

UTPOST

MAGAZINE NO. 2

2020

BLM AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING SILENT

WHY CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES NEED TO UNDERSTAND RACIAL
INJUSTICE

THE SYSTEMATIC TARGETING OF THE UYGHUR COMMUNITY IN
CHINA

WHEN RACISM MEETS SEXISM

COLOURISM IN DISGUISE

EDITOR'S NOTE

MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO START THIS NOTE BY WRITING THAT THIS YEAR, EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED FASTER THAN EVER. MOST YEARS THAT WOULD BE A CLICHÉ TO STATE, BUT IN 2020, I AM NOT SO SURE IT IS. I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT IN 2020 THE WORLD CHANGED FASTER THAN MOST OF US HAVE WITNESSED BEFORE.

IN THE WAKE OF THE PANDEMIC, INJUSTICES HAVE BEEN ILLUMINATED AND BROUGHT TO THE FOREFRONT OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEBATE. MOST PREVALENTLY, THE BLM PROTESTS, WHICH STARTED IN THE U.S AND SPREAD ACROSS THE WORLD.



YOU MIGHT BE TIRED OF HEARING ABOUT BLM AND OTHER RACIAL INJUSTICES, BUT PEOPLE OF COLOR, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC GROUPS, AND ABOVE ALL, WOMEN IN THE AFOREMENTIONED GROUPS ARE STILL FACING DISCRIMINATION. WRITING FROM A PRIVILEGED PERSPECTIVE, I FEEL LIKE A LOT OF SOCIETIES DID MAKE A HUGE CHANGE FOR THE BETTER CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THESE GROUPS, AND BECAUSE OF IT, WE SOMEHOW HAVE COME TO PRETEND THAT RACISM IS NOT A PREVALENT ISSUE ANYMORE. A LOT OF PLACES WENT FROM CLEARLY RACIST SOCIETIES TO PLACES WHERE LEGAL RIGHTS OVERSHADOW DAILY DISCRIMINATION. BLM EFFECTIVELY BROUGHT ATTENTION TO THE HARSH REALITY MANY BLACK AND COLORED PEOPLE STILL FACE ON A DAILY BASIS, NOT JUST IN THE U.S, BUT ACROSS THE WORLD.

SOLUTIONS TO RACISM AND INJUSTICES LIE BEYOND POSTING BLACK SQUARES ON INSTAGRAM OR CHANGING YOUR PROFILE PICTURE. SOLUTIONS LIE IN ONE'S ABILITY TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR AND MINDSET. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO TALK ABOUT RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION; POINT IT OUT WHEN YOU SEE IT IN YOUR DAILY LIFE, DISCUSS IT TO COMBAT IGNORANCE, AND STOP PRETENDING ITS INEXISTENCE. THE BURDEN SHOULD NOT LIE ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE OPPRESSED AND MARGINALIZED, BUT ON THE OPPRESSORS AND THE PRIVILEGED.

NO ONE IS FREE UNTIL WE ARE ALL FREE.

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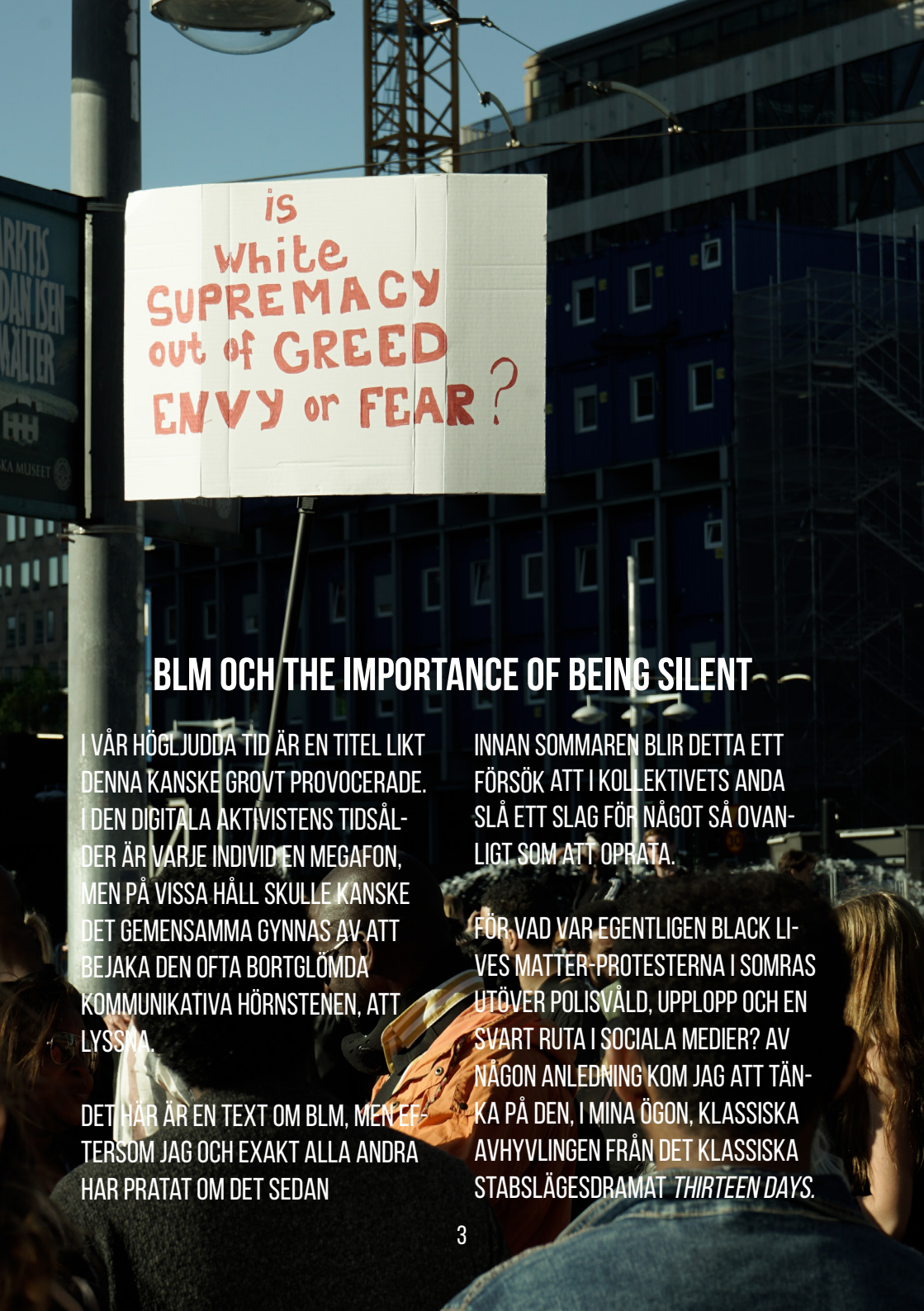
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is
white
SUPREMACY
out of GREED
ENVY or FEAR?

BLM OCH THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING SILENT

I VÅR HÖGLJUDDA TID ÄR EN TITEL LIKT DENNA KANSKE GROVT PROVOCERADE. I DEN DIGITALA AKTIVISTENS TIDSÅLDER ÄR VARJE INDIVID EN MEGAFON, MEN PÅ VISSA HÅLL SKULLE KANSKE DET GEMENSAMMA GYNNAS AV ATT BEJAKA DEN OFTA BORTGLÖMDA KOMMUNIKATIVA HÖRNSTENEN, ATT LYSSNA.

