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Black Dandyism: From Fashion to Freedom

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my beloved parents

For their endless support.

To my brothers, and sisters.

To my close friends who encouraged me.

Acknowledgments

I would like to demonstrate my sincere gratitude to my supervisor,

Dr. LARBI YUCEF, for accepting to supervise me,

For his insightful criticism, colossal support, and encouragement.

Without which I would not have been able to finish this work.

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Abstract

The act of slavery saw light roughly in 1619, when hundreds of African slaves were shipped to Europe and to the New World to work for the white man. Since then white men have issued laws to keep the slaves in chains. For that reason, black people sought to find a way to express their freedom without breaking those laws. One method was by composing songs, dances and mostly tailoring their own fashionable clothes. This movement was called "Black Dandyism" which emerged in England and later swept across Europe and reached America. This historical research aims at first to shed light on how black dandies created a new identity by wearing colorful outfits to reflect their African identity and culture. Second, it explains how the tool of fashion and music became a political movement to impose their culture and existence. Third, the researcher delivers illustrations to demonstrate how Dandyism is portrayed in literature. Finally, it ends on making a link between old Dandyism, the case of Jim Crow, and the modern one with stresses the case of "Michael Jackson."

Keywords: Slavery, Dandyism, African Identity, Fashion, Jim Crow, Michael Jackson.

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General Introduction

The wheel of time witnessed many changes between the past and today, but nothing came by chance. Each action has an equal reaction as happened with the modern black dandy with their new astonishing style of clothing, whose story that hides behind this sophisticated look and colorful suits. If we dig deep into the black people's history, we find that black dandyism can be traced back to the Victorian Era which lifted the extravagantly dressed gentlemen who cared about their look and their public image. Dandies sought a way to blend within the white society therefore, they dressed creatively in hope of being accepted

Blacks relied on fashion to get a place among the white. On the other hand, the slave trade gave birth to a new race in Europe. whites aimed to remove their identity and masculinity, but the black dandy expressed his rejection of humiliation through the development of his skill in elegance and clothing to obtain a place in the white society.

The research work will discuss the following questions:

- How and where black dandyism emerge?
- How did dandies rebel ?
- How was dandyism looked at from a literary view?

The main aim of this work is to shed light on the history of blacks from a different angle and provide the readers with information that I did not know as student. It is also to show the dark history of slavery which affected all the sides of the slave's life even the side that we thought was not affected: 'clothing', which holds many personal meanings of identity and to rise awareness on how black dandyism was generated from different style of clothing to become a part of black people's identity. Under a life of discrimination, the black people were so creative to find an elegant way and they let light went through it into start looking for a new life full of beauty .

The research paper has been divided in two chapters in order to answer the previous questions. In the first chapter, I dealt with the origins of black dandyism starting from its early signs in some theatrical works in England, and then talked about the first dandy figures that were known at that time. In addition, I looked at the black dandies in America by using some figures like Jim Crow and Long Tail Blue "Dixon" who was struggling to make an identity for African Americans.

In the second chapter, I tried to explain how black dandyism shifted from a cultural movement to a political one. I also discussed how black dandyism was represented mainly in literature. Last, I built a link between the past and present using Michael Jackson as a modern performer of the minstrel show performance and fashion style.

CHAPTER ONE:

Seeking a Place in The White Society

Introduction

When Black people were deported to Europe, they came bearing nothing with them, not even proper clothes, for they were almost naked. One element was instilled in their memories and did not fade away as their freedom was their identity encapsulated in the Diaspora they left behind. Furthermore, Europeans treated blacks as slaves to either farm the land or protect their owners. In England, however, some wealthy men considered black people as luxurious items and even as pets. Black people had to abide to the norms of white men at first, but later on, they saw in fashion an escape from the image white people imposed on them. Consequently, black people started wearing extravagant, yet elegant clothes; colourful clothes and silk hats: a mixture of the white people's conventions and the African identity. This rebellion of style was called many names one of which is dandyism.

