de facteurs. Premièrement, il a été souligné que l'esclavage avait rendu le cœur des maîtres si froid que les mauvais traitements et les meurtres d'esclaves ne signifiaient rien pour eux. Deuxièmement, il a été démontré que l'institution de l'esclavage avait façonné les sociétés américaines en créant une convention sociale qui qualifiait les esclaves noirs de non-humains. Par conséquent, une grande partie de la population américaine n'éprouvait aucune sympathie pour les traitements inhumains perpétrés contre les Noirs par les maîtres. Troisièmement, il a été démontré que les systèmes judiciaires américains étaient sapés par l'institution de l'esclavage ; par conséquent, ils ont fermé les yeux sur les atrocités faites aux Noirs.

**Mot clés :** Impact, psyché, psychanalyse, esclavage, les blancs.

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### **Abstract**

This article aims to demonstrate the innumerable psychological impact the practice of slavery exerted on the psyche of some Whites in the Selected Works of Frederick Douglass, Kwakuvi Azasu and Equiano Olaudah. The impact of slavery on the enslaved Blacks has largely been documented in scholarly works; however, few works have tackled the impact of the practice of slavery on white folks. The results obtained on the basis of the psychoanalytic analysis have evidenced that the institution of slavery had tremendous mental effects on some white slavers for a number of factors. First, it has been highlighted that slavery had rendered the heart of masters so cold that the brutalization and killing of slaves did not mean anything for them. Second, it has been shown that the institution of slavery had framed the American societies by creating a social convention which labelled black slaves as non-humans. Therefore, a large part of the American population did not feel any sympathy for the inhumane treatment perpetrated against Blacks by their masters. Third, it has been demonstrated that the American judicial systems were undermined by the institution of slavery; therefore, they closed their eyes on atrocities done to Blacks.

**Keywords:** Impact, psyche, psychoanalysis, slavery, white folk.

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## Introduction

The institution of slavery had been physically, culturally and psychologically terrible for people of African origins from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. It has been largely documented that slavery had impacted the minds of the enslaved Blacks throughout that atrocious period. A number of historical books, like *The Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* by Harriet Jacobs in 1861, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* by Olaudah Equiano in 1789, *The Slave Raiders* by Kwakuvi Azasu in 2004, and *History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave* by Mary Prince in 1831, have tackled that dark side of slavery concerning its psychological and cultural impacts on the victimized Blacks.

However, we have noticed that very few scholars have written about the possible impact of slavery on the white victimizers. In many scholarly works, we have also remarked that black people were presented as the only victims of the psychological effects of slavery.

In the light of the above problem, the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, *The Slave Raiders* and *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* pose as special texts that uncover the backlashes of the institution of slavery on the

white people. As a matter of fact, the three authors of the selected works have publicized in their narratives a number of elements permitting to clearly comprehend that slavery was disastrous for white slavers too. In other words, it should be known that the period of slavery did not only mean black slaves mental and behavioral predicaments, but it also had a tremendous effect on the white people.

It is in this context that the paper attempts to account for the issue related to white people's mental state in the face of slavery. Thus, the objective of this paper is to show how the practice of slavery had impacted on the minds and behaviors of white enslavers throughout the slavery period. To attain the stated objective, the study's data were collected, analyzed and interpreted in the theoretical context of psychoanalysis.

In this regard, the study is divided into two sections. First, it tries to explicate the state of mind and the behavior of slave masters and the American population as a whole. Then it explores the effect of slavery on the American slave society and their judicial systems.

