

CHAPTER ONE

THE SCAFFOLDING OF THOUGHT

The relationship people have with everything around them, indeed, everything in life—whether a person, other people, a thing, an event, and even themselves, begins in a concept. This mental image of a person, other people, a thing, or an event, eventually becomes a consciousness. That consciousness is known as perception or rapid cognition. Think of it as a Rolodex—preloaded with information, you use the information without thinking about it; all that is required is spontaneously retrieve and use it. It is not necessary to think analytically or critically when using the information, because you, perhaps someone else, have in advance, done all the thinking that was necessary to establish the information and when to apply it.

Perception, once formed creates a resident tendency for quick, active, and intuitive cognition of the person, people, thing, or event being perceived. Perception leads to non-deliberate thoughtful decision-making or decision below the level of consciousness. It has been called “thinking without thinking”, and it ultimately leads to unconscious prejudice or similar behavior.

Perception derives from definition or determination. The Webster dictionary defines definition as “A statement expressing the essential nature of something.”⁹¹ Indeed, statements expressing the essential nature of something or someone are based on intrinsic or artificial nature of the thing or person being defined. Stated differently, definition gives content or essence to the person, thing, or event being defined. The content conveyed by definition derives from the intent that precedes or underlies the definition. In other words, in definition, intent is prior to content. The essence of a person, people, or thing, as established by the content of their definition, could be the product of real (intrinsic) or imaginary (artificial) attributes.

Definition establishes personality—by affirming it or by creating it. In definition, an attribute that becomes a great asset and advantage to some can become a great liability and disadvantage to others. Such is the case with the racial color codes that symbolize the identity of those defined as “White people” and those defined as “Black people” by virtue of skin color (which is hardly white or black) and the associations therewith. The late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke of this reality in his now famous speech at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC, when he said that people (individuals) should not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their characters. I strongly believe that this admonition, in fact, prophetic injunction, has equal application to all people, including those defined as “White people”, even though it was made with regards to the so-called “Black people”.

Dr. King's statement is a truism (an axiom), and as such, one with fidelity to the essence of humanity—an original truth, just as the premise for the declaration of independence and enactment of the constitution of the United States of America is a truism. Even though Martin Luther King's statement was made with respect to the so-called "black people", it has equal implication for those defined as "white people" even at the time it was uttered, though this implication was present only as a potential and was largely missed because it had little consequence with regards to the so-called "white people", who were not being discriminated against on the basis of the color of their skin. In fact, it is perceived that skin color was synonymous with privilege or lack thereof.

Now that conducts of the day towards the so-called "black people" are viewed in a different light, one that is not associated with good virtue and for which people would not feel a sense of pride, honor and privilege to be associated with, the potential that was innate, all along, in Dr. King's statement about color and character, holds true for the "white man" and as it does for the "black man", in the sense that the so-called "white people" should not be judged by the color of their skin, but the content of their character—their conducts towards the so-called "black people".

In the same sense, the great documents that established the United States of America—the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, though may not have had the so-called "black people" in mind, at the time, but were established with only the so-called "white people" in mind, nevertheless, they contained the potential that can only be intrinsic in an axiom or a truism, hence the declaration of independence and the constitution of the United States of America have come to equally apply to "black people", following Martin Luther King's speech.

I am fully aware that a mere mention of the phrase "White people" and "Black people", risks leading readers to assume that this book is about racism. There is a heightened sensitivity associated with the subject of race and racism. Hence, the risks I allude to are attributable to the fact that these phrases are 'traditionally' highly controversial and often inspire passionate sentiments, frequently acrimonious in nature, yielding no useful results and causing greater animosity and deep divisions. In view of this realization, I wish to emphasize that the book is not about race. It is particularly not about the so-called "Black people" and "White people". However, it is about the process that leads to establishing the perceptions that inhabit those classifying phrases and the perceptions stemming from them and that inspire aberrations of humanity, such as racism.

In view of the broad applications of these 'terminologies', one cannot ignore the sentiments that tend to accompany them. Perhaps, I might be able to disable that tendency, by noting that majority of those defined as "White people" has nothing to do with the definition that established that particular classification or consciousness; just as those defined as "Black people" have nothing to do with the definition that established the particular classification or consciousness they are associated with. Hence, any argument made against these terminologies, is by no means an indictment of the people

they are associated with. In a way, the aim of this book is to liberate and exonerate people, from this generation henceforth, from the pains and sins of the previous generations—liberate the so-called “black people” from an oppressive definition and exonerate the so-called “white people” from the burden of guilt associated with establishing that oppressive definition.

As you might have guessed, I happen to fall within the group defined as “Black people”, but many of my friends and many of the good people I know happen to fall within the group defined as “White people”. They have nothing to do with establishing the particular definition that they are subjected to, just as I have nothing to do with establishing the particular definition that I am subjected to. We are all victims of influence. Without question, there are more privileges associated with being “White” than with being “Black”. Nevertheless, as the term “Black”, in referring to people of African descent is laden with negative and undesirable attributes, so also is the term “White”, in referring to people of Caucasian descent. Bottom line is, as I would stand up for a “brother”, so would I for a friend. It is not uncommon that we have a friend or neighbor who sticks closer than a brother and a brother who is as a foe. The lesson for us all is that in the eyes of justice, we should judge people as they are, not as they are portrayed and perceived by others.