Definition of Dandyism

According to Oxford Dictionary, the term dandy means a man who cares a lot about his clothes and appearance. Also, "a male who gives extra attention to his look; therefore, gives himself a look of a doll." Ike Ude, in *Post Colonial Flaneur* (2002), argues that the term dandy stretches beyond what is commonly conceived as stylish-person. A dandy is a person who challenges the norms of dressing imposed by society; the way he dresses is a reflection of his identity and self-confidence.

1. Black Dandyism

Monica. Miller, Associate Professor of English and Africana Studies, (2009, 10) states:

Dandyism appears to be a phenomenon particularly suited to blacks, who experienced an attempted erasure or reordering of their identities in the slave trade. For blacks in the diaspora, the dandy's special talent—the possibility of converting absence into presence through self-display—is not only a philosophical or psychological boon, but also, initially, a practical concern.

Essentially, Milner believes that no other race could adopt the phenomenon of dandyism better than the black race, as it saw fashion and style as an advantageous element to display identity, escape the social boundaries of white man, and mostly a way of linking the style of European style of clothing with the African diaspora. Nowadays, Black dandyism is not only related to prestigious men from the Victorian era, but also a social and cultural representation of the black race.

Similarly, Miller states that black dandies relied on performing to reveal their identity and beliefs. For her, black performance is a means of aesthetic cultural expression. This is embodied in the term signifying a word that black dandies used to demonstrate their longing for the African Diaspora and to take action against the common norms of living in the white society: to revise, repeat, reverse or transform all that is conventionally agreed upon. In this line Miller explains:

Deconstructive of the received codes of identity formation and performative of new modes of being, black dandies continually ‘repeat, revise, reverse, or transform what has come before,’ using clothing as a means to create new images and identities and revise them yet again (Miller, 14).

That is to say, the black dandies revised and inserted new conventions to white society because simply for them it was no longer white society, but rather a mixture of races; therefore it would be inappropriate to accept those norms without adding theirs. One method to do this was by mimicking the style of white Victorian men who dressed fancy colourful clothes and focused on appearances.

2. Black Dandies in England

It is important to mention that black dandyism was not welcomed at the first place. Black people in general were mistreated, enslaved, and treated as property. This is apparent in Mungo’s song “The padlock” (1768). The song reads as follows:

Dear heart what a terrible life I am led!

A dog has a better, that's shelter'd and fed:

Night and day 'tis de same,

My pain is dere game:

Me wish to de Lord me was dead.

Whate'er's to be done,

Poor black man must run;

Mungo here, Mungo dere,

Mungo every where;

Above and below,

Sirrah come, sirrah go;

Do so, and do so.

Oh! Oh!

Me wish to de Lord me was dead (Miller, 27).

This song reflects the oppressive society, where black people had to survive. Mungo states that a dog at that time would be fed and kept in a safe haven, but black people were wishing to be dead instead of having to live a harsh and painful life every day. Consequently, he advises black slaves to escape from their masters because there is nothing to be done in order to prevent this hard life they are leading.

The writer Hall Kim in his book, *Things of Darkness* (128) states that the dehumanization of black people dates back to 1555 in England. The black race was often

represented in portraits wearing a mask, which was referred to as "the masque of blackness." That mask, back then, reflected the inferiority of the black race in contrast to the white one.

In line with the aforementioned explanation, Florin Shyllon adds, If a man wanted to appear wealthy, he would keep a black man in his house since rich British people considered black servants as tools of amusement. (Shyllon, 7-10) During the Eighteenth century, London was the main destination for those who wanted to buy a servant as to appear wealthy in the eyes of society. Consequently, wealthy men who kept black boys as pets made sure the latter were decorated with style and fashion. One excerpt to consolidate this historical fact is mentioned by Little K.L., in his book, *Negroes in Britain*. He says:

A Negro boy, about nine years of age in a grey suit, his hair cut close to his head, was lost on Tuesday last, August 9th, at night, in St. Nicholas Lane, London. If anyone can give notice to him to Mr. Thomas Barker, at the sugar loaf, in that lane, they shall be well rewarded for their pains.

