Race As a Social Construct: Analysis of Race Issue in America Throught Movie "Crash"

Irk Kavramının Sosyal İnşası: Amerika'da Irk Sorunu'nun "Crash" Filmi Üzerinden Analizi

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Abstract

Our understanding of ourselves or knowing who we are is necessarily based on our comparisons with others. It is also a matter of distinguishing and distracting ourselves from others. Therefore, the construction of us is based mainly upon not being the other. Just like the construction or recognition of identity, white supremacy is a phenomenon which cannot exist without black people being backwards and ill-mannered. Racial differences may seem as if it is not only about our physical appearance but it is in fact about personal features and social differences. So along with the reality that race is biological and among social scientists it is a myth or a made up structure does not hold an importance for the people in power. As a result, racism has become a part of our everyday lives. Where you live, where you go to school, your job, your profession, who you interact with, how people interact with you, your treatment in the healthcare are all affected by your race. However, what may people do not realize is that this racial structure is not based on reality and anthropologists have shown for many years now that there is no biological reality to human race.And since being white is not one's skin color or genetic makeup but it is a political and social power, for black people race can be seen as a social construction or a disease. This manuscript was written in order to have an adequate understanding of the social, historical and political meaning of "race" given by the society. And an analysis will be made on how social theorists and society make sense of race and ethnicity.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Race, Racism, The color line problem, Ethnicity.*

Öz

Kendimizi anlamamız veya kim olduğumuzu bilmemiz, kendimizi zorunlu olarak başkalarıyla karşılaştırmalarımıza dayanır. Bu aynı zamanda kendimizi diğerlerinden ayırt etme ve dikkatimizi dağıtma meselesidir. Bu nedenle, kişinin kendini inşası esas olarak öteki olmama üzerine kuruludur. Tıpkı kimliğin inşası ya da tanınması gibi, beyaz üstünlüğü de siyahların geri kalmış ve kötü olmadan var olamayacak bir olgudur. Ve beyaz olmak kişinin ten rengi ya da genetik yapısı değil, politik ve toplumsal bir güç olduğu için siyah ırk için ırk, toplumsal bir yapı ya da bir hastalık olarak görülebilir. Irksal farklılıklar, sadece dış görünüşten ibaretmiş gibi görülebilir ve ırksal farklılıklar karakter özelliklerini ve sosyal farklılıkları etkiliyormuş gibi görünebilir. Ya da insanlar böyle olduğuna inanmak istemeyebilirler. Irk kavramı dolayısıyla ırkçılık günlük hayatımızın bir parçası olmuştur. Yaşadığımız yer, mesleğimiz, okulumuz, iletişime geçtiğimiz

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insanlar ya da iletişime geçme şeklimizin hepsi sahip olduğumuz ırk tarafından belirlenmektedir. Bütün bunların yanı sıra sahip olduğumuz ırkın zeka seviyemizi, cinsiyet rollerimizi ve cinsiyete bağlı tavırlarımızı, doğum oranlarını, çalışma disiplinimizi ve yeteneklerimizi etkilediği düşünülmüştür. Oysa antropologlar yıllarca bunun tam tersinin doğru olduğunu göstermişlerdir. Irk kavramının yukarıda sayılanlarla hiç bir alakası olmadığını, tamamen kurgusal bir kavram olduğunu anlatmaya çalışmışlardır. Fakat tüm bu çabalar karşılıksız kalmıştır ve günümüzde ırk kavramı hala günlük yaşamımızı etkilemektedir. Bu yüzden, ırk kavramının biyolojik bir gerçek olmaması ve sosyal bilimciler tarafından sadece bir mit olarak görülmesi, ırk kavramı üzerinden politik ve sosyal üstünlük sağlayan ülkeler tarafından kabul edilmeyebilir. Bu makalenin amacı, "ırk"ın toplum tarafından verilen sosyal, tarihsel ve politik anlamını araştırmaktır. Aynı zamanda sosyal teorisyenlerin ve toplumun ırk ve etnisiteyi nasıl anlamlandırdığını analiz edecektir.