Before going any further, it may be necessary to establish the focus of this work with respect to the subject matter. To put it differently, let me frame the context of the subject. The perspective that I express in this book is with regards to people’s relationship with other people, both as individuals within a group and as part of a group in relation to other people-groups. Henceforth, all references to definition shall be implicitly and otherwise in the context so stated (i.e. people’s relationship with one another—individually or as groups). Now that we know where we are going with this topic, let’s begin the journey.

Definition can determine the perceived essence of a person or people. The perceived essence, in turn, determines the value or worth attributable to the person or people. Consequently, definition does establish or enhance the essence of the person or the people defined. Equally, definition can suppress or destroy the true essence of a person or people defined. This reality has very powerful implications in human affairs and human relationships. At the core of these implications is psychic balance (esteem) — a basic element in human relations and well being.

Psychic balance is the invisible foundation upon which every aspect of human relationship is constructed and maintained. This foundation is in turn seated on a certain fulcrum—conscience. The human element of conscience is defined as (1). “The sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good”⁹¹. (2). “A faculty, power, or principle enjoining good acts, sensitive regard for fairness or justice.”⁹¹ Since conscience exists to serve the sense of right and wrong, therefore it must derive from truth—the foundation (or basis) for determining right and wrong conduct or good and bad conduct.

Conscience cannot and should not derive from opinion or subjective facts—a product of definition. In short, conscience is the self-revealing moral compass that tells a person where he or she is, with regards to a conduct, and points the person in the direction he or she ought to be going. Of course, one may choose to ignore conscience, but it is still relevant and still applies in the fullness of dispensation, in spite of one’s action and the apparent results of that action.

Even the law can sometimes require people to disregard their conscientious objections (moral imperatives), by superimposing impious imperatives. In fact, such is the dispensation we live in—the age of legality, not the age of morality. That is why there are people doing things that would and clearly go against the human conscience, for example, the Payday Loans and other predatory lending industries, which charge down-and-out-people (people already in deep financial woes) exorbitant (morally prohibitive) interest rates—as high as 400%.

Subjugation of conscience is also the reason for people taking advantage of other people in need and people at a disadvantage, for example, the despicable trade in human trafficking and child pornography. The predators are able to subjugate their conscience, by hiding under the umbrella of legality (as with the law) or the façade of rules (as with a system, say capitalism). Many of them admit that their conducts are morally reprehensible, as can be found in such statements as, “we know what we do is probably wrong, but it is legal” and “there are people who need our service”.

Legality is a product of definition, based on knowledge and intent, morality is based on truth. We know that knowledge and intent can and do change, quite often indeed, but real truth is unchanging, they are permanent facts. Laws can be enacted on the premises of false assumptions (false knowledge, even apparent or partial truth), and impious intents. On the other hand, conscience is based on truth. Not too long ago, people were bought and sold as slaves in America and Europe, because it was legal to do so at that time, even though people knew it was morally wrong. The law that permitted the conduct was motivated by a combination of impiety and false assumptions or false knowledge. That is precisely why people can no longer buy and sell other people (as slaves) in this day and age. In fact, it is illegal to do so.

Why was it legal to buy and sell people then, but illegal to do so now? Well, it is because the human conscience (a product of truth and unchanging referential meaning) prevailed and overturned the legality that was based on false assumptions or false knowledge. Even though the suppositions (assumptions and “knowledge” or rather, lack thereof) upon which the laws in question were based have changed, the truth that contradicts those laws remains unchanged and the referential validity thereof remains active and undiminished. It is that unchanging truth that led to the changing of the laws that permitted immoral conducts, such as slavery and apartheid.

Conscience can and has been frequently displaced by definition. By virtue of the application of definition, conscience has often been confused with feeling (emotion) or

self-interest. It is not the same as feeling or emotion. Feeling, according to the Webster Dictionary, is an emotional state or reaction—susceptibility to impression. The dictionary also defines feeling as “often unreasoned opinion or belief, or capacity to respond emotionally especially with the higher emotions”⁹¹. Feeling or emotion is a construct of particular dispositions and it is as variable as those dispositions.

The way one might feel about something today may not be the way he or she feels about the same thing tomorrow. For example, the way Americans felt about slavery and race in the seventeenth century is certainly not the way they felt about slavery in the twentieth century. Invariably, it is to be expected that the way Americans feel about abortion in the twenty first century will not be the way they feel about it thereafter.

In fact, feeling and the expression of it, have frequently involved the subjugation of conscience by means of definition. People have the tendency to define something to satisfy their intent or the feelings that drive the intent. Such inclination is depicted by the movie *Kinsey*—portraying Alfred Kinsey, a nineteenth century entomologist and counselor, who specialized in substituting conscience with emotional impetus, particularly unrestrained sexual urges and conducts. For example, a man or woman may have sexual desires for another person’s spouse, and may on the impetus of that feeling engage in illicit sexual conducts, in spite of his or her conscience. Kinsey, who frequently engaged in wife swapping, group sex, as well as other promiscuous sexual practices, actively encouraged practices such as inter-marital sex, polygamy, and perhaps, even sexual contacts that borders on pedophilia. He claimed that such desires are natural impulses that should not be modified or hindered. In other words, Kinsey implied that any restraint of sexual desire is contrary to human nature and in effect oppressive and inhumane. By logical extrapolation, his claim could be extended to other negative emotions such as anger, fear, jealousy, and hatred.