### 1. Slavery Effect on the White Man's Mind and Behavior

Before talking about the impact of slavery on the Whites, it is necessary to recall that the mental impact of slavery had been stronger for the enslaved Blacks throughout that period. It is not a secret that the history of slavery had a tremendous effect on the mindset of black people. However, it must be acknowledged that the practice of slavery in the Western countries, especially America, had occasioned massive mental and behavioral vicissitudes on the minds and behaviors of some white people, especially slaveholders and masters. In relation to the alteration or deprecation of the mindsets of some Whites, Douglass's narrative highlights a number of situations that corroborate the mentioned matter. In this regard, Douglass uncovers that slavery altered the virtuous quality of one of his mistresses, named Mrs. Auld. The mentioned mistress initially was a well-intended and sympathetic person towards him, for she used to treat him like her own son. In the similar fashion, she is presented as the one, who initiated Douglass to reading and writing.

In the same dynamics, Douglass testifies in his text that Mrs. Auld had not owned a slave prior to him. That is, he had been the first enslaved Black to be under her ownership; it means that before possessing a slave, Mrs. Auld had always worked for herself. According to the writer this can explain the reason why she was

different from other slave owners concerning the treatment of slaves. In fact, since she had not owned any slaves before Douglass, she was preserved from the drastic mental effect of slavery, which usually enticed many masters to orchestrate dehumanizing treatment to their slaves. The following lines are the notes from Douglass about Mrs. Auld's goodness, before the neurotic effects of slavery got hold of her like the other masters and mistresses:

MY new mistress proved to be all she appeared when I first met her at the door,—a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings. She had never had a slave under her control previously to myself, and prior to her marriage she had been dependent upon her own industry for a living. She was by trade a weaver; and by constant application to her business, she had been in a good degree preserved from the blighting and dehumanizing effects of slavery. I was utterly astonished at her goodness. I scarcely knew how to behave towards her (Douglass, 1845, p. 28).

The passage shows that Mrs. Auld was an excellent person who had amazed the writer. When he first met that lady, he became confused as he didn't know how to behave with her because of her obvious goodness.

Besides, Douglass reveals that when Mrs. Auld became a slave owner, she initially maintained her virtuous attitudes as she was not yet blurred by the institution of slavery. However, as time passed by, she eventually

succumbed to the temptation of attitude change. She then started to behave inhospitably with her slaves, just like the other cruel masters. Douglass successfully depicts this change of attitude as follows:

But, alas! This kind heart had but a short time to remain such. The fatal poison of irresponsible power was already in her hands, and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon (Douglass, 1845, p.28).

The above lines substantiate that slavery was so horrible that it could change the heart of even the most cheerful and honest people no matter their racial affiliation. This change of attitude of Mrs. Auld happened because the institution of slavery guided her accordingly. In that, the attitude of cruel slave-owners had a great influence on the attitude of new owners. Under that inhumane system, new masters became neurotic about the prospect that if they did not **behave** wickedly, they could not exercise their authorities on slaves.

In the same line as *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Azasu's *The Slave Raiders* illustrates the negative impact that the institution of slavery had had on the white slavers. The events of this novel took place between Africa and Britain. Its story

perfectly showcases the impact of slavery on Whites. The main character Sir. Hawkins, the chief of the British slave raiders, has immortalized the mentioned mental effect of slavery on his attitudes. Hawkins and his men are portrayed in this narrative as being accountable for perpetrating mass killing and inhumane treatment on black Africans. In this view, because Sir. Hawkins was accustomed to brutalizing black slaves, his heart became so cold that he began to think that killing human beings was a normal thing. For instance, he mercilessly volunteered to throw two old women and a small girl who were declared guilty of witchcraft into fire – all the three were white. In fact, in the Britain of that period, if a person was accused or recognized of witchcraft, he or she was immediately executed by immolation in public places. Due to the coldness of his heart, notorious Hawkins volunteered to conduct the execution of the accused poor women, including a child. To substantiate the aforementioned idea, the narrator discloses:

It was then that Captain Hawkins displayed a skill which nobody among the crowd ever saw before. He held the hag by the torso and allowed her to encumber his arms for a moment. Then he let go. The woman dropped to the ground involuntarily. Hawkins looked away as if he had given up the attempt at throwing her into the blaze. Then, and as if suddenly inspired, he held the squalling

woman by one hand, wheeled her into the blaze. (...) “be quiet,” he cajoled. “It’ll soon be over,” he repeated. The child reduced her uncontrollable scream, just a bit. Then, even the sheriff looked away when Hawkins tossed the child, playfully, into the blazing fire, which soon muzzled her cries. “It is finished!” Hawkins said, casually a hand into one of his pockets (Azasu, 2004, pp.106-107).