Introduction

W.E.B. Du Bois believed that the problem of twentieth century was the problem of the color-line, and the relationship between the darker races and the lighter races in different continents like Asia, Africa, and America. In his book "The Souls of Black Folks", he wrote that:

> Between me and the other world there is ever an unasked question: unasked by some through feelings of delicacy, by others through the difficulty of highly framing it… They approach me in a half-hesitant sort of way; eye me curiously or compassionately and then, instead of saying directly. How does it feel to be a problem? (2007, p. 7-15).

Not much has changed ever since Du Bois wrote these sentences in his book. Ever since the term "race" was invented by Enlightenment Europeans, it has been a very problematic and controversial issue for both America and and for the colonized parts of the world. Abolishing slavery in the US did not change much in the society. When Emancipation Proclamation was accepted, race was considered as a biological construct. Slavery, and later Jim Crow laws, laws that implemented racial segregations in the South were seen as natural consequences of the alleged, natural inferiority of blacks to whites. As being white gained importance in the society, African-Americans had to face with legalized racist extraction and violence, which continued in different forms. Additionally, in order to have citizenship – and the rights citizenship embedded – they had to be classified as white by the law (Diangelo, 2019, p. 35). So although slavery was abolished, African-Americans continued to be second-class citizens in much of the South, they were generally denied to vote, confined separate parts of trains or buses and obliged to use segregated eating areas or public toilets (Reynolds, 2009, p. 15). And that was not just wrong but it was also harmful.

Today, on one hand there are social scientists who believe that "race" is a social and political phenomenon constructed and it has nothing to do with biology, while on the other hand there are politicians, historians and racist groups who believe that white people are superior to black people and it is black people's destiny to be inferior in all different parts of their lives. In this article race and race problem is going to be discussed through movie "Crash" which was produced in 2004, and also how race, racism and race problem are handled in the US. The first part of the article is going to define race and ethnicity and show the difference between these two terms. Then sociological perspectives on race are going to be discussed and later race and racism are going to be taken as a social construct. Finally, the race problem in the US is going to be explained through "Crash" movie.

Defining Race and Ethnicity

There is a general consensus among sociologists who study race and ethnic relations that while the terms race and ethnicity are used interchangeably, there are differences between these two terms. And in this part of the essay, different perspectives on race and ethnicity and differences between these two terms are going to be explained. To start with, the main difference between race and ethnicity is that race highlights the socially defined physical characteristics among people, such as skin color, hair

texture, or facial features of a certain group of people. Basically that definition is more likely to reinforce our commonsense of understanding of race. Ethnicity, on the other hand, points out a group of people who comes from the same nationality, and has the same ancestry or shares the same culture, and/or language. So ethnicity is not related to physical appearance in any way. (Fitzgerald, 2017, pg. 23).

As it has already been mentioned above, among sociologists race is considered as a socially constructed phenomenon, which in other words means that race is not a biologically or genetically determined structure. So what makes a certain group of people seem different from the rest of the society is the racial categories that distinguish a certain group of people according to their physical characteristics which are given to particular societies (Fiztgerald, 2018, p. 33). Hall refers to a similar point and he also sees race as the centerpiece of a hierarchical system, which organizes the great classificatory systems of difference in the society. In this sense, race is again a socially constructed phenomenon, and a system that produces differences among people (2017, p.33).

Although the sociology of race and ethnicity goes into the depths of the racial hierarchy and tries to put all these racial groups in their right positions in this hierarchical system, much of the empirical research is focused on blacks and whites. This empirical research does not propose to avoid what many racial groups such as Latinos, Asian Americans, American Indians, or other racial and ethnic groups in America have gone through, but instead it aims to acknowledge the relationship between black and white people, and to build up the racial hierarchy in the US, which still remains solid today (Fitzgerald, 2017, p. 23).