The situation of emotion Vs conscience could, perhaps, be illustrated with a certain song that lamented the dilemma faced by a woman “in love” or better stated, lusting after a man married to another woman. She decided that if being right or doing what was right, in other words, if complying with conscience means sacrificing one’s desires or feelings, then she would not want to be right. Of course, “being right” means acting according to the dictates of conscience—in her case, it would be to leave another woman’s husband alone. A similar situation confronted the antebellum southern United States of America—the era of slavery, in which case, being right meant setting the slaves free and ending segregation, but that would also mean the loss of economic power and privilege. In keeping with the preceding analogy, they subjugated their conscience by the definition they brought to bear on their conducts and on African Americans.

When the fulcrum (conscience), upon which psychic equilibrium rests, remains in balance, it leads to psychic harmony—mutual respect among people and peoples. When it becomes displaced, the result is psychic domination, which leads to social, political, economic oppression and disenfranchisement. The presence of psychic equilibrium is key to peaceful coexistence; the absence of it is recipe for disasters—strife, hatred, enmity, wars, and destruction.

Self-respect and the respect a person receives from another person derive directly from the value or worth ascribed to the person. Equally, the respect a group of people accords itself, and the respect it receives from other people derive directly from the value or worth ascribed to the group. This in turn determines a person's or people's self esteem. It also determines the essential attitude of people within a group towards themselves, their attitude towards other people within and outside their groups, and the attitude of other people-groups towards them. In the *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*, Kenneth Clark wrote of "The Psychology of the Ghetto", as follows:

Human beings who are forced to live under ghetto conditions and whose daily experience tells them that almost nowhere in society are they respected and granted the ordinary dignity and courtesy accorded to others will, as a matter of course, begin to doubt their own worth. Since every human being depends upon his cumulative experiences with others for clues as to how he should view and value himself, children who are consistently rejected understandably begin to question and doubt whether they, their family, and their group really deserve no more respect from the larger society than they receive. These doubts become the seeds of a pernicious self- and group-hatred, the Negro's complex and debilitating prejudice against himself.⁶

These situations are all linked to perception and definition. In view of the profound implications of perception and definition, it is tremendously important that people define themselves rather than be defined by other people. People who have been defined by other people should, if I may borrow an expression from the incomparable Bob Dylan, "change their way of thinking and make themselves a different set of rules". They should "put their good foot forward, and stop being influenced by fools". In other words, they should develop what C.S. Lewis called "resistance thinking."

There are two fundamental facts that every conscious and reasonable person must know, regardless of what the person might have been told or led to believe. These are simple but important facts that make it a matter of necessity that people have the prerogative and the responsibility to define or determine who they are or who they become—philosophically and realistically.

The first reason or fact is that no one else knows you as much as you know yourself. Dr. Seuss once said "There is no one alive who is Youer than you." So, if you think you know so little of yourself, you can be sure that no one knows you as much, in other words everyone else knows even less or nothing about you. The second reason is that, fundamentally, no one else seeks your real interest more than you do. Hence, you are the best or most suitable person to represent and project those interests. Remember, the word "you" here refers to the operative phrase "conscious and reasonable person".

Many people have been led to a false understanding of the virtue of humility and essence of providence. There is a certain timeless value and virtue in being humble and modest—not to think too highly of oneself or more than one ought. Nevertheless, we

must also be cognizant of the natural tendency and attitude of humans towards other humans. For centuries, people have been led to accept the definition ascribed to them by others, in some cases regarding such definition as providential imperative, divine order, or scientific exactitude.

For too long, people have been forced to accept definitions imposed on them by others. Even today, many people have been led to believe that standing up for themselves—speaking up or speaking out and speaking for themselves, constitute a lack of virtue—self aggrandizement. This misnomer has been conveyed in that uncertain proverbial phrase that we have all heard—“blowing one’s own trumpet” or “beating one’s own drum”. There is no question, modesty is a virtue, but timidity, subservience, and obsequiousness are not; indeed, the later are vice.

Those who hypocritically peddle this notion of “virtue” use it as an instrument of domination and exploitation, by defining themselves favorably and in ascendant glorious terms while defining others in pejorative and limiting terms. It was, that people were discouraged from speaking up for themselves and were mischaracterized as “blowing their own trumpets”, when they did. This notion essentially gave the wrong people the power to speak for others, and they often did, with malicious intents and deleterious motives—mischaracterizing others and taking advantage of them. As Dr. Ravi Zacharias said, “every interpretation is tangentially stated to satisfy the interpreter.”²³⁰ Hence, definition, essentially being a form of interpretation, is in tangent with the definer’s motives.