DET HÄR ÄR EN TEXT OM BLM, MEN EFFERSOM JAG OCH EXAKT ALLA ANDRA HAR PRATAT OM DET SEDAN

INNAN SOMMAREN BLIR DETTA ETT FÖRSÖK ATT I KOLLEKTIVETS ANDA SLÅ ETT SLAG FÖR NÅGOT SÅ OVANLIGT SOM ATT OPRÄTA.

FÖR VAD VAR EGENTLIGEN BLACK LIVES MATTER-PROTESTERNA I SOMRAS UTÖVER POLISVÅLD, UPPLOPP OCH EN SVART RUTA I SOCIALA MEDIER? AV NÅGON ANLEDNING KOM JAG ATT TÄNKA PÅ DEN, I MINA ÖGON, KLASSISKA AVHYVLINGEN FRÅN DET KLASSISKA STABSLÄGESDRAMAT *THIRTEEN DAYS*.

“YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND A THING DO YOU ADMIRAL? THIS IS NOT A BLOCKADE. THIS IS LANGUAGE. THE LIKES OF WHICH THE WORLD HAS NEVER SEEN”

FÖRSVARSMINISTER ROBERT MCNAMARA SKÄLLER UT EN ADMIRAL SOM HELT OKÄNSLIGT TÄNKT SKJUTA MOT ETT RYSKT FARTYG UNDER KUBAKRISEN. KANONKULAN ÄR OCKSÅ ETT SPRÅK MED ETT BUDSKAP OCH DET HANDLAR OM ATT FÖRSTÅ VAD SÄGS FÖR ATT KUNNA VETA VAD MAN SKA SVARA, OM INTE SÅ KOMMER ALLT ESKALERA TILLS VI ALLA PLÖTSLIGT STÅR OCH HUTTRAR I ATOMVINTERN. JAG TÄNKER PÅ DET DÄR RÄTT OFTA. DET KÄNNS SOM ATT SPRÅKETS BETYDELSE OFTA GLÖMS BORT NÄR ALLA PRATAR MEN INGEN LYSSNAR.

I LÄGET MED BLACK LIVES MATTER KÄNNS DET SÅ HELA TIDEN. SEDAN MORDET PÅ GEORGE FLOYD, ELLER EGENTLIGEN SEDAN ALLTID, HAR PROTESTERNA, UPPLOPPEN OCH VÅLDET OCH VI I VÅRNORDSVENSKA UNIVERSITETSSTAD SER ILSKAN OCH NICKAR, LÄGGER EN KOMMENTAR, I BÄSTA FALL DELAR EN BILD.

- GALET DET SOM PÅGÅR.
- AA.

MEN ILSKA ÄR ALDRIG BARA ILSKA OCH VÅLD ÄR ALDRIG BARA VÅLD. DET ÄR ORD OCH SPRÅK, ALLA HANDLINGAR BÄR OCKSÅ PÅ BUDSKAP. PROTESTERNA BERÄTTAR OM NU, DÅ, OSS OCH JAG. OM SAMHÄLLE, KLASSE OCH KÖN, IDEOLOGI OCH PSYKOLOGI. RASISM, SLAVERI OCH VÅLD. DET FINNS UNDERLIGGANDE BERÄTTELSE BAKOM DESSA HANDLINGAR. MEN INGA DOLDA BERÄTTELSE. WITTGENSTIEN SA ATT “NOTHING IS HIDDEN”, ALLT STÅR DÄR OM MAN BARA LYSSNAR, LÄSER ELLER TITTAR TILLRÄCKLIGT NOGA.

ETT EXEMPEL SKULLE KUNNA VARA ATT 2010 SATT EN TREDJEDEL AV ALLA SVARTA AMERIKANSKA MÄN MELLAN 20 OCH 39 ÅR UTAN HIGH SCHOOL-EXAMEN I FÄNGELSE.

MAN KAN IBLAND HÖRA AVFÄRDANDE RÖSTER SOM LYFTER KRITIKEN ATT DET ÄR EN FÖR KÄNSLOSAM RÖRELSE. PROTESTERNA ÄR FÖR KÄNSLOSAMMA OCH ATT UPPLOPPEN ÄR AGERANDEN AV MÄNNISKOR I AFFEKT, ATT DEN

RATIONELLA TANKEN LÄMNATS. ETT MINST SAGT PROBLEMATISKT PÅSTÅENDE SOM SPRINGER UR EN PATRIARKAL SYN PÅ KÄNSLOR SOM EN KVINNIG EGENSKAP SOM STÅR I MOTSATS TILL (DEN VITA) MANNENS RATIONALITET. ATT KÄNSLOR OMYNDIGFÖRKLARAS DÅ DE SES SOM PRIMITIVA OCH IMPULSIVA ÄR I DETTA FALL OCKSÅ RASISM.

ISTÄLLET SKULLE MAN KUNNA FRÅGA SIG VAD DESSA KÄNSLOR BEROR PÅ. KANSKE DELVIS PÅ ATT OM MAN SKULLE INKLUDERA DE FRIHETSBERÖVADE VAR ARBETSÖSHETEN BLAND UNGA SVARTA MÄN SOM ALDRIG LÄST PÅ COLLEGE 42 PROCENT ÅR 2000.

FÖR ATT VIFTA BORT DESSA PROTESTER OCH DE SOM SYMPATISERAR OCH STÖDGER DEM UTFRÅN DEN EMOTIONELLA PAROLLEN ÄR ATT FRÅNTA BLM DESS SUBJEKTIVITET. DEN RATIONELLA TANKEN STÅR INTE I MOTSATS TILL AFFEKTERNA OCH ATT REDUCERA DEN POLEMIKEN ÄR BÅDE ATT BORTSE FRÅN DE SOCIALA PROBLEMEN OCH ATT FRÅNTA UPPHOVSPERSONEN SIN UPPLEVELSE. DET VORE ATT I MOTSATS

PÅSTÅ ATT ALLTING ÄR "HIDDEN" OCH PSYKOLOGISERA INDIVIDEN ISTÄLLET FÖR ATT LYSSNA PÅ KOLLEKTIVET, LEX HYSTERI.

EN PROTEST ÄR SPRÅK, OCH DET ÄR PROTESTEN SOM ÄR SUBJEKTET, INTE DEN SOM HÖR OM DET. DEN SOM SKROLLAR SINA FLÖDEN ÄR ENBART EN PUBLIK SOM DETTA UTTRYCK PROJICERAS MOT.

MED DET SAGT SÅ BETYDER INTE DET ATT ROLLEN SOM PUBLIK NÖDVÄNDIGTVIS BEHÖVER VARA PASSIV. EN SOM LYSSNAR ÄR AKTIV I ETT SAMTAL, ATT DELTA ÄR ATT FRÅGA VARFÖR DETTA SÄGS. ATT LYSSNA ÄR ATT AKTIVT ANSTRÄNGA SIG FÖR ATT FÖRSTÅ MEN DÅ MÅSTE MAN OCKSÅ VARA TYST OCH GE UTRYMME.