The above excerpt shows that after throwing the three persons into fire, Hawkins put his hands in his pockets to show that he was strong. It **can be inferred from** the above excerpt that the cruelty of Captain Hawkins is the direct impact of slavery. The way he terrorized Africans mercilessly is what **had** rendered his heart remorseless. He threw the small girl into the blazing fire without flinching or even hesitating at any moment. The narration shows the reader here that the actors involved in slavery were directly or indirectly impacted mentally to a certain extent. As there was no fear of punishment for him when he brutalized the poor Africans, Captain Hawkins had personally rated himself above everything. His social image was the aspect that mattered to him the most.

Another **instructive** book that tackles the negative impact of slavery on the psyche of Whites is *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaugah quiano*. Equiano declares that at the early moments of his servitude under the ownership of Captain Pascal, there was a lot of complicity, mutual affection,

and respect between them despite the fact that **he** was still a slave. Captain Pascal filled the protagonist with reassurance and confidence with his mild and humane attitude toward the latter. More importantly, **the master** had even allowed him to work so he could make some personal profit:

(...) I thought the time long till I obtained my freedom. For though my master had not promised it to me, yet besides the assurances I had received that he had no right to detain me, he always treated me with the greater kindness and reposed in me an unbounded confidence; he even paid attention to my morals, and would not never suffer me to deceive him or tell lies, of which he used to tell me the consequences; (...) I had never once supposed, in all my dreams of freedom, that he would think of detaining me any longer than I wished (Equiano, 1996, p.51).

The extract displays that the protagonist had a lot **of** confidence in his master as he felt safety and reassurance by his side. The careful and lovely ways that the captain formerly showed to Equiano are the evidence that he was actually a good-hearted person. However, this Equiano’s good-hearted master had finally become quite a cruel person. Equiano got shocked when his master Pascal refused to grant **him** his freedom as planned. Instead, he started **abusing** the enslaved Equiano:

I was so struck with the unexpectedness if this

proceeding that for some time I did not make a reply, only I made an offer to go for my books and chest of clothes, but he swore I should not move out of his sight, and if I did he would cut my throat (Equiano, 1996, pp.51-52).

The excerpt shows a sudden volatility in the behavior of Equiano's master. This change of behavior can be explicated by the fact that the ego of the mentioned master had succumbed to the pressure of his id<sup>1</sup> force and that of the superego<sup>2</sup>. He had initially resisted the mentioned two pressures. As the institution of slavery proved to be a source of mental manipulation, Equiano's master finally succumbed to their influences, and became cruel.

## **2. The Impact of Slavery on the Western Society**

This section provides details relating to the impact of slavery on the American society. In doing so, it provides a portrayal of the behavior and the state of mind of the American population at the moment the practice of slavery was booming. It finally accounts for impact of slavery on the American judicial institutions.

### **2-1 Western Population and Slavery**

After the foregoing section which has highlighted how the fact of possessing slaves could damage the good nature of

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<sup>1</sup> The "id" is one of divisions of Freud's approach to psychology of personality. It is the instinct, desire, or the intuitive force that attract the individual.

white people. In Douglass's text, he testifies that slavery had deprived some white masters of the natural affection that a person could have for his/her offspring. Slave masters and overseers frequently abused female slaves, and in case the victim became pregnant by the master or overseer, the child would not be recognized a fortiori given any special treatment.