Dillon states a similar argument. He argues that even if we see someone's blackness or whiteness as and through their skin color, what we do with this skin color, how we react to it or how we differentiate people can change according to time and particular historical movements. His statement comes to the same point that race is not a biological outcome but rather it is a political and a social product. As a result, racial inequality is a phenomenon that is not only experienced by the people who are exposed to it but it is something structured into social institutions and everyday life. It is something both individually and socially experienced (2014, p. 402). The black scholar and civil rights activist Lani Guinier takes race issue from a different perspective and emphasizes on the sophisticated and versatile structure of race stating that race is not just a single thing but in fact it is many things. Guinier claims that race can be stigmatizing as well as liberating. She also believe that if we put race in a single category and avoid its many different social outcomes, we fail to specify whether we mean biological race, political race, historical race, or cultural race. (Guinier and Torres, 2002, p. 4).

According to Appiah, so much of what has been said so far about race is undignified, confused, implicit and useless. He also reminds us that discussions about race also have an inevitable impact on our way of understanding and handling the concept of culture and identity. And without having a wide range of shared beliefs, values, signs and symbols, it is not possible to form a common culture. But he does not put his idea in the way that everybody in the group is supposed to have the same belief and

values. Instead, he states that everybody in the group should know their origin, ancestry, or how they are seen and held in the society (1996, p. 6).

Angela James's approach is also slightly different. In her article on race and racial classification, James claims that race is actually a slippery concept. She remarks that race is real and present in every aspect of life but due to the fact that race comes with obvious contradictions, it is not easy to mark race as a social construct in any objective sense. And while race is a shifting phenomenon rooted in social and political affairs, most people tend to see it as a fixed characteristics and although it is not a biological structure; people, when they look at human body, want to see an evidence about their racial identity. So although race is a biological fiction, it nonetheless is a social fact (2008, p. 32).

Perspectives on Race

The first race theory that is going to be explained here is racial formation theory. Racial formation is a theoretical framework constructed by sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant in 1986. One of racial formation theory's central premises is that race is not fixed structure but it is a social and biological formation shaped by society and institutions. Because race is formed and shaped by society, it remains unfixed and unraveled (Winant, 2000: pg. 169). It has assisted social scientists in understanding the extent to which the state and society define and control race, and in fueling debate and critique, it continues to influence future developments (O'Brien, 2018, p. 5).

The racial formation perspective was an attempt to break with three major reductionist strains of sociological thought that did not do justice to the centrality of race in social life. The first groups of theories, which are called ethnicity-based theories, basically view the role of the state as democratizing by creating laws making discrimination illegal. The extent to which various racial-ethnic groups are able to assimilate culturally and politically determines the degree to which they experience racial conflict and discord. The second group of theories, which are class based, Omi and Winant blame the capitalist marketplace for racial divisions. And these perspectives share the tendency to reduce race to a bargaining chip through which the capitalists exploit and divide working class. The third problematic category of theories is nation-based, - positing that racial exploitation is exacerbation by a colonial power's decimation of groups' ties to the greater Diaspora. However, such perspectives are deemed "retro" in the postcolonial era (O'Brien, 2018, p. 5-6).

Omi and Winant offered race in their racial formation theory, as an "organizing principle of social relations", not as something reducible to ethnicity, class or nation (1986: pg. 68). They insist that race is a "socio-historical concept" in a constant state of flux, which means that it is "unstable and politically contested" (1986, p. 60).

Through the development of their theory, Omi and Winant offer many historical examples such as how the racial categories of "black" and "white" simply did not exist until to the late seventeenth century in the United States, and they were formulated to provide an ideological underpinning to

slavery. For instance, Africans who identified as Yoruba or Ibo, and spoke different languages, suddenly were grouped together in a category called "black", while immigrants of many different ethnic heritage, again with diverse linguistic backgrounds, or lumped together and called "white". The two authors propose the notion of "racialization" to describe the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, social practice or group (1986, p. 64). And racial formation theory claims that what produces racial change in the society is racially based social movements and racial state. For instance, the creation of "Asian American" in the 1960s as a political label that united diverse ethnic groups like Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, and Korean racial state (Omi and Winant, 1986, p. 83).

The second theory that is going to be discussed here is systematic racism. Systematic racism, at the core, has stereotypes, prejudices, and discriminatory practices, white people's emotions or thoughts towards colored – people (mainly black). It mostly focuses on white people's points of view, especially of European descents, and it shows us how systematic racism takes place at work places, schools or any kinds of institutions. Systematic racism is the practice that makes white superiority racial exploitation and discriminatory practices exist in the society. The center of systematic racism encompasses discriminatory practices, which at the core prevent colored people to have the social credit, opportunities, and privileges that are available to white people (Korgen, 2017, p.12).