BLM ÄR EN KAMP MOT DET ETABLERADE OCH ALLMÄNNA OCH HAR MAN PRIVILEGIET ATT VÄLJA OM MAN VILL HÖRA PÅ ELLER INTE ÄR MAN DEL AV DET ETABLERADE. HÄR I UMEÅ HAR DE FLESTA FRIHETEN ATT VÄLJA OM MAN VILL BRY SIG. ANSVAR ÄR ETT FRITT VAL MEN DET ÄR EN VIT FRIHET



OCH ATT VÄLJA BORT DET ÄR ATT EXKLUDERA SVARTA FRÅN KOLLEKTIVET OCH ERKÄNNA ATT DET FINNS ETT VI OCH ETT DOM. FÖR VISSA HAR INTE FRIHETEN ATT IGNORERA PROBLEMEN, OCH EGENTLIGEN, OM VITA FAKTISKT SÅG BLM SOM ETT KOLLEKTIVT PROBLEM OCH INTE SOM DERAS PROBLEM SÅ SKULLE DET INTE HELLER GÅ ATT VÄLJA ATT INTE LYSSNA.

FÖR DET ÄR INTE HELLER DEM SOM FÖRSÖKER PRATA MED OSS. DET ÄR VI SOM TALAR.

THIS IS NOT A BLOCKADE.

**WRITER: MANNE BERGGREN WIKLUND
PHOTO: @ELIN JENJILA FRANZÉN**

“SOUTHERN TREES BEAR A STRANGE FRUIT
BLOOD ON THE LEAVES AND BLOOD AT THE ROOT
BLACK BODIES SWINGIN' IN THE SOUTHERN BREEZE
STRANGE FRUIT HANGIN' FROM THE POPLAR TREES

PASTORAL SCENE OF THE GALLANT SOUTH
THE BULGIN' EYES AND THE TWISTED MOUTH
SCENT OF MAGNOLIAS SWEET AND FRESH
THEN THE SUDDEN SMELL OF BURNIN' FLESH

HERE IS A FRUIT FOR THE CROWS TO PLUCK
FOR THE RAIN TO GATHER FOR THE WIND TO SUCK
FOR THE SUN TO ROT FOR THE TREE TO DROP
HERE IS A STRANGE AND BITTER CROP“

- *BILLIE HOLIDAY-STRANGE FRUIT (1939)*



**CLIMATE
CAN'T
WAIT!**

WHY CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES NEED TO UNDERSTAND RACIAL INJUSTICE

THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT HAS MADE MORE INFLUENTIAL ACTORS AWARE OF TODAY'S INJUSTICES BUT DISMANTLING INSTITUTIONALIZED AND SYSTEMATIC RACIAL INJUSTICE REQUIRES WAY MORE THAN SUPERFICIAL RHETORIC AND GESTURES. IT REQUIRES THE ONES WITH POWER TO TACKLE AND ELIMINATE THE VERY SYSTEMS THAT CREATED TODAY'S INEQUALITIES AS WELL AS RESTRUCTURING CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES THAT MAINTAIN EXISTING INJUSTICES. CLIMATE CHANGE IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW AND THE IMPACTS EXTEND WAY BEYOND INCREASING TEMPERATURE AND MELTING GLACIERS. THE VERY SYSTEMS EVERY HUMAN AND SOCIETY DEPEND ON ARE AT RISK: FOOD, WATER, ENERGY, ECOSYSTEMS, WILDLIFE, HEALTH, AND AGRICULTURE ARE ALL FAILING DUE TO THE DESTRUCTIVE POLICIES AND ACTIONS PERPETRATED BY HUMAN ACTIVITY IN THE PAST FEW CENTURIES.

TODAY'S UNEQUAL SYSTEM ORIGINATES FROM THE COLONIAL PERIOD. SLAVERY CREATED THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATION FOR THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, WHICH FURTHER SHAPED OUR MODERN-DAY SOCIETY, STRUCTURES, AND POLICIES. THE DEEP HISTORY OF RACIAL INJUSTICE HAS SHAPED THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORMATION OF TODAY AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE ASYMMETRIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ONES MOST AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ONES CONTRIBUTING TO IT. OUR UNSUSTAINABLE AND UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT HAS MADE MARGINALIZED PEOPLE, SUCH AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND PEOPLE OF COLOR, MORE EXPOSED TO CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS.

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM IS THE DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS OCCURRING WHEN CORPORATIONS AND GOVERNMENTS PLACE OIL PIPELINES, CHEMICAL

PLANTS, POLLUTION FACTORIES, AND TOXIC WASTE DUMPS NEAR OR IN LOW-INCOME AND MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES. RESEARCHERS HAVE, FOR EXAMPLE, FOUND THAT AREAS SHAPED BY DISCRIMINATORY HOUSING POLICIES HAVE FEWER TREES, HIGHER AVERAGE TEMPERATURE, AND MORE PAVEMENT. THESE AREAS ARE ALSO LESS LIKELY TO BE INCLUDED IN SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS AIMING AT PROTECTING COMMUNITIES FROM THESE THREATS.

DORCETA TAYLOR, AN ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGIST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, HAS STUDIED THE HISTORY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT. SHE POINTS OUT THE WHITE MAN'S DOMINATION IN THE HISTORY OF CLIMATE ACTIVISM. ACCORDING TO A STUDY FROM 2014 BY THE GREEN DIVERSITY INITIATIVE, PEOPLE OF COLOR ONLY MADE UP AROUND 12 PERCENT OF LEADERS AND STAFF MEMBERS IN NONGOVERNMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND FOUNDATIONS. SYSTEMIC RACISM HAS INFILTRATED THE GLOBAL CLIMATE MOVEMENT, WHICH HAS RESULTED IN THE OVER-REPRESENTATION, ENLARGEMENT AND

PRIORITIZATION OF WHITE AND WESTERN PERSPECTIVES. THIS HAS RESULTED IN THE MARGINALIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE, PERSPECTIVES, AND EXPERTISE COMING FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AS WELL AS PEOPLE OF COLOR. IN GENERAL, THERE IS A LACK OF DIVERSITY IN THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS AND IN CLIMATE CHANGE SCIENCE; WHICH FURTHER AGGRAVATES THE EXCLUSION OF NON-ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE FROM UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES. WHEN MARGINALIZED PEOPLES' EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE ARE TREATED AS AN ALTERNET, IT GETS OVERLOOKED AND EXCLUDED FROM THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. ANOTHER DILEMMA IS THE STRONG POLITICIZATION IN THE DISCOURSE REGARDING CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS, WHICH LEADS TO THE DANGEROUS IGNORANCE OF BOTH SCIENCE AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE.