In the painting representing Lady Mary Churchill (duchess of Montagu 1720), it appears that she possessed a servant that is drawn beside her in the portrait. What is different about the servant is that he was a little boy who was displayed in a fashionable manner. The first thing that would appear when one takes a look at the picture is that Lady Mary was at the centre of the portrait in contrast to the servant boy who was marginalized and put in the corner of the drawing. This can denote that the black child was of no identity to his Lady, he was but a pet. In such portraits, in order to determine the social status of both the master and the servant, critics examine the style of clothing.



Figure 1- Lady Mary Churchill with Negro, Slaves to fashion: Black Dandyism and the styling of black diasporic identity (Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2009) p 51.

3. Dandyism in America

Unlike in England, Black dandyism quickly emerged with the American societal conventions to become part of the American identity. Black people in America sought a way of self-expression through fashion and style in order to blend in with the society and easily find jobs. After the emancipation of black people, Black dandyism spread all over the new world; it demarcated the transformational phase that black slaves became free citizens. (Borgstrom, 143)

Eric Lott (43), an American cultural historian and professor, gives one example of the social and cultural integration of the black people into the American society, the Pinkster festival. The latter is originally adapted from the Dutch culture. Presently, people of all races meet up to celebrate the season of flowers (spring). In such occasion, slaves and their masters, white and black people wore the same outfit. Later on, in 1800, black people rejected the idea of wearing the same as white man and chose their model as a black king.

Slaves who first set foot on the American soil had a great part of their bodies exposed and were almost naked. However, the Americans forced those slaves to wear European clothes. This made Africans lose part of their identity. Also, some historians write that those black people who arrived on American shores were naked representing a barbarian look. (Milner, 3)

In respect to Miler's statement, (Miler, 90) also adds, there was a significant trade of clothes between Europeans and Africans. The former traded well-tailed clothes with textile and gold. However, later on, the arrival of Africans into the European continent led to the creation of a hybrid style: a mixture from traditional African clothes and European fashion. Consequently, Black people took advantage of the tool of fashion to reflect their new identity and reflect the African diasporic dream.

It is also important to mention Richard T. Schaefer (3), author of *Race and Ethnicity in the United States*, statement concerning the link between how black people in America dressed and the way they were treated. He explains that fashion and freedom for slaves were two facets of one coin. If black persons wore fancy clothes then they were more likely to find jobs and receive a better treatment. Clothes, style, and fashion were not the concern of black people only. Even white people regarded style as a mirror to one's identity. Nonetheless, in regions as South America, slaves were forced to wear female clothes as an attempt from their masters to degenerate and humiliate blacks. However, not all slaves could fight, for, some escaped from their masters and lived in other cities. Moreover, Lawmen and politicians saw considered the contribution of slaves in the war as an act of democracy and a patriotic deed.

3.1 Slavery in America

"All men are created equal", said Thomas Jefferson. This quote was taken into consideration after the war of independence in 1775. Black people fought side by side with the white people for a higher purpose: having a unified and free country. This act became more recognized as it paved the way towards slavery abolition. (Theodor, 50)

It is paramount to mention that the ideology of freeing slaves started in northern colonies, at that time there were few slaves left, which made jobs easier. However, the southern area farmers and property owners relied entirely on slaves to manage their farms and plant their

lands. Because of the nature of southern states that depended on agriculture to keep their economic growth stable, southerners refused the idea of abolishing slavery.

This act of refusal led in 1850 to the passing of a new law entitled “the Fugitive Slave Law.” It states: any slave who escapes to the northern colonies or Canada should be brought back to his master, and receive a proper punishment. However, northern colonies did not respect this law as they hid escapist and transported them to safer areas at night; mainly through railways. (Lanck, 25)

The new idea of freeing slaves was not welcomed in the south, and what made the southerners ignite the flames of war was, when northern states did not abide to the law of returning escapist to their masters. The latter, paved the way to a civil war, which was ended with the defeat of the southern states.