In this regard, Douglass reveals that he was in the mentioned situation since his father was said to his master. However, he had never been recognized by the latter as his son nor given any special and parental care: "My father was a white man. He was admitted to be such by all I ever heard speak of my parentage. The opinion was also whispered that my master was my father; but of the correctness of this opinion, I know nothing; the means of knowing was withheld from me" (Douglass, 1845, p.16). In the passage, the narrator is dubious about the correctness of the identity of his father, for neither his mother nor his alleged father had informed him about that matter. The reason why Douglass was withheld from knowing his white father lay on the fact that slavery had rendered American population hostile to the connection between Whites and Blacks. That is, it was imbedded in the minds of the

<sup>2</sup> The superego is also one of Freud's approach to psychology of personality. It represents the society and the family for an individual.

then white American population that blackness was negative.

Mentally, Americans were not prepared to accept mixed-race children to enjoy the same privilege as their white counterparts. Therefore, it is unveiled that those mixed-race children were reserved an even worse treatment as compared to the other black slave children. They were ill-treated by wives of their biological fathers who could not take their defense:

I know of such cases; and it is worthy of remark that such slaves invariably suffer greater hardships, and have more to contend with, than others. They are, in the first place, a constant offence to their mistress. She is ever disposed to find fault with them; they can seldom do anything to please her; she is never better pleased than when she sees them under the lash, especially when she suspects her husband of showing to his mulatto children favors which he withholds from his black slaves (Douglass, 1845,p.17).

Knowing that her husband might be the genitor of a slave, a mistress would do everything to suffer the poor child just to satisfy her ego, guided by jealousy and racism.

Surprisingly, in such situations, the master did not intervene to appease the suffering of his progeny. The master's nonintervention is imputed to the fact that he did not recognize the latter as his

biological child but instead as his slave. In most cases, Douglass denotes that the master got rid of such slaves – the child he engendered with a black slave woman – by selling them away for the respect of his wife:

The master is frequently compelled to sell this class of his slaves, out of deference to the feelings of his white wife; and, cruel as the deed may strike any one to be, for a man to sell his own children to human flesh-mongers, it is often the dictate of humanity for him to do so; for, unless he does this, he must not only whip them himself, but must stand by and see one white son tie up his brother, of but few shades darker complexion than himself, and ply the gory lash to his naked back; (Douglass, 1845,p.18).

In the above, the narrator reveals that it was not only the mistress who was brutal to mixed-race children but also her own children. It means that the master's legitimate white children relished the prospect of inflicting pain to the mixed-race slave children, their half-brothers. As a result, the master, father of the mixed-race slave, had to sell his progeny away. Again, for the sake of a social convention resulted from psychological disorder created by slavery, a father without any pity or sympathy dared bargain his own flesh and blood, just because the latter was **of** a darker complexion slave. That inhumane attitude prevailing in American society was the manifestation of the backlashing impact

of slavery on them. In a word, this situation demonstrates that the practice of slavery has impacted and turned almost the whole American citizens (young and old; and men and women).

In the similar dynamic way, *The Slave Raiders* by Kwakuvi Azasu has also demonstrated the impact of slavery on the British population. This historical narrative testifies that the heart of the British people of the period of slavery became solid and devoid of mercy. Therefore, the mentioned stiffness of heart of some British people made them ignore the death and ill-treatment of slaves. In other words, the institution of slavery had turned the hearts of most of the slaveholding European populations into cruel and pitiless ones. For instance, *The Slave Raiders* reveals that in the sixteenth century, while slave trade was at its peak in Europe, some British people had not only become intolerant and merciless vis-à-vis black slaves but also their own white counterparts. The analysis enables us to construe that any British citizen, who happened to be accused of witchcraft, was destined to be immolated as a punishment despite their whiteness: “Hopkins answered clearly and convincingly, ‘by the powers conferred upon me by our Holy Father, Pope, and the Holy Mother, the Church of Christ, and by the instruments of the Inquisition, I find

these three guilty of witchcraft”” (Azasu, 2004, p.102). Hopkins is presented in this illustrative work as a famous and intolerant witch-hunter whom everyone feared. His actions resulted in the immolation of many English people on public places. The acceptance of this human burning activity by English people is undeniably due to the fact that their hearts were toughened as a result of the practice of slavery. Hence, seeing black slaves being brutalized in all unimaginable ways made the hearts these slave holding Europeans colder that they could even watch some of their own white fellows being burned alive without feeling any remorse.