Perhaps, we could illustrate this fact, by borrowing from a certain story, with which Dr. Zacharias illustrated the preceding quote. In paraphrase, the story is about a fugitive by the name of Hosea Rivera, who absconded with millions of dollars of stolen money. A bounty hunter, commissioned to find him and recover the stolen money, tracked Hosea to a bar in Mexico. The bounty hunter told the bar tender that he was looking for Hosea Rivera, and the bar tender identified a man sitting and drinking alone in a dimly lit corner. The bounty hunter walked over to the identified man and asked him if he was Hosea Rivera, to which the man sitting and drinking alone affirmatively nodded. Then the bounty hunter told him that he had come to recover all the money he had stolen, and if Hosea didn’t tell him where all the money was, he was going to shoot him in the head, right there and then.

However, the man identified as Hosea Rivera, did not understand a word of the bounty hunter’s threat. Because, he did not understand nor spoke English, just as the bounty hunter did not understand nor spoke Spanish, so the bar tender was called over to interpret to both men what each had said to the other. The story holds that Hosea Rivera, on hearing the demands and threats that accompanied it, said to the interpreter “Very well, tell the bounty hunter to walk outside, turn right, walk a certain distance to an old well, covering the well is a pile of stones, remove the stones and you will find all the money in the well.” The interpreter turned to the expectant bounty hunter and said, “He said go ahead and shoot.” Perhaps, this is merely a story, but it underscores the intent that precedes and underlies an interpretation.

Speaking of the dubiously canny and unpredictable tendency of the human intent, the Holy Bible, in Jeremiah 17: 9-10 said, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,”³⁸ who can understand it, but God. Therefore, leave your fate in no one’s hands, except God’s and yours. Perhaps, in the realization of the abuse, to which many people have been subjected, due to mischaracterization, people are now encouraged and indeed expected to speak for themselves, because, if they fail to do so, no one will speak for them, as they ought to be spoken for. If we may use the trumpet analogy still, it would be to say that truthfully, no one can or would “blow another person’s trumpet better than his own, or blow it correctly”.

Hence, people who resign to letting others speak for them may never be heard or heard correctly. This is what participatory democracy or egalitarianism is all about. In fact, the Constitution (First Amendment) that established the greatest democracy the world has ever known, at least yet, particularly empowers people to speak for themselves, as a necessary precursor to speaking on behalf of others, since people cannot speak on behalf of others if they can’t, don’t or won’t speak for themselves. To be clear, blowing one’s own trumpet, in the context it is used here, is not the same as unabashed self-promotion that is all too common these days.

However, more than ever, there is a need for people to understand who and what they really are ... not who or what someone else says they are. In our society, there is a tendency for people to feed off of the definition and perception other people have of them, because that is how they have been thought and more so because humans are by nature socially interdependent. Intrinsicly, people value other people’s opinions of them. Numerous sociological and psychological studies prove this reality. It is a condition of our interconnectedness as humans—an essential part of humanity.

However, there is a crucial balance, which needs to be maintained between how we view ourselves from own eyes and how we view ourselves from other people’s eyes, so to speak. Unfortunately, there is the tendency that many people do derive their worth or esteem completely and directly from other people’s opinions. This has left many people without the proper knowledge of who they really are — a sad and tragic existence.

The ultimate way to achieve real and legitimate self-determination is through a direct personal relationship with God — the God that offers peace, life, and freedom to the world. Such relationship can only be consummated through his son Jesus Christ—the Prince of Peace, who gives life more abundantly, and truth that makes one truly free. All that one needs to do is to honestly investigate His claims and His offers. In essence, it is critically important that people understand and see themselves the way God sees them. This is an absolute necessity in the struggle for self-determination and self-preservation. As Abraham Lincoln said, “It is difficult to make a man miserable while he feels he is worthy of himself and claims kindred to the great God who made him.”

Similarly, it is easy to make a person or a people miserable when the true sense of self—their true identity, has been lost and while they feel unworthy of themselves and are

ignorant of their kindred to the great God who made them. No one deserves to be cast in any image that is not truly his or hers, whether good or bad.

It has been shown that every interpretation is tangentially stated to satisfy the interpreter, hence even when someone speaks for someone else or blows that proverbial trumpet for someone else, it may not sound the way the owner wants it to sound, the best way it could sound, or the way it ought to sound. The way someone is portrayed by someone else is determined by several exigent and mitigating factors. It could be that the person speaking for you does not know you well enough to speak accurately of you or portray you as you truly are. It could also be that he or she does not want you to be perceived as good as you really are, perhaps equally good or better than he or she is.

The point to be made, however, is definitely not self-promotion rather it is to highlight the necessity for people to speak for themselves, to make their viewpoints and nature clearly known. Obviously, this sometimes leads to self-promotion and self-aggrandizement, however, it is better to mischaracterize oneself rather than be mischaracterized by others. For the simple reason that it is better to promote oneself than demote another or be demoted by another, since self-promotion is also intrinsically self-correcting.

It is your right to define yourself, how you define yourself is another matter, with a different set of implications. Psychology shows that many people with superiority complex, nearly always, have certain inadequacies, perhaps inferiority complex, veiled with the superiority complex they exude—excessive projection or over promotion of self. It is equally true that others create a superiority complex for themselves, by creating inferiority complex in other people. It is a classic case of casting someone in a bad light, so that another can look good at the expense of the one that is made to look bad.