4. The Concept of Blackface

Miller explains the concept as follows:

The blackface dandy is a stage character developed and refigured from the 1820s on to respond to the actual emergence of black dandies in American society as well as other social and cultural concerns. Given that the advent of black dandyism coincided with the use of typically upper-class clothing by white Americans who used elaborate suits and accessories to distinguish American identity, society and culture from Europe, the history of the black dandy as an argument about class and race restrictions is entangled with the history of the white dandy as an argument about American nationalism (Miller, 4).

That is to say, the break of dandyism in 1820 was but a reaction towards the mistreatment and discrimination. For dandies, clothing as those who were of high societal class was a rebellion that would keep dandies with a unique African identity. Black dandies did not stop at the level of fashion; they also moved into theatre and musical bands where they sang and performed what white people called “Anti-social songs.”

The Dandy movement helped in reshaping people's minds and the way they viewed black people. Despite the huge gap between the cultural and social side of both the black people and the white, this influence led to the creation of a mixed society, where black and white people wore nearly the same trending fashion of dandy style, and celebrated the famous stage characters. Two famous black dandies who represented the Blackface were *Long TailBlue* and *Jim Crow*.

Popular Dandy Figures

Long Tail Blue

Long Tail Blue, (also called Dixon) Born in 1801 in Virginia, was a regular circus boy when he was 15 years old. After that, he stole the lights with his impressive voice, which was discovered when he sang "My Long Tail Blue" in 1827. Dixon was a reflection for the blackface for decades. In this song, Dixon spoke highly of his blue jacket that had a tail, which he thought of as a sign of responsibility. As many famous dandies, Long Tail Blue represented his identity by wearing a unique style of clothes that consisted mainly from a hat, shiny shoes, and a colourful pantaloons. Dixon was a controversial figure as his popular "My Long Tail Blue" was the reason that made him enter jail after the authority shred his blue jacket into pieces. However, people wore the same as Dixon(see figure 2) and stood beside him until he was released from prison. (Miller, 9)

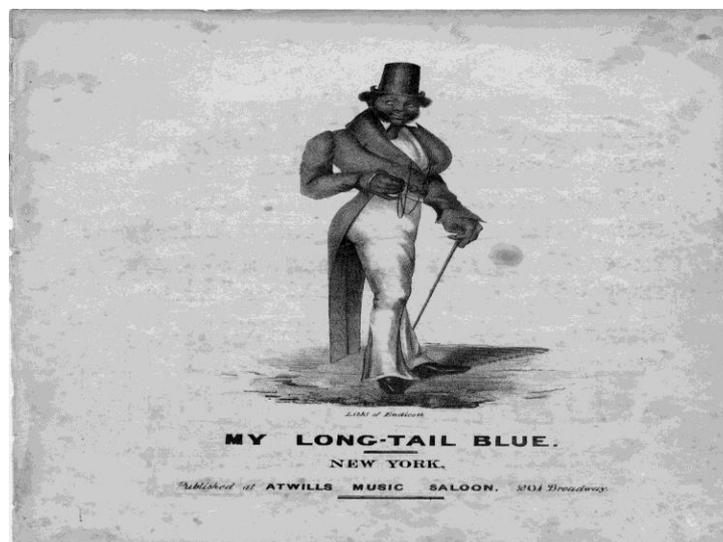


Figure 2- Long-Tail Blue Dixon, (New York: Atwill's, c.1827). The character of a dandy, Blue, with horned top hat, shifty eyes, and a straight, dignified stance. Image courtesy of John Hay Library, Brown University

5. Jim Crow

Some black people succeeded in making a name for themselves through acting in theatre and joining musical bands. One example is Jim Crow (see figure 3) who immersed himself in acting in New York City. Later on in 1830, Jim Crow wrote and sang eye-opening songs that spoke of racism and the issue of slavery as well as the thirst for freedom. He also dressed and danced differently. Eventually, as a black dandy, Jim Crow is considered among the pioneers of this criterion, mainly because of his controversial songs and style of dressing both of which urged American white people to consider the identity of blacks. This is an example of his popular songs:

