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Culture 320
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Reading Analysis

Colonization and civilization are often linked hand in hand, as in without colonization there would be no civilization. However according to, Aime Cesaire, "...between colonization and civilization there is an infinite distance". In Cesaire's article, *The Discourse of Colonialism*, he explains the great distance between civilization and colonization is because colonization is unjustifiable. There is an overarching belief that colonialism benefitted the areas being colonized and that the Europeans were civilizing these areas and helping them while in reality colonization was undeniably destructive. The argument made by Cesaire is that Europe essentially regressed while colonizing because of the barbaric acts committed on the indigenous people were deemed acceptable because the indigenous were considered an inferior people. Colonization instilled the belief that the western way was the only way for society to live. It created the gap between Europeans and non-Europeans making the Europeans the superior, dominant race while the non-Europeans were an inferior, submissive race. Essentially, colonization created racism. According to Robert. B Marks in his book *Origins of the Modern World*, essentially there was nothing that made the Europeans more dominant, it was just by chance based on resources that enabled them to industrialize and colonize other areas. However, this belief that the Europeans were superior was widely accepted as well as a lasting belief. It is still prevalent today, and can be tied back to our class discussion about the white savior complex, which is the belief that white, or western people, need to fix non-westernized countries by showing them their western ways. In 2015, it is an

extraordinarily prevalent concept that the western way is the way all people should be living their lives, and when we provide aid to impoverished countries we should be providing them westernized aid.

While the Europeans, "...pride themselves on abuses eliminated." (43), the abuses they have created through colonialization, such as deaths, rapes, torture, destruction of cultures, economies and lifestyles are ignored. It wasn't until Hitler committed these crimes against fellow Europeans were they acknowledged as something barbaric. One of the lasting effects of colonialism differential treatment of western people versus nonwestern people is still something that society struggles with today. Earlier this week, in Chapel Hill North Carolina a white man shot and killed three Muslim people for what so far has been stated as unprovoked. There has been little to no media coverage of the deaths of the three innocent Muslims, however, if the races were reversed and it was three innocent white people killed by a Muslim would there be more media coverage? Generally, there is far more media coverage on a death of three innocent white students than there has been for the Muslim students.

Colonization in its time was detrimental to the indigenous people and has left lasting effects that society is still experiencing today. "Truly there are sins for which no one has power to make amends and which can never be fully expiated" (42). Although I disagree that these sins can never be atoned, I believe that society is still suffering from the effects of colonization decades later. Is the racism that our country is constantly struggling to overcome really a lasting effect of early European colonization? If Cesaire states that these sins can never be atoned for, will society ever be able to exist in a state where all people are equal, and there is no inferior group?