The implication of the prerogative of self-definition (self-determination) is that even if people have established an exaggerated or false definition for themselves, they still have to live up to that definition. Whether they succeed or fail, is of much less consequence, than being subjected to a pernicious definition or characterization by others. In the latter case, to emerge from such definition, the people so defined are still compelled to depend on those who imposed the definition in the first place, for approval or affirmation.

The point to be made here, is that it is much more difficult to emerge from a bad image and much easier to lose a good image. In the same sense that a person who has been falsely accused has more to lose and has greater difficulty redeeming himself in the court of public opinion than someone who is guilty and was never charged or charged but wrongly declared innocent. Everyone knows that in the court of public opinion there is no presumption of innocence for anyone accused of a crime or portrayed negatively.

It has been said that, self-definition is inescapably self-correcting, as numerous doping Olympic and professional athletes, and lip-sync-singing-Pop stars have all failed to live up to the image or definition they had sought for themselves. On the other hand,

an imposed definition is not self-correcting, but largely dependent on those who imposed it be lifted. Such is the case with people who have been defined negatively or people who have been given a negative image by others, for example the so-called “black people”.

The definition of a person or people is fundamental to the essence of the person or people defined. It sets boundaries for those defined and often determines the options and opportunities available to people. There is power in the spoken word. The Holy Bible says, “The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit” (Proverbs 18:21).³⁸ All through history, people have sought to dominate, reject, and oppress others for selfish and impious motives. People who have been defined by others are often or usually at disadvantages that put them in vulnerable positions or in positions of weakness—unable to claim or defend their rights. Examples of such people include abused children, abused wives, orphans and widows in some societies, aborted babies, euthanized elderly and people stricken with “terminal illness” (such as Terri Schiavo), poor people, conquered people, oppressed people, people without rights, people without privileges, etc.

In general, people who cannot assert their rights (those who have not acquired the capability to assert their rights) and people who have lost the ability to assert their rights, are frequently defined by those who possess the means to do so. Either the victims do not have the means and serve to present a definition of who they are, or they have been compelled to accept the definition ascribed them. Often, they are constrained to believe that they do not possess the knowledge, intellect, or other abilities to define themselves.

On the other hand, those who have defined or attempted to define others have done so from a position of advantage, power, control, or influence. It could be as with a parent repeatedly telling an abused child that he or she will never amount to anything, that he or she is unworthy, unwanted, an accident, stupid, foolish, or “a monster”, hence leading the child to believe that he or she is worthless, unlovable, and undesirable. It could also be as with an employer or a ruler subjecting his employees or subjects to servitude. It is particularly so in the case of the definition of people groups or “race”, where people concerted act towards a particular group of people in ways that suggest that they are inferior. Race definition, also known as racial formation, is a socio-historical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed. Schaefer also wrote:

Those in power define groups of people in a certain way that depends on a racist social structure. The Native Americans and the creation of the reservation system in the later 1800s would be an example of this racial formation.⁷⁹

Schaefer made a sobering and ominous observation as to the far-reaching power of racial formation. He said, “No one—absolutely no one—escapes the extent and frequency to which we are subjected to racial formation”.⁷⁹

In the antebellum south, an example of social construction of race was known as the “one-drop-rule.” This tradition stipulated that if a person had even a single drop of

“Black blood,” that person was defined and viewed as “Black”. Today children of biracial or multiracial marriages try to build their own identity in the United States that seems intent on placing them in some single traditional category (S. Love 1996; R. Schaefer 1996).⁷⁹

Such definition of race stems from one of two dispositions. The first is hatred, especially stemming from narcissism—a bizarre satisfaction derived from mistreating others. The second is the desire to exploit other people for the exploiter’s own narcissistic interests. These are, in large measure, the focus of this book, because they are largely relevant to the context of the subject.

The essential purpose of defining people is to create two sets of consciousness, in other words, to establish two sets of realities. The first set of realities is to put limitations on those defined and create a demarcation to exclude them and constrain them to accept such definition as providence or inevitability. The second set of realities is to subjugate the conscience of the one who defines, in order to create a disposition that justifies or rationalizes his actions, however contrary to reason they are, for example the mistreatment of others —the people they have defined.

The definition of people by other people has fundamental implications. Definitions such as “race” establish attitudes of racial superiority and inferiority, prejudice and bigotry. These attitudes ultimately evolve into an institutionalized system of discrimination, exclusion, deprivation, and oppression; based on superficial and imposed qualities or characteristics such as skin color, other racial definitions and sentiments associated with race definition—superiority and inferiority complex, prejudice and bigotry. Through the ages, definition has been used as an instrument of domination, exclusion, and oppression.

Such definitions also bring about racial and cultural aggression, all of which are highly destructive to the people so defined. This is particularly true of Native Americans and African Americans, who have experienced extreme cases of the impact of definitions that inspired and established racism and cultural aggression towards them.

Historically, the definition of people, such as race or race definition, constitutes a system of special privileges and benefits. It guarantees psychological, symbolic, and material rewards for those who have successfully defined others as to exclude those they have defined from the benefits of privilege. It also guarantees special privileges to those included, by reason of based on the object of definition, for example skin color, ethnicity, etc. In essence, the purpose of defining people is to establish a system of privilege, designed to exclude or include them.