Example 1:

I met a Philadelphia niggar
Dress'd up quite nice and clean
So I knocked down dis Sambo
And shut up his light,
Says I go away you niggar
Or I'll skin you like an eel.(Miller 11)

Example 2:

Kase it dar misfortune,
Anddey'd spend eberv dollar,
If dey only could be
Gentlemenob colour.
It almost break my heart,
To see dem envy me,
An from my soul I wish dem,
Full as black as we (Martin E. Segal, Martin 10).

In example 1, Jim Crow highly improvised against the white society by writing and performing songs that were thought provoking and debatable among all races. In this song ,for instance, he uses the line "Dress'd up quite nice and clean" as a reference to the misconception that draws a bad picture of black people. Then, other words denoting violence such as, "knocked

down", "shut up" and "skin" Jim Crow uses these words as a reaction to the violence acted on black people who are clean and dress in a new manner. This song is among other controversial songs that gave Jim Crow (also called Rice) the title of "Anti-authoritarian man." (Miller, 11)

As for example 2, Jim Crow shows sympathy towards the white society simply because they are white. In this, he says they are misfortunate of being white and that they are ready to pay as much as it takes them to become white. The narrator employs what was called "race inversion." This term means that black people even if they were enslaved, discriminated and called bad names; they still believed they were fortunate of being black. (Miller, 10)



Figure 3- M.T. Rice (Jim Crow), (Riley, c.1832) Image courtesy of John Hay Library, Brown University.**Figure 4: "Zip Coon" (Hewitt, c.1834)**

6. The Concept of Color Line

Tracing back the etymology of the term “Color line is no easy task. However, what historians know is that in 1881, the term color line was first introduced in Fredric Douglas’ article “The Color Line.” A few years later, the term became known when W.E.B Du Bois employed it in his book “The Souls of Black Folk”(1903)

Richard T. Schaefer (522-523) argues that from the eighteenth century to nowadays, the issue that is still harming us is that people are still pigeonholed according to their skin color, social status and behaviour. Black people back then were denied simple rights like owning a land or property and were compelled to follow the unequal social system of power that was dominating Europe and America. Furthermore, Dandies, who were slaves once, found it necessary to rebel in terms of style of clothing because as they lost their country of origin, they did not want to lose their identity as well. Nowadays, this concept is used merely to refer to racism or the defining line between the white people and the black.

Conclusion

Black people deprived from their values in Europe then in America were treated like pets or less. However, Black people never gave up their identity, a move that they considered as valuable as life itself. Furthermore, Black people sought to have a voice in the white society, and the best way for them was to challenge the common conceptions and European beliefs. This was demonstrated in their way of dressing which gave birth to a new movement called “Dandyism.” This movement, however, did not stop at the cultural level but also extended to reach politics. Moreover, dandyism is still preserved by modern singers as “Michael Jackson” and also represented in different literary works.

CHAPTER TWO:

Black Dandies Accomplishments

Introduction

The widespread black dandies' identity did not stop at the level of clothing and style, but also spread to reach caricature and salient literary achievements. Moreover, artistic works helped in making a way for dandyism to go from slavery to liberty. In addition, with the rise of modern singers and dancers such as Michael Jackson, vivified the movement and gave it a contemporary form that fits the modern era. Interestingly, Jackson has followed the steps of Jim Crow in both performing at the stage and keeping the colourful style of clothing.