MANY OF THE MEASURES TAKEN FOR CLIMATE DISCORDANTLY CAUSES PROBLEMS FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN THE WORLD. THIS IS, AS MENTIONED BEFORE, BECAUSE INDIGENOUS

PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE AND NEEDS OFTEN GET EXCLUDED FROM THE POLICY PROCESS. OECD PRESENTED A STUDY ON HOW AUSTRALIA, CANADA, NORWAY AND SWEDEN EXCLUDE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN THEIR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT. THE PURPOSE WAS TO HIGHLIGHT THE LACK OF INCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES. THE EXPANSION OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE SAPMI AREA IN SWEDEN WAS CARRIED OUT WITHOUT INCLUDING OR UNDERSTANDING THE SAMI PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVES IN COMMUNITY PLANNING. AN EXPANSION OF WIND POWER IN THE SAPMI AREA MUST TAKE PLACE IN A WAY WHERE THE SAMI PEOPLES' POSSIBILITY TO LIVE AND DEVELOP IS NOT LIMITED OR DISCARDED. IN SWEDEN'S CASE, THE OECD BELIEVES THAT A CLEARER POLITICAL FRAMEWORK IS NEEDED WHERE RESOURCES SHOULD BE SET ASIDE FOR SAMI ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH CAN FURTHER PROMOTE SAMI RESEARCH AND IMPROVE IMPORTANT DATA THAT IS DEFICIENT TODAY.

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE IS CONTEXT-SPECIFIC AND REQUIRES SYSTEM THINKING. A COMBINATION OF CLIMATE EXPERTISE AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE IS NEEDED TO PRODUCE THE MOST EFFECTIVE POLICY OUTCOMES. IT ALSO NEEDS TO BE A PROCESS THAT IS LOCALLY OWNED AND DRIVEN BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES. ONE FUNDAMENTAL WAY TO ACHIEVE BETTER AND MORE PROGRESSIVE CLIMATE POLICIES IS TO CHANGE THE WAY WE UNDERSTAND AND SEE THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE. WE CAN ABANDON THE EXISTING HEGEMONY WITHIN CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES AND SCIENCE BY INCLUDING LOCAL FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE, EMPHASIZING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES, AND HISTORICAL PATTERNS OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL MARGINALIZATION. THE INCREASED AWARENESS REGARDING ISSUES CONNECTED TO INJUSTICE WITHIN THE AREA OF CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES IS THANKFULLY IMPROVING, WHICH WILL GIVE RISE TO A MORE INCLUSIVE, CONTEXTUAL AND LEGITIMATE POLICY PROCESS.

AS POLICYMAKERS, LEADERS, COMMUNITIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES, AND INFLUENTIAL ACTORS ARE TRYING TO COPE WITH CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THEY ACKNOWLEDGE THE HISTORY OF RACISM, DISCRIMINATION, AND TODAY'S RACIAL INJUSTICES. INFLUENTIAL ACTORS ADAPTING A SO-CALLED COLOR-BLIND APPROACH ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THE DISCRIMINATION AND THE SLOW VIOLENCE MARGINALIZED PEOPLE EXPERIENCE BY IMPLEMENTING POLICIES ONLY BENEFITTING SOME, WHILE ABANDONING OTHERS. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT RACIAL INJUSTICES ALSO ARE ENVIRONMENTAL, THAT THE VULNERABILITY TO RISING SEA LEVELS, POLLUTION, EXTREME WEATHER, LIMITED ACCESS TO NUTRIENT FOOD, EXPLOITATION AND POOR WATER QUALITY IS CONNECTED TO THE SYSTEMATIC EXCLUSION OF THE PEOPLE MOST AFFECTED BY IT.

THERE ARE NO SIMPLE SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX ISSUES. AS MENTIONED ABOVE, MORE INFLUENTIAL ACTORS HAVE BECOME AWARE OF TODAY'S RACIAL INJUSTICE BUT IN ORDER TO

TEAR DOWN INSTITUTIONALIZED AND SYSTEMATIC RACISM, WE NEED TO SEE MORE THAN SUPERFICIAL RHETORIC AND GESTURES. IT REQUIRES PEOPLE WITH POWER TO TACKLE AND ELIMINATE THE VERY SYSTEMS THAT CREATED TODAY'S INEQUALITIES AS WELL AS RESTRUCTURING CLIMATE POLICIES THAT MAINTAIN EXISTING INJUSTICES. CLIMATE JUSTICE EMBRACES THE PRINCIPLE THAT ALL PEOPLE AND ALL COMMUNITIES ARE ENTITLED TO EQUAL PROTECTION AND THAT POLICIES, LAWS, EDUCATION, FOOD AND WATER QUALITY, HEALTH AND LAND USE, MUST CONSIDER THE INJUSTICE EXISTING WITHIN THE SYSTEM IN THE CALCULATION. ALL INJUSTICES ARE INTERTWINED; THEREFORE ARE INJUSTICE ANYWHERE A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE. CLIMATE JUSTICE IS ABOUT EVERYONE'S JUSTICE.

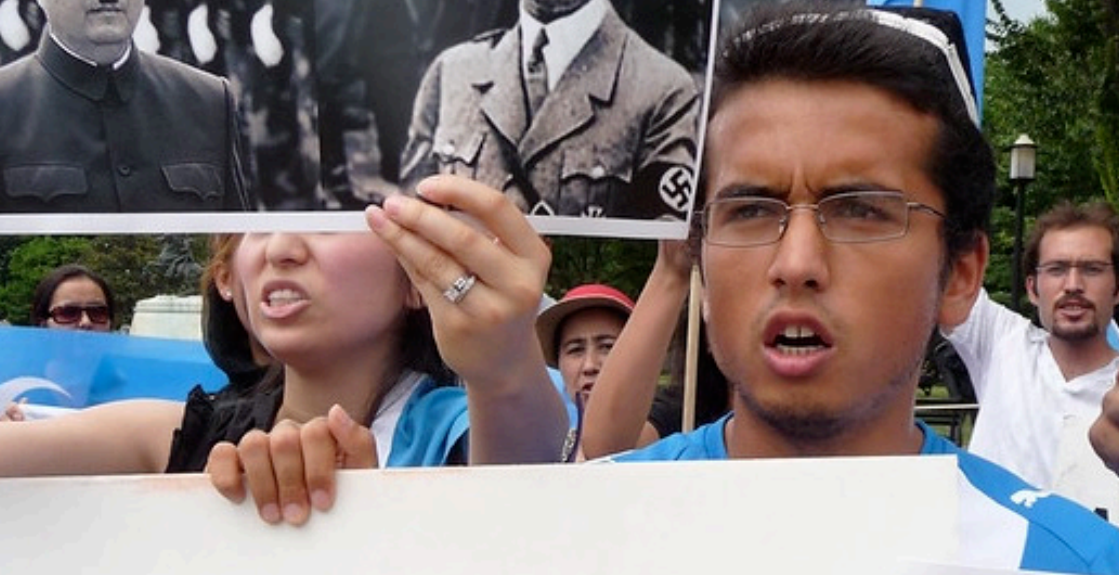
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CANNOT BE REPEATED ON THE WORLD'S STAGE



FEED THE



THE SYSTEMATIC TARGETING OF THE UYGHUR COMMUNITY IN CHINA

RACISM IS A SERIOUS AND RELEVANT ISSUE TODAY, JUST AS IT HAS BEEN FOR CENTURIES. RIGHT NOW, THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT, BEING AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE TOPIC, HAS SHED LIGHT ON VARIOUS PROBLEMS THAT SOCIETIES ARE FACING ALL AROUND THE WORLD. STRUCTURAL OR INSTITUTIONAL RACISM IS BASED ON POLICY WITHIN A GOVERNMENT THAT SPREADS HATRED TOWARDS PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RACES OR BELIEFS. BY DOING SO, THE FAVOURED GROUP OF THE GOVERNMENT IS ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO AND THEIR DOMINANCE OVER OTHER MINOR GROUPS OF THE SOCIETY. CURRENTLY, THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT IS CARRYING OUT AN ETHNIC CLEANSING OF A MINORITY GROUP: **THE UYGHURS**.