Hence, the heart of a large number of western people became solid and devoid of mercy as a result of the practice of slavery. As indicated earlier, the institution of slavery had turned the hearts of most of the slaveholding European and American populations into cruel and pitiless ones. Therefore, masters and overseers were ready to attend the brutalization of their offspring that they engendered with raped slave women. All these social attitudes, seen in the midst of American population concerning black slaves, were the manifestation of their extreme superiority pride created by slavery. The under the influence of narcissism, a large number of white masters, mistresses, overseers and the large part of the population had treated



black slaves brutally. Even today, the negative impact of slavery is visible in American society.

For instance, Coulibaly A.S and Coulibaly Z have demonstrated through “Immigration in the Confluence of Racial Implications in African Literature: A Reading of Adichie’s *Americanah*” that black people are still continuing to suffer from the impact left by slavery on some white Americans. The two scholars have proved that, just like in the era of slavery, black people are still regarded as inferior beings and cornered to the margins of the American society. White Americans in majority do not want to mingle with Blacks. They also sustain that, in western countries mainly in America, people of African origins suffer from all sorts of discrimination just because of their skin color. That is, according to some white Americans today, being black is an abomination or *nothingness* just like posited by their forefathers in the slavery period. The two writers have given an illustrative conversation between Ifemelu, the main character, and a white man about her lifestyle on her weblog in *Americanah*. In this conversation, the white man made Ifemelu understand that Blacks are not wanted in the American society even for adoption:

“even write about adoption?  
Nobody wants black babies in

this country, and I don’t mean biracial, I mean black. Even the families don’t want them’. He told her that he and his wife had adopted a black child and their neighbours looked at them as though they had chosen to become martyrs for a dubious cause”. (Adichie, 2013, pp.4-5).

This passage corroborates clearly that some white Americans are still under the negative stereotypes left by slavery. That is why in the excerpt, a white man expresses that they don’t want black children even for adoption despite the end of slavery several years ago. Inferring from the above extract, it can be sustained that all the racist mentality which is hunting some white people is the direct result of the past stereotypical opinions inherited from slavery.

## **2-2 American Judicial Systems and Slavery**

Like the American population, their judicial systems were also influenced by the institution of slavery. The justice institution is the arbitrator that controls, implements, and serves justice and equality in accordance with the constitution of a country. Judges are the guarantors of social stability, and the verdict they announce should be unbiased. However, the American judicial institution lacked impartiality as far as the abuses committed by slave owners **to slaves** were concerned. In Douglass’s narrative, it is recounted that the enslaved Blacks were deprived of all rights that human beings

could benefit. It is because of that injustice situation that Douglass writes the following to show his disagreement about the institution of slavery: “He seemed to see fully the pressing necessity of setting aside my intellectual nature, in order to contentment in slavery. But in spite of him, and even in spite of myself, I continued to think, and to think about the injustice of my enslavement, and the means of escape (p.88).” From the foregoing, Douglass castigates the fact that the fruit of his physical labor benefitted exclusively his then master Thomas. Therefore, he wondered that that situation could not prevail for the sake of his humanity. Knowing that he could not sue Master Thomas for the deprivation of his rights due to his status, he resolved to project an escape.

The reason why Douglass had privileged the escape channel was linked to the fact that American judicial systems were affected by the institution of slavery the same way as the American population in the whole. The social conventions had labelled black slaves as merchandise or even inferior beings. That is why in the preceding section, Douglass testifies that the slaveholding American population was blinded by the whiteness pride, superiority complexes. That situation had made them incapable to feel any human compassion for the enslaved Blacks - who were under the lashes and bullets on the

daily basis. In addition, masters could assassinate their slaves without being worried. In relation to that, Douglass has provided a number of cases in which slaves were brutalized by master without any judicial concern for the brutalizers. In this view, he depicts that white agents, masters and overseers, involved in slave activities had free hands and could act the way they pleased.