1. Black Dandyism as a Political Movement

Dorothea Fischer-Hornung, explains in her book *Embodying Liberation: The Black Body in American Dance* that with the outbreak of Modernism, a movement that sought to make radical artistic changes to give modern forms of art (literature, architecture, music and paintings), African-American version of modernism also appeared. These later culminated in novel artistic forms that solely reflected black identity. Black Modernism, however, did not stop at the forms of art, but stretched to extend from a cultural movement to a political one that aimed at giving black people their rights, and fought against racism.(2001, 54)

Houston A. Baker (1989, 4), an American scholar, specializing in African-American literature and Distinguished University Professor of English at Vanderbilt University, states that during the twentieth century, and with the black dandyism becoming established on political grounds, the dandies grouped in cities and manifested asking for recognition and equality; shouting for a place in the white society, breaking the race and gender limits. At that time, American societies feared the rise of women too as they also demonstrated with black men. Interestingly, white middle class people started joining the demonstrations that demanded change in terms of social class, identity, gender and mostly culture.

In brief, black dandyism conversion into a political movement demanded civil rights through fashion, theatre then adopted new methods: manifestations and marches. For instance, The Silent Protest (1917) (see figure 4) was a peaceful and powerful march that celebrated the role of black soldiers who fought in WWI. This protest was called "Massive Negro Protest" These movements are what gave Black dandyism a political form.



Figure 4 - The silent protest parade, July 28, 1917

Source: <https://www.history.com/news/the-silent-protest-that-kick-started-the-civil-rights-movement> accessed March 19, 2019)

2. The Representation of Dandyism in Literature

In Franz Fanon (2008, 118), a French West Indian psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary, and writer from the French colony of Martinique, writes in his book “Black skin - White Masks” about the distinction made between what black people, whom he refers to as black skin, and white people, whom he describes as white masks: white people’s outfit and attitude. He explains that there is a clash between black and white populations. He, also, argues that white man, who enslaved and colonized free lands, have no regard for the black people's identity starting from the way they dress to the savage way of treating them.

In line with this, he states, “All this whiteness that burns me...I sit down at the fire and I became aware of my uniform, I had not seen it, it is indeed ugly. I stop there, for who can tell me what beauty is?” In this quote, Fanon describes a state of a black person who was forced to wear white people’s clothes. The black man struggles to find his identity that was once represented in the way he dressed. That’s why he says, “It is indeed ugly”

Mar Gallego Durán (2003, 15), who is a tenured professor of American and African American Literature in the University of Huelva, narrates the story of what she called "an Ex-Colored man: the biography of a black dandy. A black man who suffered during the Harlem era. The author investigates the direct relation between the conflict gaining an identity and at the same time fighting the colour line, which determines black men's value in the white society. Moreover, the story of "Ex-Colored man" speaks of a dandy who is a mixed race of a white man and a black father. As one advanced in the story, the main character keeps of swinging between trying to adopt the white values or hang to the black diaspora.

Another worth work of literature in this field is the work of Celeste-Marie Bernier in “Visualizing Slavery 2016.” He, (2016, 162), claims that when individuals notice a black man wearing a different style than theirs, they assume that this person is rebellious or attempting to manifest. However, the author explains, even if the dandy is going to protest, he prefers doing it in a modest style to allude to the fact that he belongs to Africa; hence, has an African identity. In addition, dandies used clothes made of African fabric as a language speaking for their rights, identity, gender and African culture.

Since antiquity, black dandies found their way into art, namely, literature, movies and contemporary works. The main aim of these artistic works is to give a conventional and/or universal image about dandyism. Between the present and the past, dandyism is still carried out by several artists such as Michael Jackson: who is considered as an epitome of modern black

dandies. Just like Blue Tail, Michael influences all people around the world by performing according to the black people's culture and beliefs against racism.

3. Ancient Dandyism

Before mentioning modern dandyism, one has to look back and investigate the ground on which modern dandyism is built. Dandy performances were divided into two parts: First part, those in north: First part, on the one hand, those in the north who wore luxurious and fancy clothes such as Zip Coon. In this part of country, they performed on stage by singing well-written songs that would captivate the audience specially females. On the other hand, Jim Crow, who lived among the slaves in South America, sought to represent their suffering and how ill-treated they were.