Systematic racism exists with the involvement of whole system and systematic racism theory gives a description and explanation about how the white dominated institutions oppress, discriminate, and operate black people and these white dominated institutions shape the society. Since existence of racism and racist oppressions are not seen or accepted by the society, systematic racism theory tries to take closer to look at what lies behind this structural or institutional racism. At the core there are unjustified practices that do not give black or colored – people privileges, opportunities or immunity while white people have all of them. Throughout US history, systematic racism has been a foundational and intricate reality that includes 1) the many exploitative and discriminatory practices of white people; 2) how the unjustly gained resources and power caused white and white dominated institutions oppress the blacks in the society; 3) the preservation of countless oppression, discrimination, racial stereotypes, and prejudices and unjustly practices in white dominated institutions (Korgen, 2017, p.13).

The third theory is color-blind racism. Whereas the Civil Rights Movement made many important gains, in particular the removal of overt, state-sanctioned forms of segregation and discrimination, it did nothing to address racialized wealth disparities. It also did not significantly unravel the notions of the American system that surrounded it. The result is that racial inequalities persists and seems to be growing, while most Americans believe that we live in a just society where any inequalities can be explained through individual efforts or cultural difference. (Burke, 2018, p.21).

According to color-blind racism, most whites do not see any color but they only see people. They reject all the racial categories; they believe that they do not make any racial distinction based on color and that only the absence of accounting for race will bring equality. Therefore, they claim that

they are not the one who are responsible for the race problem but actually it is the colored – people (especially blacks) are responsible for all the racial problems and racial prejudices that they have in the US. According to Bonilla – Silva, most people believe that in order to make the society get along, blacks and other minorities should just stop complaining about what happened in the past, and instead they should focus on their work, their social life and they should complain less about racial and social discrimination. So basically this ideology, which acquired adherence and dominance in the late 1960s, sees contemporary racial inequalities as the outcome of nonracial dynamics. However, regardless of white people's "sincere fictions", racial considerations shade everything in the US. For instance, blacks and darks-skinned racial minorities stay well behind whites in every area of social life. The numbers show that they are more likely to be poor than white people, their income is about 40 percent less than white people, and have about an eighth of the net worth that whites have. When it comes to housing, black-owned units are valued at 35 percent less when compared to white owned ones, the police target black and dark – skinned Latino people more because of their racial profile. And this attitude causes their misrepresentation and devaluation among those arrested. When we compare it to Jim Crow racism, the color - blind ideology may not seem that harsh or discriminatory. Because it does not suggest that God put black people and other minorities in a servile position but instead they claim that they are backwards and more likely to involve with criminal practices because they are not educated, they do not work hard earn their money, and they tend to act like they are the victims of the what happened in the past. Color – blind racism asserts that the privileges, opportunities or anything that white people but black people are lack of, has nothing to do with their skin color. And that is what white people see and think as problematic about colored – people (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 1-3).

Bonilla-Silva, in his book on race and color – blind racism, developed his ideas and formed four key features. He set paths to understand and evaluate the racial ideas that share mutual features with this color – blind ideology. The first core feature is that this ideology is used to legitimate the status quo, which produces privileges for whites. It mostly happens when racism is denied as a growing feature of contemporary life, and when people minimize the role of historical inequalities that continue to impact today's opportunities. The second core feature if color-blind ideology is its complicity with neoliberal politics and ideologies. This aspect of the ideology assumes an equal playing field, disavows a structural understanding of racism and denies any ongoing discrimination or bias. The third and the fourth core features are about its ongoing use of racial stereotypes. These two features center around the mobilization of racial stereotypes in indirect, coded fashion, coded inferences about racial groups or the pervasive belief that culture is alone and primarily powerful in its ability to drive or explain inequalities (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 23 -26) (Burke, 2018, p. 22-23).

