

Around Jan /72

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~~the struggle~~

Struggle by oppressed people for their liberation is an ancient process which ground almost to a halt during the 50's in America. The past decade however has witnessed a tremendous resurgence of ~~energy~~ political energy by exploited groups. Led by the example of Black people, numerous other groups have begun to recognize a common element in their oppression and to ~~join together~~ unite in struggle against the common enemy.

The first stage in the struggle entails the painful acknowledgement of the extent to which the values of the oppressor have been internalized by the oppressed. This internalization is an indispensable component of the oppressor's program to keep people down.

~~It precludes the formation of an oppressed identity and fosters a false identification with the master.~~

~~Power and the right to power are thus~~

for it precludes the formation of an oppressed identity; that is, if you are truly inferior, you cannot believe that you are oppressed. Identification with the master's values relieves him of most of the work: we hate ourselves, we are ashamed of what we are, we keep in line lest we force him to punish us for our wrongful insubordination. Power and the right to power are thus located externally. Identification makes us weak and contemptible.

Power relationships are maintained, not so much because the oppressed person is ashamed of ^{her/}himself, but because ~~he~~ (s)he is ashamed of her/his sisters and brothers. Vertical identification supercedes horizontal.

It is important to make clear the nature of vertical

~~identification or identification with the~~ the aggressor identification (sometimes called identification with ~~the~~ the aggressor) and of the role it plays in stabilizing power differences. Traditionally, identification has been conceptualized as the desire to be like the aggressor. Freud says, "A little boy will exhibit a special interest in his father; he would like to ~~grow~~ like him and be like him, and take his place everywhere" (Tuckman, 185). This view of identification fails to take into account the aggressor's reaction and its consequences. He does not want the ~~xx~~ slave to be like him, to take his place, for such an attitude will result in a very different kind of identification, one which threatens the master and which he takes great pains to prevent. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ He does not want the slave to give up ~~his~~ the blues, to appreciate luxury and cultivate fine tastes. He wants the slave^{to} to identify with only one aspect of himself^{the master}, namely, his view of the slave--~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ of all slaves--as an inferior ~~species~~ and contemptible species.

This identification, having accomplished its two-fold objective of inculcating self-hatred, and thus hatred for others like oneself, leaves the slave with only a negative identify. ~~all that is admirable--i.e., the master--is forbidden.~~
 however
 When literal slavery gave way to wage-and-welfare-slavery, when ~~the black~~ black people achieved a tiny measure of freedom from the master's domination, they began to reach for what was formerly forbidden--not an identity with other blacks, but with the white man. Identification, as Freud had defined it, had begun. ~~Bourgeois ideology the black~~ Black people wanted to

be like whites, and bourgeois ideology told them it was possible. History told them it wasn't. The shift in consciousness from the slave identity^{to} identification with whites was a progressive and indispensable step in the evolution of ~~revolutionary~~^{political} consciousness among black people. The sham of such identification was not long in becoming evident, as it is becoming evident to other oppressed groups such as women, gay people, students

Although identification with the aggressor betokens self-contempt, it also is indicative of a sense of freedom to change oneself, & hence of a dormant power.