For instance, Douglass reveals that one of his masters had shot down one of his slaves and was not worried or questioned. He narrates that there was a slave whose name was Demby. The latter was so severely beaten by his master by that the victim ended up refusing to follow orders of his punisher. As a result, he was shot dead like an animal, and there had been no punishment against his murderous master. The only thing the murderer had said about his crime was that Demby had become unmanageable: “Mr. Gore... not even giving Demby an additional call, raised his musket to his face, taking a deadly aim at his victim” (Douglass, pp.19-20). This tragic scene not only demonstrates the cruelty of the white slave masters but also the weakness of the American judicial institutions.

Furthermore, he reports that a cousin of his wife, who was between fifteen and sixteen, had been murdered by her mistress, called Mrs. Hicks. That event took place at night, and the young black girl had fell

asleep as a result of lack of sleep in the previous nights, due to her restless service. When the baby of the Mrs. Hicks started crying without being assisted by the exhausted slave girl, **the latter** was murdered pitilessly, and the murderer was not worried: “Mrs. Hicks, finding the girl slow to move, jumped from her bed, seized an oak stick of wood by the fireplace, and with it broke the girl’s nose and breastbone, and thus ended her life” (Douglass, 1845, p. 21). This example by Douglass about the cruelty of slave holders testifies and supports the claim that slavery was nothing but dehumanizing for the enslaved black people. **It also shows the coldness of the hearts of some white people and the weakness of the American judicial institutions as a result of slavery.**

In the similar way, *The Slave Raisers*, whose events are set between Africa and the Great Britain, evidences the vulnerability of the Britain’s judicial institutions during the period of slavery. It is actually highlighted in the narration that the enslaved Blacks could be ill-treated to death without their murderous masters being questioned. On the eve of one of his biggest journeys to Africa, John Hawkins, a main character and one of the greatest British slave merchants, decided to entertain his guests onboard a slave ship about to depart for Africa. He ordered four slaves to perform in front of his guests: “Good. Bring four of them to the deck. I’d like them to entertain my

guests.(Azasu,2004,p.205).” During the show, John Hawkins kept on torturing slaves just feel better. Tired and disgusted, they stopped the performance to have rest. However, this situation was interpreted by Mr. Hawkins as a lack of respect towards his great person. Thus, he decided to shoot one of the performing enslaved Africans as a warning to the rest:

He felt terribly insulted by the creatures he himself had hunted down and captured. How dared negroes, even negroes, defy his august personage and in the very presence of his guests!... Hawkins decided to shoot one of them as an example to the rest (Azasu,2004,p.210).

The passage reveals that Hawkins had considered the tiredness of the four slaves as an affront to his person. To respond, He killed one of them in the presence of many dignitaries of Britain of the given period without fearing that his action could be brought to court. Indeed, Mr. Hawkins had not been questioned for his assassination of the innocent black slave. That is, it was not in the power of British judicial institutions to open cases about abuses committed against the enslaved Blacks. In a word, the western judicial systems were influenced and used as tools to consolidate the practice of slavery.

The same thing can be said about Equiano’s *The Interesting Narrative*. In fact, in his narrative, Equiano testifies that masters were not afraid of being sued over

the brutalities or killing of slaves. It is because of that reality that Equiano's master Captain Pascal had broken the law by refusing to set the latter free as indicated by the State's laws. In addition, he had even threatened to kill Equiano in case he insisted or tried to escape:

(...) he swore I should not move out of his sight, and if I did he would cut my throat, at the same time taking his hanger. I began, however, to collect myself, and plucking up courage, I told him I was free and he could not by law serve me so. But, this only enraged him the more, and he continued to swear, (...) (Equiano, 1996, p.52).