The last social theory that is going to be explained in this part is critical race theory. CRT or the critical race theory is a formation that collects a group of people, activists and scholars who want to take a part in shaping and studying the relationship among race, racism, and power. CRT spread out as the scholars, lawyers and social activists in the US became aware of the fact that the benefits, and favorable advances of the Civil Right Era started to lose its impact on the society. So they felt an urge

to take a step forward. The movement takes similar issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses hold, but places them in a wider perspective. CRT is different from traditional civil rights in many aspects and it questions the roots of liberal order, which includes equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment ideas, and neutral principles of constitutional law (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, p. 2-4).

What CRT theorists believe is that they assume that racism is an everyday experience, not aberrational, the widespread, ordinary experience for most people of color in the US. And because it is ordinary, this everyday racism is difficult to cure or address. Racial inequalities are enmeshed into social, political and economic conditions of the US. Therefore, formal legal remedies are ineffective in confronting racism in the everyday lived experiences of people of color. Additionally, there is a second feature that CRT movement holds that most of the CRT theorists agree that the system of white superiority and dominance in society serves important purposes. This second feature is sometimes called interest convergence or material determinism. Since racism develops the interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class people (physically), a huge part of society have little incentive to eradicate it. There is no single identity for any individual person; rather each person exists at the intersections of cultural, social, class, gendered, and many other identities that define who he or she are (Romero, 2008, p. 31) (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, p. 7).

The third theme of CRT theory is that the social construction thesis claims that race and race theory are products of social thought and relations. As it has already been mentioned several times before, races are not inborn, inherent, fixed or real. They do not hold a biological or genetic structure; rather, races are categories that society builds, controls, or retires when convenient. And the final theme concerns differential racialization and its different consequences. Critical writers in social sciences and in law have put notices to the ways that how minority groups are racialized in different ways by the superior people in the society in different times. And that attitude is a response to changing needs of labor market. For instance, at one point, the society did not need blacks and they were not much of a help but instead they needed Mexican or Japanese agricultural workers. At another time, the Japanese were not seen as in favor of the society and removed to war relocation camps. As a conclusion, popular images and stereotypes of various minority groups are not fixed, and they may change over time (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, p. 8).

As it can be clearly seen from the different approaches to race, race is a floating social idea created to protect white superiority by justifying racial inequality. Even after slavery in the US was abolished, white superiority continued to play an important role in people's lives. And justified racist exclusion and violence against African – Americans showed itself in new forms.

Race as a Social Construct in the Movie "Crash"

As it has been discussed before, "race" is a social product and to say that race is a social product is to recognize that racial groups are socially built – up structures rather than biologically which means

that racial categories are slippery and unstable. So these categories do not stand on a solid ground, they can show different attitudes and perspectives towards racial minorities through time and place. The construction of "white" cannot be possible without the construction of "black". In Hegelian thought, the subject is constructed by conciliation through the other. The subject represents itself through the other and signifies the other as its social opposite (Yeğenoğlu, 1998, p.6).

Being acquired as black or white or any body color is not about one's skin color or genetic make up as it is seen in the society. But it is more likely a social and political process. And what white privilege holds are the rights, benefits, and advantages that only belong to white people. It is also the immunity for white people that black people can never have. It gives certain obligations to black people while liberates the white people. (Fitzgerald, 2017, p. 49). In addition to that, Said takes the relationship between the West and the East as a relationship of power and domination. And according to Said, this relationship is so deep that it is rooted in their shared history. It is the relationship of the lived material realities of the colonizer and the colonized with one another. Therefore Otherness, as Said put it, is not simply a spleenless way to acknowledge difference but a political and cultural representation that reifies and ultimately denigrates differences (1978, p. 5-25-28).