The following extract demonstrates how simple and direct old dandies sang. Extracted from the American musicologist Hans Nathan's (1977, 55)

My mama was a wolf

My daddy was a tiger

I'm what you call

De Ole Virginny Nigger

Half fire half-smoke a little touch of thunder

I'm what you call

D'eight wonder62

Nathan (1977, 70) also explains that Ancient dandyism was not only the music or the clothes, but was more characterized by the body movements: dances and special movements. He adds, when dandies performed, they did not mimic other artists but instead they worked hard to change their facial expressions and invent a unique style of dancing.

4. Modern Dandyism: Michael Jackson

Known as the "King of pop", Michael Joseph Jackson, (August 29, 1958; June 25, 2009), was born in Gary, Indiana, U.S.A. The best-selling music artist, an American singer and a dancer, he had a career in the Jackson 5 with his brothers and sisters. He launched his solo album at the age of 13 years old, then he worked to become number one in the world of music industry, when he became famous people accused him of changing his skin colour, so he agreed on a rare television interview with Oprah Winfrey, explained that he has a skin disease called vitiligo and the surgery was necessary. Jackson's bestselling album was "Thriller (1982)"; it made a wide success also did other albums like "Black or White" and his music video "Ghost."

In black and white, Michael Jackson danced in a traditional way, as did the old dandies: The same old footsteps, hands claps and finger clicks. Jackson was the epitome of modern dandyism: a performer who respected the traditional way "minstrel dance" and developed his own dances. As he twinkled his feet and leaned back; mastered the moonwalk. All these gestures made him look powerful especially in the scene below (see figure 05)

Michael Jackson performed on the stage and danced outstandingly by taking dandyism to a new modern era, and that what made him earn the title of "King of Pop". He also spoke about everlasting issue of racism; filled his videos and songs with messages against this phenomenon. However, as any other artist, Jackson was subjected to heavy critique.



Figure 5-Michael Jackson performing in his video Black or White Manning, Harriet J. Michael Jackson and the Blackface Mask. Ashgate Publishing Group, 2013. p37-49.

On the one hand, as Harriet J. Manning (2013, 35), awarded Doctor of Philosophy for her work on blackface minstrelsy and its legacy, explains that “Black and White” was criticized first for its content, as it incites for violence and shows controversial scenes. For this, he was blamed and criticized even by his parents. He, then, expressed his apology and asked for forgiveness if the video has caused any damage to viewers. On the other hand, some of his fans criticized him for changing his skin colour from black to white. Again, he explained that he had a rare skin disease that caused him to undertake the surgery. Besides, He always spoke as an African American.

To put it mildly, Michael Jackson’s video “Black and white” though it was controversial and ground-breaking also showed his true position: a true and modern dandy with classic performance and classic outfit who spoke on behalf of his race. In addition, the video reflected his blackness. Indeed, it received many critiques, some of which considered the video as a revolution demonstrating black people as a culture and not only a colour of dark complexion.

In addition to "Black and White", Manning (2013, 78-79) describes the second most known song "Ghosts 1997." As the story starts unfolding, the viewer would understand that the town mayor along with the town people try to reach for a house in which a hideous maestro

lives Michael Jackson performs the maestro. As the town people approaches the house, the next scene goes to the graveyard at night and the viewer can see the fearfully gloomy view. This image may signify the black minstrel. Then, huge gates open, and the next scene shows cages with animals trapped inside. This, once again, refers to how the black people were treated, especially in Belgium where they kept a black person in a cage so that people can watch him encaged.

The following scene begins with the opening of a great dance hall. The maestro emerges from the fog, head covered with a hood, his face covered with a mask made from bones. People surrounding him gazed with eyes wide open with fear. Then, the maestro destroys the mask, now Michael Jackson's smiley face appears. This particular scene alludes to the notion of the "blackface mask" that is, under the skin lies the soul and the spirit; one should not judge people from their complexion.

To sum up, Michael Jackson succeeded significantly to draw the minstrels dandy dances. Wearing fancy colourful clothes to reflect the dandy spirit and gives glimpse of the past: when slave-owners across Europe allowed their slaves to wear whatever they wish especially during holidays. Jackson too, with his astonishing dances and controversial ideas on racism, attempted to remind people that black or white we are all the same and that we are gathered under humanity.