THE UYGHURS ARE ONE OF MANY MINORITY GROUPS IN CHINA. THIS COMMUNITY IS UNITED BY THEIR ISLAMIC BELIEF AND ARE ONE OF THE OLDEST

TURKIC-SPEAKING GROUPS IN CENTRAL ASIA. FOR CENTURIES THEY HAVE BEEN THE MAIN INHABITANTS OF THE XINJIANG PROVINCE IN WESTERN CHINA. IN RECENT YEARS, THE GROUP HAS FACED RACISM ON MANY LEVELS, AND IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, INSTITUTIONAL DISCRIMINATION HAS GOTTEN MORE INTENSE AND POSES SERIOUS CONCERNS TO HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS.

IT STARTED TO INTENSIFY IN 2014 WHEN THE CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING LAUNCHED A CAMPAIGN WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO FIGHT TERRORISM AND SEPARATISM. THESE WERE THE FIRST STEPS TO AN ESTABLISHED RACIST SYSTEM IN CHINA. IN THE FOLLOWING YEARS, SO-CALLED RE-EDUCATION CAMPS STARTED TO SPREAD. THE REGULATIONS ON DE-EXTREMIFICATION, RELEASED IN 2017, INTERPRETED PRAYERS, ARTICLES ABOUT UYGHUR CULTURE, AND THE PRIVATE DISPLAY OF RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AS

EXTREMIST ACTIONS. THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA THAT DO NOT ALIGN WITH CHINA'S MEDIA POLICIES, E.G. WHATSAPP, CAN BE SEEN AS A POSSIBLE THREAT AND, THEREFORE, A REASON FOR DETENTION. IN FACT, ANY CONTACT WITH PEOPLE OR GROUPS OUTSIDE OF CHINA, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF ISLAMIC BELIEF, IS SEEN AS SUSPICIOUS.

ONE OF THE MOST EXTREME TOOLS OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO CONTROL AND DISCRIMINATE AGAINST THE UYGHUR COMMUNITY IS THE AFOREMENTIONED RE-EDUCATION CAMPS. THE OFFICIAL LABELLING IS "TRANSFORMATION THROUGH EDUCATION," AND THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO SECURE ETHNIC UNITY IN ORDER TO PREVENT RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM. THE PEOPLE THAT ARE PUT INTO THE CAMPS EXTRAJUDICIALLY, HAVE NO ACCESS TO A LAWYER OR ANY OTHER POSSIBILITY TO CHALLENGE THE DECISION. UP TO 6,000 PEOPLE CAN BE HELD IN THE SAME CAMP AND UNDERGO BRAINWASHING PROCEDURES SUCH AS SINGING POLITICAL SONGS OR STUDYING SPEECHES OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY.

PUNISHMENTS FOR ACTING UP OR NOT SHOWING ENOUGH PROGRESS CAN BE VERBAL ABUSE BUT CAN ALSO GO AS FAR AS FOOD DEPRIVATION, BEATINGS, OR BEING HELD IN STRESSFUL POSITIONS. ONE UYGHUR, WHO WAS BROUGHT INTO THE CAMP IN 2017, SAID THAT HE WAS FORCED TO STAND IN A FIXED POSITION FOR 12 HOURS STRAIGHT. NOT EVERYONE WHO IS SENT TO THE CAMP SURVIVES. DEATH CAUSED BY FOOD DEPRIVATION AND TORTURE OCCURS, AS WELL AS SUICIDE.

BECAUSE OF THE CONSTANT THREATS AND DISCRIMINATION FACILITATED BY THE GOVERNMENT, SOME UYGHUR DECIDE TO LEAVE CHINA AND LIVE ABROAD. BUT EVEN THEN, THE HARASSMENT BY CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND ORGANISATIONS DOES NOT STOP FOR MANY. THE FEELING OF FEAR IS PART OF THE DAILY LIFE OF MANY UYGHURS, INCLUDING THOSE LIVING ABROAD. IN SOME CASES, THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT PRESSURES THE GOVERNMENTS OF COUNTRIES TO EXTRADITE THE REFUGEES IN QUESTION. AN EXAMPLE IS YILYASIJIANG REHEMAN, WHO STUDIED ABROAD IN EGYPT IN 2017,



WHEN HE WENT MISSING. IT IS STRONGLY SUSPECTED THAT THE EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES HANDED HIM OVER TO THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES AND SENT HIM TO ONE OF THE RE-EDUCATION CAMPS. HIS FAMILY IS STILL UNAWARE OF HIS LOCATION ALMOST THREE YEARS LATER.

WE HAVE TO STAND UP AGAINST THE SYSTEMATIC DISCRIMINATION THAT THE UYGHUR COMMUNITY IN CHINA SUFFERS FROM.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL GATHERS SIGNATURES TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT FOR A CHANGE AND ALSO RECOMMENDS TO CONTACT THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT DIRECTLY VIA LETTER OR EMAIL. YOU CAN SUPPORT THEIR FIGHT FOR YILIASIJIANG REHEMAN BY SIGNING THE ONLINE PETITION. MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WEBSITE OR BY CONTACTING THE AMNESTY STUDENT GROUP AT THE UNIVERSITY.

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PHOTO: MICHAEL BROWN/FLICKR

NAME: UIGHUR PLACARDS

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WHEN RACISM MEETS SEXISM

THIS YEAR CELEBRATES THE DAWN OF 26 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA; A COUNTRY WHERE ITS PEOPLE'S CREATIVITY KNOWS NO BOUNDS. A LAND FULL OF BEAUTY FROM THE HIGHVELD OF GAUTENG TO THE TROPICS OF KWAZULU – NATAL, A NATION THAT WELCOMES ALL WITH KINDNESS AND SINCERITY. HOWEVER, POVERTY, PATRIARCHY, INEQUALITY, STAGNANT ECONOMIC GROWTH, HIGH RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT, AND LOW LEVELS OF EDUCATION

STILL STAND AS THE MAJOR DOWNFALL TO SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PLAYS AN UNFORTUNATE ROLE IN MANY WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S LIVES ACROSS THE GLOBE. IN 2013, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION STATED THAT THIRTY-FIVE PERCENT OF WOMEN WORLDWIDE HAD EXPERIENCED EITHER PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE OR NON-PARTNER SEXUAL

VIOLENCE. IN 2016, SOUTH AFRICA'S FEMICIDE RATE WAS 12.1 PER 100,000 WOMEN, WHICH IS ALMOST FIVE TIMES HIGHER THAN THE GLOBAL AVERAGE OF 2.5 PER 100,000 WOMEN.