Definition has been used and is still being used as a servo and strategy to divide, exploit, and destroy people. Such is the color complex associated with dark skinned people, particularly Africans and the Aboriginal Australians. Increasingly, poor and low wage working “class” of people are subjected to similar treatments, albeit without the destructive power of the presuppositions that inhabit racial definitions.

Definitions, such as the one borne by the Darwinian “theory of evolution”, create and infuse a deleterious state of consciousness in a society. For example, the Darwinian theory of evolution established the notion that humans are basically animals; therefore, the human existence is essentially survival of the fittest—the quintessential extreme capitalist paradigm of eat or be eaten, kill or be killed, dominate or be dominated. Darwin himself, so stated in his book *On The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*.⁹ The notion of biological evolution, at least, as Darwin propounded, is the most pernicious idea ever conceived by man to relegate and destroy the people excluded by that definition—the so-called non-favored races.

Darwin’s idea has inspired the worst atrocities and most heinous acts of man’s inhumanity to man, which the world has ever seen, and it continues to plague and afflict the world like no other plague known to man. It is largely responsible for the intractable problems confronting the world today, and has been a constant threat to world peace and stability. It is the foundation of the growing human moral insensitivity and the linchpin of the old vice which has become the new “virtue” — greed. The callousness that prevails in the world today and the justification for social and economic inequality are largely the bane of Darwin’s definition. Those, who by virtue of this definition believe that they are at advantage (favored by nature) are all too eager to embrace this philosophy and to live by it.

Jerry Bergman, noted in his publication *Darwinism and the Nazi race Holocaust*, that the core idea of Darwinism was not evolution, but selection. “Evolution ... describes the results of selection”, even the most ardent evolutionists, such as David Quammen and Richard Dawkins, agree. There is no question, Darwin’s philosophy inspired contemporary racism, the worst of which was committed by Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. In fact, Sir Arthur Keith, one of the foremost evolutionists, believed that Hitler, by his actions, was part of the “natural forces” of evolution — essentially moving the evolutionary process along, indeed hastening the process. He wrote, “The German Fuehrer ... consistently sought to make the practice of Germany conform to the theory of evolution.”⁹⁹

Keith also wrote:

The leader of Germany is an evolutionist, not only in theory, but, as millions know to their cost, in the rigor of its practice. For him, the national “front” of Europe is also the evolutionary “front;” he regards himself, and is regarded, as the incarnation of the will of Germany, the purpose of that will being to guide the evolutionary destiny of its people.¹⁵⁰

Perhaps in an attempt to distance himself from the “monster” he had helped create—to extricate and exculpate himself from the disastrous atrocities conceived and nurtured by Keith and his peers, the so-called scientists of the day, and unleashed on humanity, Keith, was quoted as saying:

If war be the progeny of evolution — and I am convinced that it is — then evolution has “gone mad”, reaching such a height of ferocity as must frustrate its proper role in the world of life — which is the advancement of her competing “units”, these being tribes, nations, or races of mankind. There is no way of getting rid of war save one, and that is to rid human nature of the sanctions imposed on it by the law of evolution. Can man ... render the law of evolution null and void? ... I have discovered no way that is at once possible and practicable. “There is no escape from human nature.” Because Germany has drunk the vat of evolution to its last dregs, and in her evolutionary debauch has plunged Europe into a bath of blood that is no proof that the law of evolution is evil. A law, which brought man out of the jungle and made him king of beasts, cannot be altogether bad.¹⁵⁰

If this was a sign of remorse, it was a shameful and pathetic contrition. However, I am inclined to believe that it was not. Keith’s ideology was patently evil; it was evident even in his veiled attempt to distance himself from the ultimate executor of his ideas. Keith may have sought to distance himself from the messenger, but not from the message, a message he, perhaps more than any other man, articulated and promoted, to the detriment and destruction of millions of people, be it by war or by abortion. In the light of justice, he is just as culpable as those who by the impetus of the ideology he helped shape, have murdered millions of people.

There can be no doubt that Hitler’s book *Mein Kampf* (“My Struggle”) was inspired by Darwin’s writings, particularly the theory of evolution. In fact, it is believed that the title was taken from (or was inspired) by Darwin’s subtitle, “Struggle for Existence,” and by Ernst Haeckel (the chief German advocate of evolution), who published a book in 1905, titled, *Der Kampf um den Entwicklungs-Gedanken* (“The Struggle over Evolutionary Thinking”). Abraham Foxman, wrote in the introduction to the Ralph Manheim’s translation of Hitler’s book, *Mein Kampf*, “Many of the ideological themes of *Mein Kampf* were embraced to varying degrees by groups in Germany, Europe, an even the United States before Hitler wove them together to form the foundations of National Socialism”.³⁶ Perhaps, next to the Alfredo Rosenberg’s 1930 *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, the *Mein Kampf*, revered by every active racist, tops the list of the ‘must read’ literatures for white supremacist groups, even the Arab Socialist Ba’ath Party and Muslims extremists. It has been the inspiration for all active hate-groups, particularly white supremacists all over the world.