4.1 Michael Jackson Becoming an Epitome

As stated in Vogue.co.uk, besides Michael Jackson's legendary well-written songs and outstanding performance, his style of clothing influences billions around the world mainly singers and actors. As a fashion icon, he was the black man who revived the moonwalk dance, wore the eighties jackets and made them popular again, put on gloves that gimmers and sometimes wore a military jacket reflecting his masculinity.

Threadfought.net article on July 2008 writes that Michael Jackson owned military outfit which he wore on several occasions, for instance when he met President Ronald Reagan (see figure 07). Michael entitled "the king of pop" for this, probably, he wore different outfit than other singers; mainly clothes that seemed simple but had broad shoulders and colourful stipes. In addition, with the rise of feminist moves, clothes became more of a symbol to shows one gender belongings. This might be another reason for his careful choice of pants, jackets and glimmering gloves.



Figure 6-Michael Jackson with president Ronald Reagan
<http://www.threadfought.net/inspired-michael-jacksons-fashion/>
(date of access March 25, 2019)

Shawn Henning (2013, 68), the former executive producer of Michael Jackson, mentioned in his book that, Michael Jackson could remove the boundaries separating between women's and men's clothes. He did so by wearing white gloves, white jackets and shiny pants. This style is inspired from female singers such as Madonna. Stereotypically, man who wears a pink shirt or female-like clothes is a homosexual. However, Michael Jackson wore these outfits and he was married and had two children. Now, this act made people rethink and question the fashion boundaries. Eventually, those who wear different clothes or come up with a new style should be called innovative people instead of questioning their gender.

Threadforthought.net also writes that Jackson did not only wear clothes inspired from female singers; he also crossed gender lines and put on women's make up such as, lipstick and eyeliner. In addition, he cut his hair to match Elizabeth Taylor's hairstyle. In many occasions, Michael performed using an umbrella: the one that Asian women use to protect their skin from sunrays. Similarly, he also had skin disorder to worry about. To sum up, Michael did not regard the gender boundaries; in fact, he transgressed all those lines that determined what females should wear as opposed to males.

Conclusion

Modern art has an undeniable influence over all people, and dandies are no different. This chapter explained how dandies gained a political ground from only a cultural base. Then, it demonstrated the portrayal of dandyism in literature mainly in Franz Fanon and Mar Gallego Durán books. Furthermore, it compares the ancient dandyism to modern dandyism and briefly states their characteristics. After that, it delivers an example of modern dandyism: the case of Michael Jackson and his performances, songs and influence over fashion and gender. Beneath all of his performance, he managed to reflect black identity and the harsh times slaves had to go through.

General Conclusion

Before slavery, Black men in Britain imitated people of higher classes by adopting luxury and attitude when African people came into contact with the Europeans. In fact, they used clothing to change their social situation. During slavery, many Black laws restricted the liberties of the slaves and even freed Black people. For instance, some laws forbade wearing appropriate clothes to dehumanize them.

To demand equality, the Black Dandyism Movement spread to reach America. Thus, Black people were able to dress elegantly only on theater by using the Black Mask Face. Black people used the streets to show the world their humanity and beauty to gain political recognition. Then, they started portraying the African-American culture in different forms of art. In post slavery, Black people felt free to perform their personal African identity in public as well as in media. For example, Michael Jackson represented all the sides of Black Dandyism starting from his fashion style.

The black dandies made a successful outcome, by realizing governmental recognition at the Harlem Renaissance, after they started portraying their new mixture identity; they gained recognition from all over the world. They used their new style, fashion and their new identity as a weapon to defend themselves and so as to be part of the American society.

Black dandyism has been historically challenged and continues to challenge the issues which black people were and still facing because of their color skin and mostly their identity. In order to get a broader outlook on this topic, future research ought to delve deeper into investigating other forms of Black Dandyism practiced by different modern bodies who certainly added something to that subject.

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