In the movie we see how this white privilege shapes the lives of different racial groups as well as white peoples themselves. The movie revolves around different racial groups, their relationship with each other and it touches many different social psychological issues like prejudices, stereotypes and alienation of people from the society. We see the portrayal of racism not only from white people's side but also from black people's side. While white people think that all colored people – including Latinos – are dangerous and criminals, the African – Americans think that all white people are racist. The both sides have prejudices and they stereotype people's attitude and intentions according to their body color. In psychology, a stereotype emerges when the people who share same feature or features are seen as one. From a stereotyped perspective, all the members of the group seem to have similar way of thought or attitude. Although stereotypes are not bad and they are sometimes very accurate, they may also distort the reality in different ways. There are a couple of things that can be seen as problematic about stereotypes. First of all, they can exaggerate the differences between groups and that can make the stereotyped group seem awkward, strange and dangerous, not like us. Second of all, they can produce selective perceptions. People, most of the time, seem to believe in the only evidence that suits the certain stereotypes and reject any other perceptions that do not fit. And lastly, they can belittle differences within the stereotyped group, and they can create the impression that all members of that group are the same (Wade and Tavris, 2012, p. 352-353).

The question of why black people are seen as criminals and dangerous does not have a simple answer. It has historical roots and it goes back to the declaration of Emancipation Proclamation. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery and it left a loophole in the society. The Thirteenth Amendment did not allow either slavery or involuntary servitude to exist in the United States, except the one who commit a crime. Only those could be enslaved as a punishment for their crimes.

According to many institutional histories, slaves could not handle the emotional outcomes of freedom. These emotional complexities and outcomes were what caused them to become thieves. Being designated as thieves became kind of a legacy for them, which was transferred from one generation to the other.

Texas State had seen this gap in the law as an opportunity and gave itself a right to lease all of its prisoners to private cotton and sugar plantations, as well as to companies which ran lumber camps and coal mines, and built railroads. The slavery was abolished but this kind of new slavery continued for five decades, and eventually Texas State wanted to have the revenue that the private companies, and planters were gaining from its prisoners. As a result, between 1899 and 1918, the ten states purchased themselves ten plantations, and began to use them as prisons. This kind of slavery was not lifetime long and it did not pass from one generation to the other. However, one way or another, it was a slavery which forced innocent and free men, who were not guilty of any crimes and enfranchised by law to freedom, to work without any financial gains, and they were bought and sold repeatedly, they were forced to do orders of white masters, and most of the time they encountered with extraordinary physical coercion (Blackmon, 2008, p. 4-5) (Bauer, 2018, p. 19).

They were charged for small felonies and most of the time they were not given a chance to defend themselves. Their living conditions were brutal, they were not fed well enough, and they could sleep only for a couple of hours. Exhaustion and physical weakness made them vulnerable to epidemics. Eventually, waves of diseases caused a rapid decline in the population. Pneumonia and tuberculosis sickened dozens (Blackmon, 2008, p. 2).

Regardless of what the black people went through at the time; they were seen as criminals by the society. That is one of the controversial parts of the movie because in the beginning we see two black men in a coffee shop, complaining about how the waiter ignores them and only serves to white customers. And as they walk on the street they see a white couple, the DA (district attorney) and his wife, and one of the black men realizes that when the DA's wife sees them, she feels uneasy and holds on to her husband tightly. One of the black men argues that she holds her husband tightly only because they are black and she thinks that they are dangerous. He keeps complaining about how badly black people are portrayed in the society and a couple of minutes later; they steal this white couple's car. So, basically they come to the point where they are seen as criminals. In psychology this is called self – fulfilling prophecy theory. That is an expectation fulfilled due to the tendency of the person who holds it to act in ways that bring it out (Wade and Tavris, 2012, p. 493).

Gilroy explains the reasons that lay behind the belief that black people cause a problem in a more specific and simple way. He believes that today the idea of black people's causing a problem or series of problems generates the center of racist reasoning. It also has a close relationship with another idea that is equally mischievous, popular and integral to racial meanings. There is also another idea that portrays black people as victims of the past, and they are the objects but not the subjects. They are human beings who have feelings yet do not have the ability to think and they are incapable of

considered behavior. The contradiction between black people's being seen as problem and victims has kind of become the primary mechanism that pushes race outside of the history and into the realm of inevitable events. (1987, p. 11-12).