There is not question that Nazism sought to exterminate people defined as “inferior races” — dark skinned people, Jews, Gypsies, Slovaks and some Caucasians, who did not meet the criteria for the definition of the “ideal white race”. There is equally no doubt that Nazism built upon the foundation of Darwinism. In fact, Darwin, himself, wrote:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time, the anthropomorphous apes . . . will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state, as we may

hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the negro [sic] or Australian and the gorilla.⁹⁸

Referring to the Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, Harvard University's Stephen Jay Gould wrote, "Biological arguments for racism may have been common before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory." Abraham Foxman, wrote in his introduction of Ralph Manhein's translation of *Mein Kampf*, what many people, including scientists and scholars, such as Gould, has always known. Manhein notes:

"When coupled with nationalism, racial (social) Darwinism led to the development of national stereotypes; thus educated people at the end of the nineteenth century could seriously claim that the distinctive cultural characteristics of the English, French, Americans, and Germans were biological. Eugenics movements with the goal of improving national or racial "stock" through selective breeding (which later became inextricably linked with the Nazi regime in popular perception) arose in England, Scandinavia, and the United States."⁴⁶

Today the Eugenics drumbeats are again sounding, as we have seen lately with the *Bell Curve* by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, and other racists masquerading as scientists.²¹ History, arts, science, religion, and culture have all being implicated in the effort to act on the desire to dominate others. Of course, this is by no means a blanket indictment of these institutions, however, it is to suggest that we must be cognizant of the continued attempts throughout the history of man to exploitatively employ these institutions to dominate, control, exclude, exploit, and destroy others.

It must be clearly understood that the essential nature and purpose of the disciplines of history, arts, science, and religion, are not the end to which they have been so frequently employed. The illegitimate application of these social entities is vividly illustrated by Napoleon's notion of history, as "a set of lies that people have agreed upon". Napoleon's sentimental conviction and his intent to manipulate history to render what he desired was evident in his statement, "even when I am gone, I shall remain in people's minds the star of their rights, my name will be the war cry of their efforts, the motto of their hopes." One could argue that the same is true of virtually all people who have sought to dominate others.

Clearly, Napoleon's assessment fittingly describes Darwin, whose name has become the "war cry" for the efforts of those driven by the same pre-suppositional framework that drove Darwin, those in agreement with his philosophy. He has become "the motto of their hopes", whose set of lies ("theory of evolution") they agree upon, as the vehicle for what Aldous Huxley¹⁴³ described as "simultaneous liberation from a certain political and economic system and liberation from a certain system of morality," the morality that interferes with their "sexual freedom".

The worst atrocities man has committed against fellow man has been inspired not so much by religion, science, culture, and history, but by people who bear and act in the

name of religion, science, history, and culture; those who claim authority in the name of religion, science, culture, and history, for purposes other than the essential truth of these institutions. Their deviation from the essential truth and nature of the institutions they claim to represent has culminated in the birth of vicious ideologies, such as the Darwinian philosophy (“theory of evolution”), xenophobia, and intolerance.

The so-called theory of evolution is indeed the root of contemporary racism. Though it may have drawn inspiration from a certain eastern philosophy, it seems to have indirectly, perhaps inadvertently, reinforced the eastern philosophical beliefs that established the cast class systems. The “theory of evolution” is a direct contradiction and a frontal assault on Christianity and the foundations of the United States’ Constitution. In fact, many of its ardent proponents (mostly atheistic and humanistic academics) have clearly indicated that they would not have supported the United States’ Declaration of Independence. Because, they do not believe in the central premise of the document—“that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.”²⁰¹ The aberrant humanistic thinking epitomized by Darwin’s philosophy has robbed many people of their true self and decimated the world in substance and in essence.

To borrow a famous quote from the great Abraham Lincoln, in paraphrase, this book is an effort to essentially bring all people to the realization that, so far, some of us have been fooled all the time, all of us have been fooled some of the time, but we, all, should not and must not be fooled all the time. This book is a twelve-chapter volume that seeks to lift the veil, to reveal the philosophy and intents underlying the definitions and perceptions, which have established the individual and group identities to which we have all been subjected. It also seeks to establish the direct connection of the world’s most intractable problems — racism and other forms of bigotry, to those definitions and perceptions. In establishing this connection however, the ultimate goal is to inspire people to change these aberrant ways of thinking.

Let us illustrate the theme of this book with something everyone can relate to—a name. Imagine going to a gathering or an event with friends or colleagues. At the event, everyone identified themselves; gave their names, said who they are and what they do for a living—essentially who they are and what their life is about. When it was time for you to introduce yourself, someone else got in front of you and introduced you as someone and something you are not. Say your name is James and you have great potentials or John and you are well educated, a highly motivated and skilled professional, you have climbed Mount Everest once or twice, been to the Olympics as an athlete among other things. But, you were introduced as Jane Doe, a recovering alcoholic and ex-convict or as John Doe, an uneducated loafer, a squatter who lives off friends, with no ambition or skills whatsoever. Would you remain mute and allow the definition you have thus been given to stand? It is very likely you would not. Why then are many people allowing an even greater wrong to be done to them, by continually failing to speak up for themselves, in the face of such wrongs, thereby condemning themselves to life-limiting mischaracterization and misperceptions?