This excerpt evidences that white masters did not care about being charged because of slaves. That is why Captain Pascal breached the law by holding his slave beyond the indicated period, and he knew that there would be no trouble for him over that matter. It means that even though there were some laws that instated some regulations concerning the condition of holding slaves in some States of the United States, slave masters could breach them without being punished or questioned.

Sadly, even today the impact of slavery reflects on American judicial system. It can be postulated that black Americans do not benefit from the same privilege as their white counterparts in the face of courts. The case of police violence against people of

African origins is a good example which proves that there is still injustice toward Blacks. In that, we can assume that the mentioned current injustice is linked to old stereotypical assumptions that continue to weigh on the mindsets of the contemporary American judicators and security agents. The police violence against Blacks and the disproportionate incarceration of the latter are the evidence substantiating the impact of slavery on some Whites as they are blurred by narcissistic ideology of the era of slavery. The latest case was the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed 46-year old black man by the police in Minnesota USA, on May 25, 2020. This black man was murdered the similar way as many other black people previously in the era of slavery. This situation in today's America is the evidence showing that American police are still tougher on black people than their white counterparts. In addition to that, the statistics have also shown that the majority of the inmates are black people in America, particularly in the State of Minnesota:

Compared to other states, Minnesota has the greatest black-to-white disparity in imprisonment rates. In 1997, the most recent year for which state-by-state data are available, the ratio of African Americans to whites in state prison was 25.09 to 1. This is the highest ratio of all states. In 2000, 37.2% of the state's prisoners were African American. By comparison only

3.5% of the population of Minnesota was African American (Council on Crime and Justice, (Council on Crime and Justice, N.D), p.1).

The above is a statistic about the imprisonment rates between Whites and Blacks in the State of Minnesota, United States in 1997 and 2000. These statistics reveal that despite the small number of African Americans in the State of Minnesota, they count the largest percentage of the imprisonment rate in comparison with white counterparts. This shows that American Blacks are still experiencing race-based discrimination just like the period of slavery. With this regard, it can be sustained that the old stereotypical visions about Blacks are still prevailing in the American society. The foregoing idea is illustrated as follows:

From the earliest White portrayals of Indians as “savages” bent on murdering helpless homesteaders on the plains and prairies, to their regular claims that African Americans were sexual “brutes” who must be prevented from raping White women, the notion that Brown and Black people must be controlled and confined due to their innate and inherent criminal and deviant natures is, as historian Khalil G. Muhammad puts it, “embedded in the cultural DNA of the nation” (Thompson, 2019, p.222).

The extract evidences that in the earliest period of the history of the USA, Indians, due their skin color, were portrayed by some Whites as savages, and many helpless indigenous Indians were killed on that account. The same quotation evinces that African Americans were regarded as sexually brutes, so they had to be stopped from raping white women. The accumulation of all the hostile behavior of white folks towards Blacks can be explained as a mental deficiency. That is, the mindsets of some white Americans were undermined by the institution of slavery, preventing them to show their humanity to Blacks. All the above illustrative accounts are intended to support thesis affirming that institution of slavery had altered the mind and behaviors of some Whites. What is more, the heartless atrocities which were perpetrated to black slaves by Whites were all guided by the negative influence of that institution. Finally, the same quote demonstrates that the American judicial courts did not treat the cases of Blacks the same way as Whites. That is why masters were relaxed to brutalize poor slaves.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we may say through the works *Frederick Douglass*, *Kwakuvi Azasu* and *Equiano Olaudah* that the institution of slavery had not only impacted the victimized black slaves, but also the white victimizers.

Indeed, the practice of slavery has been a mental prejudice for the white people leading many of them into behavioral changes. For instance, slavery had changed the good nature of those Whites involved in that inhumane practice by turning their hearts cold. The same situation was reflected on the American society as the American slave society as well as its judicial institutions became infested and corrupt as a result of the slave institution. The assassination of black slaves was not seen as a crime by most white Americans a fortiori their judicial institutions.

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