AN OUTCRY BY SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN OVER THE DEATH AND PAIN CAUSED BY THE HANDS OF MEN IN THIS COUNTRY HAS LED TO INTROSPECTION ACROSS THE NATION. WHILE WE ENDEAVOUR TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE DRIVERS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ARE THROUGH OBSERVATION, STATISTICS AND FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS; WE HAVE SUMMARISED IT AS FOLLOWS: THE PRIMARY DRIVER LEADING TO GENDERED POWER INEQUALITY IS FUNDAMENTALLY ROOTED IN THE PATRIARCHY AND IS DRIVEN BY SOCIAL NORMS AND INTERSECTIONAL POWERS. THESE NORMS BREED INEQUALITIES REGARDING SEXUALITY, CLASS, GENDER, AND MOST FUNDAMENTALLY, IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT, RACIAL INEQUALITY. THESE INEQUALITIES ARE CONTINUALLY PERPETUATED IN THE DEMOCRATIC STATE AND HAVE RISEN IN THE POST-APARTHEID ERA.

MOST AGREE THAT APARTHEID LEFT BEHIND A MINDSET WHICH UNDERVALUES, DEGRADES, AND HUMILIATES ENTIRE GROUPS OF PEOPLE AND RENDERS THEM AS INFERIOR. THIS IS SEEN THROUGH THE SYSTEMIC INSTITUTIONALIZED VIOLENCE AND RACISM; WHICH PLAGUES ALL SOUTH AFRICANS.

THE PATERNALISTIC GAZE OF WHITE SUPPRESSORS DURING APARTHEID HAS A DIRECT LINK TO THE EMASCULATION AND DISEMBODIMENT OF THE BLACK MAN'S ESSENCE. THIS SYSTEMIC RACIAL SYSTEM THAT DISALLOWED BLACK PEOPLE THE FREEDOM OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH HAS LEFT THEM AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SOCIAL HIERARCHY, RESULTING IN THE DEBILITATION OF THE BLACK MAN'S MASCULINITY.

HAS THIS RESULTED IN THE BLACK MAN HAVING TO CONTINUALLY DEFEND THEIR MASCULINITY IN THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA? WITH SOUTH AFRICA BEING PLAGUED OF RACIAL POLARISATION, WITH PEOPLE BEING MARGINALIZED THE DARKER THEIR COMPLEXION IS, BLACK MEN AND WOMEN FIND

THEMSELVES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PECKING ORDER.

MOST SOUTH AFRICANS CONFIRM THAT VIOLENCE AND COLOUR OF SKIN ARE MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, YET THE PEOPLE SEEM TO FIRMLY HOLD ON TO THE LEGACY THAT IS EMBEDDED; HISTORICALLY, SOCIALLY, AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY. THE DISPLACED RAGE AND HOSTILITY SHOWN TOWARDS WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA DERIVE FROM A YEARNING TO REASSERT MASCULINITY, STATUS AND POWER IN A SOCIETY THAT STILL GLORIFIES LIGHTER SHADES OF PIGMENTATION OVER ANY OTHER. THIS LEAVES BLACK WOMEN OPEN TO INJUSTICES PERPETRATED BY MEN WHO SEE WOMEN AS LESSER AND WEAKER HUMAN BEINGS.

THERE HAS BEEN A MATCH LIT IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND FROM IT, A FIRE THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED SOARS THROUGH THE COUNTRY. NOT ONE CAN IGNORE THE TENACITY AND SHEER DRIVE SHOWN TO TACKLE THE DIRE NEED FOR ALL UNDER SOUTH AFRICA'S SKY.

PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA ADDRESSED THE NATION ON THE 5TH OF SEPTEMBER 2019, IN RESPONSE TO THE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THAT WOMEN AND CHILDREN FACE DAILY IN SOUTH AFRICA. IT WAS STATED THAT THE EMERGENCY TEAMS AT A PROVINCIAL LEVEL WOULD BE STRENGTHENED; WHICH WILL BRING THE POLICE, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH, JUSTICE, AND EDUCATION SERVICES TOGETHER WITH A SWIFT RESPONSE TO ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. THE PRIORITY FOCUS WILL BE ON WOMEN, CHILDREN AND OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS, INCLUDING THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY.

REHABILITATION PROGRAMMES IN PRISONS WILL BE INCREASED AND RECONFIGURED TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF REPEAT OFFENDERS. A MULTI-FACETED PLAN HAS BEEN SAID TO BE IMPLEMENTED NATIONALLY, WHICH WILL PREVENT GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE THROUGH SCHOOL PROGRAMMES, COMMUNITY INITIATIVES, AND WORKPLACE POLICIES.

NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS MINDFUL(D) ORGANISATION, A YOUTH-CENTRED MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE THAT FOCUSES ON DESTIGMATIZING MENTAL ILLNESS, PROMOTING MENTAL WELLBEING, AND OFFERING ACTIVE SUPPORT ARE CREATED TO TACKLE THESE ISSUES. THE ORGANIZATION IS FOUNDED BY A 21-YEAR-OLD STUDENT CALLED MBALI PFEIFFER SHONGWE. SHE HAS CREATED A SPACE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA; A PLATFORM THAT HELPS IN THE EDUCATION ON ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED AS A GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

MISS SHONGWE AND HER TEAM HAVE PUT TOGETHER A THREE-PART WEBINAR SERIES THAT CONTAINS: FIRSTLY, THE UNRAVELLING OF THE MENTAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ON WOMEN AND QUEER BODIES AND SECONDLY, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY AND LASTLY, ASKING THE QUESTION “WHERE TO FROM HERE?” THROUGH PLATFORMS SUCH AS THIS ONE AND BECAUSE OF THE DRIVE TO BE PART OF THE CHANGE, MANY SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE EDUCATED THEMSELVES AND OTHERS TO BE BETTER AND TO DO BETTER.

WRITER: BETHANY THOMPSON

PHOTO: ISTOCK PHOTO BY GETTY IMAGES



BETHANY AND HER FRIEND PROTESTING AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT, 2019.

**“MEN ARE AFRAID THAT WOMEN
WILL LAUGH AT THEM. WOMEN ARE
AFRAID THAT MEN WILL KILL THEM.”**

-MARGARET ATWOOD

PARIS

FAIR & WHITE[®]

SAVON GOMMANT
EXFOLIATING SOAP

200 g 7 oz



PARIS

FAIR & WHITE[®]

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EXFOLIATING SOAP

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EXFOLIATING SOAP

200 g



COLOURISM IN DISGUISE

MY NAME IS NADIA HOSSAIN, AND I BELONG TO THE BANGLADESHI DIASPORA IN SWEDEN. MY PARENTS MOVED TO THE COLD NORTHERN COUNTRY FROM BANGLADESH IN THE 1990S. I HAVE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO SPEND QUITE A FEW HOLIDAYS IN BANGLADESH, AND I HAVE GREAT MEMORIES FROM THOSE DAYS.

HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE PARTICULAR MEMORY THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET. I SAW AN ADVERT THAT PORTRAYED THE SKIN LIGHTENING CREAM FAIR & LOVELY, AND IT LEFT ME PERPLEXED. THE ADVERT IS KNOWN AS THE AIR HOSTESS. IT DEPICTS A YOUNG, DARK-SKINNED, INDIAN WOMAN WHO IS NOT EARNING ENOUGH SALARY FOR HER FAMILY. THROUGH VISUALIZATION, THE ADVERT IMPLIES THAT THE REASON BEHIND HER NOT GETTING A BETTER JOB, OR GETTING MARRIED, IS HER DARK SKIN. SOON, THE SOLUTION TO HER PROBLEM IS INTRODUCED - THE CREAM FAIR & LOVELY. THE WOMAN USES THE CREAM, WHICH MAKES HER

SIGNIFICANTLY FAIRER, AND THEREFORE, INSTANTLY ACQUIRES A BETTER-PAID JOB AS AN AIR HOSTESS. THESE TYPES OF ADVERTISEMENTS CAN BE FOUND ALL OVER ASIA.

THE GLOBAL SKIN LIGHTENING INDUSTRY IS ESTIMATED TO BE WORTH 31.2 BILLION US DOLLARS IN 2024. IT IS A MASSIVE BUSINESS ALL AROUND THE WORLD. CREAMS, SOAPS, CLEANSERS, CHEMICAL PEELS, PILLS, AND EVEN INJECTIONS, ARE AVAILABLE ALTERNATIVES TO ACHIEVE A LIGHTER COMPLEXION. THIS FAIRNESS STANDARD IS EQUATED WITH BEAUTY, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY IN SEVERAL PLACES GLOBALLY AND CORRELATES WITH THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH THE POPULATION PREDOMINANTLY HAS HIGHER PERCENTAGES OF MELANIN. WHILE MANY MIGHT THINK THAT THE MINDSET: "ONLY THE WEALTHIEST HAD THE LUXURY OF STAYING INDOORS, AWAY FROM THE SUN" IS OUTDATED, IT IS VERY MUCH RELEVANT TODAY. IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY A SHADY BUSINESS, AND I

WILL EXPLAIN WHY THESE PRODUCTS ARE HARMFUL ON AN INDIVIDUAL AND GLOBAL SCALE.

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION HAS EXPRESSED THAT NUMEROUS SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS USE DANGEROUS CHEMICALS SUCH AS INORGANIC MERCURY, HYDROGEN PEROXIDE, GLUTATHIONE, AND HYDROQUINONE ARE HAZARDOUS TO THE USER'S HEALTH. HYDROQUINONE IS A CHEMICAL USED IN PHOTO PROCESSING, RUBBER MANUFACTURING, AND HAIR DYES. IT SHOULD NOT BE PUT ON ANYONE'S SKIN. FOR EXAMPLE, PRODUCTS CONTAINING INORGANIC MERCURY CAN LEAD TO KIDNEY DAMAGE, SKIN RASHES, SKIN DISCOLOURATION AND SCARRING, REDUCTION IN THE SKIN'S RESISTANCE TO BACTERIAL AND FUNGAL INFECTIONS, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, PSYCHOSIS, AND PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY. AS A RESULT, THESE INGREDIENTS HAVE BEEN BANNED IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES, BUT CUSTOMERS GET THEIR HANDS ON PRODUCTS WITH HIGH CONCENTRATIONS OF THESE DANGEROUS CHEMICALS THROUGH UNDER-THE-TABLE SOURCES, AND SINCE WE

LIVE IN A MODERN WORLD, IT IS ALSO EASILY OBTAINABLE ON THE INTERNET.

IN ADDITION TO THESE PRODUCTS' PHYSICAL DAMAGE, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTAND WHERE THIS DESIRE FOR LIGHTER SKIN TONE STEMS FROM. THIS DESIRE IS FUELED BY COLOURISM. COLOURISM SIGNIFIES PREJUDICE OR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DARKER SKIN TONES, TYPICALLY AMONG PEOPLE OF THE SAME ETHNIC OR RACIAL GROUP. COLOURISM IS A DIRECT INHERITANCE OF EUROPEAN COLONIALISM AND SLAVERY, WHERE INDIVIDUALS WITH LIGHTER SKIN TONES WERE TREATED BETTER AND RECEIVED BENEFITS IN COMPARISON WITH THEIR DARKER COUNTERPARTS.

EVELYN NAKANO GLENN EXPRESSES IN HER ARTICLE *YEARNING FOR LIGHTNESS*: "TRANSNATIONAL CIRCUITS IN THE MARKETING AND CONSUMPTION OF SKIN LIGHTENERS, THE DESIRE FOR LIGHTER SKIN AND THE USE OF SKIN BLEACHES IS ACCELERATING IN PLACES WHERE MODERNIZATION AND THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN CAPITALISM."

IN RESPONSE TO THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT, THE COMPANY HINDUSTAN UNILEVER THAT PRODUCES THE SKIN LIGHTENING CREAM FAIR AND LOVELY, HAS NOW DROPPED THE WORD “ FAIR “ AND CHANGED ITS NAME TO GLOW & LOVELY. BUT THE WORD CHANGE DOES NOT, IN ANY WAY, ADDRESS THE FACT THAT THIS CREAM HAS EXPLOITED COLOURISM AND PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING FAIR SKIN AS THE ONLY ACCEPTED BEAUTY STANDARD IN A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE WORLD. CORPORATIONS LIKE UNILEVER, L’OREAL, JOHNSON & JOHNSON, AND COUNTLESS MORE ARE REINFORCING COLOUR HIERARCHIES AND HAVE BEEN PART OF WHAT HAS CONVINCED MILLIONS OF PEOPLE THAT THEY WOULD BE HAPPIER, BETTER LOOKING, AND MORE SUCCESSFUL IF THEY BECOME SEVERAL SHADES LIGHTER. ANNOUNCING THAT THEY WILL NO LONGER SELL PRODUCTS THAT MENTION SKIN LIGHTENING IS JUST A REBRANDING. IT DOES NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM; THEY JUST LET COLOURISM LIVE IN DISGUISE.

LIKE IN MANY SOUTH ASIAN HOUSEHOLDS, MY FAMILY AND I WATCH BOLLYWOOD MOVIES TOGETHER. FROM A YOUNG AGE, I REMEMBER THINKING THAT NONE OF THE WOMEN IN THE MOVIES, THOUGH BEING FROM THE SAME AREA AS ME, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, HAD A VERY LIGHT COMPLEXION. BUT SOON ENOUGH, I REALIZED THAT FAIR SKIN WAS CONSIDERED BEAUTIFUL. ESPECIALLY WHEN I HAD RELATIVES TELL ME TO USE FAIR & LOVELY, OR WHEN THEY SAID: “SHE HAS SUCH A SWEET FACE, TOO BAD SHE IS DARK “, OR WHEN PEOPLE IN BANGLADESH COMPARED MY YOUNGER SISTER WITH ME, WHO HAS A LIGHTER COMPLEXION, MENTIONED: “THE YOUNGER ONE IS PRETTIER, LOOK AT HER FAIR SKIN!”

WHILE MY PERSPECTIVE AND KNOWLEDGE AROUND THIS SUBJECT ARE MOSTLY CONNECTED TO AN ASIAN EXPERIENCE, THIS WAY OF THINKING - THAT FAIRER SKIN IS EQUAL TO BEAUTY, SUCCESS, AND A HIGHER CHANCE OF GETTING MARRIED, IS COMMON ACROSS NUMEROUS PARTS OF THE WORLD. THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION HAS REPORTED THAT SEVERAL

COUNTRIES IN AFRICA ARE FAMILIAR WITH SKIN LIGHTENING PRACTICES. IN NIGERIA, A STRIKING 77% OF NIGERIAN WOMEN USE SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS REGULARLY. TOGO FOLLOWS THEM WITH 59%, SOUTH AFRICA WITH 35%, AND MALI AT 25%.