Portrayal of racism and racial stereotype from a different perspective is done by two white police officers. While one of the police officers is racist, the other one, Hansen, is not. But that does not stop him getting affected by his partner's racist views. Later in the movie we see that Hansen lets a black man get into his car and wants to give him a ride and even though he assumes that he is not racist, he automatically thinks that this black man is going to pull his gun and shoot him. So he reaches out to his gun first and kills the black man. This shows how racism and stereotyping non – white people become kind of a habit for white people. And it is not easy for them to go beyond these stereotypes.

Another important point that is worth mentioning here is that after the police officers start to chase the car thieves, the racist police officer stops another car. While his partner warns him insistently that they are chasing the wrong car, he does not listen to him. He stops the car, makes the driver, who is also black, get out his car and wants him to prove that he is not actually drunk. Later on, we find out that the black driver is a movie producer and he is not drunk. However, that does not stop the racist police officer to keep harassing him and his wife. This also does not give the black driver a chance to report a complaint about the police officer because the movie producer thinks that nobody is going to take them seriously. "Driving while black" is a phrase that describes everyday racism and it conveys the stronger possibility that black drivers or motorists will experience being stopped frequently when compared to white drivers even when they drive in a normal speed (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 397). We also see that even if you have a high qualified job, your skin color gets to decide where to stand in the society and whether you can defend your rights or not. At this point, Franz Fanon explains in a good way that it is not what you have become or achieved in your life that makes you valuable in society but it is your skin color that gives you a social status. Fanon recounts his experience of being black in Black Skin, White Masks:

> The white world, the only honorable one, barred me from all participation. A man was expected to behave like a man. I was expected to behave like a black man – or at least like a nigger… My blackness was there, dark and unarguable. And it tormented me, pursued me, disturbed me, and angered me. Negroes are savages, brutes, and illiterates… (1967, p. 114-115).

Fanon goes on to say that no matter how hardworking they are or how many brilliant physicians, teachers, doctors or professors they have, their racial color always comes first. It is not the teacher but the Negro teacher or it is not the doctor but the negro doctor. Prejudices and their racial are always ahead of their occupations and accomplishments (1967, p. 117-118).

We see racism from different perspectives. The movie does not only show us how blacks are discriminated but we also see that Latinos and Middle Eastern people have to face color-line problem in everyday life. After the DA and his wife have been attacked by black thieves, they decide to change

their house locks and call for a locksmith, who is a Latino. She is annoyed by this Latino locksmith, whom she thinks is a gang member with prison tattoos, so much that she wants the locks to be changed again by a white locksmith. Asians are seen as greedy smugglers and the only Middle Eastern character, Farhad, who is also seen as terrorist after 9/11 and assumed Arab, is only one who attempts to murder someone.

In short, the movie Crash depicts the different points of view in US society and it shows that racism, prejudices and all kinds of negative attitudes towards other people can really affect them in several different ways. As these negative attitudes are learned and they are no innate, it is possible to turn things around and get rid of these attitudes.

Conclusion

Because the problem of the twenty-first century remains a problem associated with race, and the world that we live in has not solved the race problem, it is still hard for colored people to live their everyday life without having been discriminated due to their skin color. So this paper has aimed to explain that how "race" is a socially, politically constructed phenomenon and that the colored people's everyday problems are not actually about their skin color but it is about white people's attempt to gain privileges and social status in a white dominated society. Ever since the black were brought to America, they have always been seen as outcast, second-class citizens, savages or ill – mannered. Even after they gained their social and political rights, nothing much changed and they still had problems with integrating into the society. They could not handle the emotional complexities and outcomes of freedom. They had to eat and sit in different places. They could not get into white people's schools, they could not use the same library with white people and even their churches were different. White people have supported segregated neighborhoods, schools, transportation and public accommodation. As a result, being a second-class citizen has become something they could never escape from.

Therefore, with showing different perspectives on race and giving a short historical background about the topic, it is aimed to support idea that race is not a biological phenomenon but it is a constructed idea. And through the analysis of movie Crash, it has been aimed to enlighten the problems that the black people face in their everyday life. It is not how white people claim that blacks' playing the "race card" or if blacks or other minorities should just stop thinking about the past, focus on today, work hard and complain less. Regardless of what white people think, race issue shades everything in America.

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