Definition, classification or naming is central to one's identity; everyone knows that a person is identified through names or naming. When asked to identify someone or something, we are expected to name or categorize the person or thing. Naming assigns 'words of identity' that form part of the appearance of self (Stone 1962: p. 93) and the centrality of language in general, and names in particular, in fixing identity and marking its changes has been known by many social scientists, particularly Strauss (Strauss 1997: pp. 17 - 19). Names can therefore demonstrate achievement, privilege or inclusion; but names are also ascribed, and can be imposed on recipients against their will, to demonstrate subjugation, lack of privilege or exclusion; for example the naming of people of African descent as "black". Such names, as with the labels indicated by the labeling theory, are difficult to get ride of.

In some cases, names may be denied to people, as with the exclusion of the descendants of American slaves from citizenship—denying them the identity inherent in the classification or identification known as "American". This situation is etched in the memory of the nation, by the infamous 1857 United States Supreme Court decision, led by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, which declared in the case now known as the Dred Scott case, that all "blacks"—slaves as well as free—were not and could never become citizens of the United States. The Supreme Court decision stems from the recognition that names establish claims or entitlement to being, it is a proclamation of who we are and who we are not—self and others. African Americans were deemed unworthy of the claims and entitlements embodied by the title or name "American", hence excluded from citizenship and the most basic rights. As I indicated before, unborn children are now subjected to similar treatment, whereby they are denied the most basic title or name "human beings" or "people", hence excluded from the most basic claims and entitlements: the right to live.

In an article titled "*Naming the Other: Power, Politeness and the Inflation of Euphemisms*", the author wrote:

In definitions of self, the other is at least implicitly identified, just as defining the other implicitly characterizes self. Ricoeur notes that 'the Other is not only the counterpart of the Same but belongs to the intimate constitution of its sense' (1992: p. 329), and focuses on the way in which the other is incorporated into the self (strongly reminiscent of a symbolic interactionist perspective) through identification in or with others (1992: p. 121). Contrastive identification, of us against them, is just as significant. The often implicit nature of this opposition means that self can be left unspecified, can go unnamed, even while basking in the reflection of a negatively constituted other.²¹⁹

A common example of this can be found in the relative, qualified or group identification that is now uniquely American, whereby every American is identified by his or her ethnic origin, except the so-called "White people" or "White Americans". In this definition of the other, the explicit specification of self, in this case, the dominant "White people", is not required for that self to gain status and distinction. However, we must also acknowledge that there is another perspective or dynamic to this definition or ethnic-

qualifier (hyphenated identity). America and indeed all of Western society, which is increasingly becoming multicultural, new immigrants are often the force driving this definition or identity, because they view their ethnicity or religion that have become incorporated to qualify their identity, as an empowerment.

Nowhere is this more apparent and problematic than in the identity of Muslims in Western society, in that Muslims completely reject the prospects of integrating into the Western society, because of the diametrical nature of Islam to the Western ideals and way of life. Others fear assimilation because it “would lead to loss of their distinct ancestral cultural identity”, which would imply colonization or cultural defeat by assimilation. Therefore, they resort to establishing cultural colonies in the Western societies, aided by multiculturalism and political correctness. Ultimately, the resulting definition, which by the way; is the subject of my previous book (*Tribalizing America: The Emerging National Identity Crisis*) holds a potentially dangerous outcome for Western societies, as already emerging all over Europe in the evidentiary culture clash or clash of ideas. However, as the author of the article *Naming the Other: Power, Politeness and the Inflation of Euphemisms*”, notes that:

“Those who distinguish have the distinction of not being explicitly distinguished. In the same way, the most authoritative systems of classification are those that are taken as natural rather than constructed: the other is incorporated into ‘a natural order of disorder’ (Foucault 1981: p. 44). Boundaries and limits are most effective when taken for granted, sensed rather than specified: ‘The sense of limits implies forgetting the limits’ (Bourdieu 1986: p. 470). Identification of the other upholds the boundaries without the need to make direct reference to boundaries or self.

Just as names may place the self, they may locate the other in terms of a wider or narrower scope of belonging. This belonging is not necessarily conceived through relationships, a community defined by interaction. In place of interactional identification, a physical or behavioural attribute may be accorded definitional primacy in characterizing who ‘they’ are. Here names encapsulate the other’s identity in terms of key characteristics: the key unlocks the essence of being, summing up all that it is necessary to know. Such knowledge is of course linked to power.”²¹⁹

Naming, as definition, is a form of power. “The named is already bound, confined within limits, though these may mark an exclusive circle or excluded fringe.” A name may be a prerequisite not only for social position, as with the English paternalistic system of feudalism, but also for social action and political solidarity, as in the emerging America group identity. The power of names to impose recognition of one’s identity upon others has been known for a long time, as many philosophers and social scientists, notably Pierre Bourdieu, the acclaimed French sociologist, have documented. Equally significant is the power to impose others’ identity upon them, as well as the power to deny names for oneself or others, as highlighted by the Dred Scott case.

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