ALL AROUND ASIA, IT IS COMMON TO FIND BEAUTY PARLOURS THAT OFFER SKIN LIGHTENING TREATMENTS, INCLUDING EVERYTHING FROM CREAMS TO INJECTIONS. A SURVEY DONE IN THE PHILIPPINES REPORTED THAT 50% USED SKIN LIGHTENERS DAILY. IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA, CREAMS CONTAINING HIGH PERCENTAGES OF INORGANIC MERCURY ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE. ACCORDING TO THE UNITED STATES FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, SMALL SHOPS AND INFORMAL MARKETS SELL THESE PRODUCTS TO LATINO, ASIAN, AFRICAN, AND MIDDLE EASTERN COMMUNITIES. THEY CAN ALSO BE TRACKED DOWN ON THE INTERNET, PROMOTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA, AND SOLD THROUGH APPS. I HAVE WITNESSED SEVERAL SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS IN SMALL SHOPS IN SWEDEN, THE UK, BELGIUM,

SAUDI ARABIA, AND QATAR FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

AS THE DESIRE FOR A LIGHTER COMPLEXION IS DEEPLY INGRAINED IN MANY COMMUNITIES OF PEOPLE OF COLOUR, SOME ARE UNAWARE OF ITS HARMFUL EFFECTS; SOME EVEN COMPARE SKIN LIGHTENING TO TANNING. WHILE TANNING ALSO CAN LEAD TO HEALTH ISSUES, THE ORIGIN OF THE TREND IS NOT ROOTED IN THE IDEOLOGY OF WHITE SUPERIORITY BUT IN THE FASHION ICON COCO CHANEL, WHO WAS PHOTOGRAPHED SUN-KISSED ON HER MEDITERRANEAN VACATION IN THE 1920S, WHICH QUICKLY BECAME A TREND IN THE WESTERN WORLD.

PREFERRING FAIRER SKIN AND PRAISING EUROPEAN FEATURES IS NORMALITY AND VALUED BY PEOPLE OF COLOUR WORLDWIDE. THE INTERNALIZATION THAT "WHITE IS RIGHT" AND THAT ETHNIC FEATURES AND DARKER SKIN TONES ARE ASSOCIATED WITH LACK OF CIVILIZATION AND SEEN AS UNDESIRABLE IS EXCEPTIONALLY PROBLEMATIC. ETHNIC FEATURES AND MELANIN ONLY SEEM TO BE APPRECIATED WHEN IT IS

ON WHITE BODIES. SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS ARE YET ANOTHER FACTOR THAT FUELS THE DIVIDE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND ENHANCES A TOXIC MINDSET THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE SUPERIOR BECAUSE OF THE COLOUR OF THEIR SKIN; EVEN IF IT MIGHT BE AN UNCONSCIOUS MINDSET. IF COSMETIC BRANDS TRULY WANTED TO SEE CHANGE AND DEMANDED EQUALITY, THEY WOULD IMMEDIATELY TAKE THEIR PRODUCTS OFF THE SHELVES; FOR GOOD.

AS A CHILD, I USED TO SCRUB AND SCRATCH MY SKIN UNTIL IT WAS BURNING BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WOULD RUB OFF MY COMPLEXION. I DO NOT WISH THAT SELF-HATRED UPON ANYONE. SO, ASK YOURSELVES, DOES COMPLEXION AFFECT YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS? ACKNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTAND THAT LIGHTER COMPLEXIONS OFTEN APPEAR IN POPULAR CULTURE AND UNDERSTAND HOW THAT AFFECTS US. SPREAD AWARENESS ON THIS TOPIC, QUESTION PREVAILING BEAUTY STANDARDS, AND TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE STRUGGLED WITH A DARKER COMPLEXION AND ETHNIC FEATURES, REMEMBER, **YOU WERE BRAIN-WASHED INTO THINKING THAT EUROPEAN FEATURES ARE THE EPITOME OF BEAUTY.**

BEST REGARDS,
AN UNFAIR AND LOVELY GIRL, NADIA.

WRITER: NADIA HOSSAIN
PHOTO: NADIA HOSSAIN

IF YOU ARE
NEUTRAL IN
SITUATIONS OF
INJUSTICE, YOU
HAVE CHOSEN THE
SIDE OF THE
OPPRESSOR!



TAVE

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IN UMEÅ,

I WISH I COULD AVOID MENTIONING COVID. HOWEVER, THE CORONA PANDEMIC HAS AFFECTED US IN COUNTLESS WAYS, WHICH MAKES IT AN INESCAPABLE SUBJECT. SWEDEN IS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING THEIR SECOND WAVE OF CASES AND MORE RESTRICTIONS ARE BEING ADDED INTO OUR SOCIETY. IN THE BEGINNING OF THE AUTUMN TERM, UMEÅ WAS NOT AFFECTED TO THE SAME DEGREE AS OTHER CITIES. THEREFORE, WE WERE ABLE TO OPERATE ON CAMPUS, WHICH WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE START-UP OF OUR ORGANIZATIONAL WORK. DESPITE HAVING TO MOVE OUR OPERATIONS INTO THE DIGITAL SPHERE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE SEMESTER, WE STILL MANAGED TO HAVE REGULAR MEETINGS AND HOST MEANINGFUL ONLINE LECTURES. I AM PROUD OF MY BOARD AND WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH, CONSIDERING THE CIRCUMSTANCES.



DESPITE THE PANDEMIC, WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED SEVERAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, WHICH HAVE SHOWN US HOW INFLUENTIAL THE POWER OF THE PEOPLE IS, EVEN IN CHALLENGING TIMES. ANOTHER NOTABLE EVENT THIS YEAR WAS THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. WE MANAGED TO HOST TWO EVENTS CONCERNING THE TOPIC, FIRSTLY, AN INFORMATIVE LECTURE WITH PÉTERIS TIMOFEVEJS AND SECONDLY, AN ELECTION NIGHT WITH CO-HOSTS NORDPOL AND UMEÅ STUDENTKÅR. WITH A NEW PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, WE CAN EXPECT A DIFFERENT INTERNATIONAL ORDER AND A CHANGE IN GLOBAL COOPERATION WITHIN FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

PERSONALLY, I AM QUITE HAPPY THAT THIS YEAR IS COMING TO AN END AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WHAT THE NEXT MIGHT ENTAIL. HOPEFULLY, WE WILL SEE THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL REGARDING THE PANDEMIC, BUT AS WE HAVE LEARNT THIS YEAR, NOTHING CAN BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED.

GET INVOLVED IN THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED
IN JOINING OUR DIFFERENT COMMITTEES, BRING YOUR
SKILLS AND IDEAS AND HELP US BECOME EVEN BETTER!

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OUR MAIN FOCUS IS MAKING
INTERESTING LECTURES FOR OUR
MEMBERS, HELP AND SHARE OUR
AGENDA.

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