

# Facts Are Stubborn: A Critical Commentary on Kehinde Andrews' Work on the Psychosis of Whiteness

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## Abstract

This paper offers a critical assessment of The Psychosis of Whiteness by Kehinde Andrews, arguing that the text fails to adequately engage with the structural conditions in which whiteness is experienced, enacted, and reproduced in the contemporary global context. Andrews contends that racism in modern Western societies operates through a form of collective delusion, whereby its realities are denied or distorted to preserve existing power relations and sustain inequality. By framing racism as both systemic and psychological rather than merely individual or moral, it is suggested that dominant groups reshape social reality through mechanisms such as denial, projection, and selective memory at a societal level. However, this paper argues that such a framework contains significant theoretical gaps, which revolve around a neglect of class analysis and sidestepping the role of capitalism in the reproduction of racism. These omissions raise questions about the usefulness of concepts such as irrationality and delusion in explaining racial dynamics, as well as about the adequacy of “whiteness” as a primary explanatory category. The analysis also critiques the tendency toward sweeping generalisations, particularly the portrayal of white people as collectively subject to forms of delusion, alongside the insufficient attention given to the classed nature of whiteness. Finally, by challenging the conceptual foundations of “white psychosis”, the paper argues that the proposed solution, which is rooted in critical pedagogy and the deconstruction of whiteness, risks proving ineffective. Without addressing the structural dimensions of racism, especially those tied to capitalism and class relations, critical pedagogy is unlikely to deliver meaningful progress toward social justice.

## Keywords

Whiteness, Psychosis, Racism, Race, Class, Capitalist System

## 1. Introduction

Kehinde Andrews, in his clearly written and well-researched book, *The Psychosis of Whiteness: Surviving the Insanity of a Racist World* (2023), presents a provocative attempt to recast the old wine of whiteness in a new bottle. Andrews' work contextualises whiteness as a cultural notion that is afflicted by serious delusions and bizarre collective hallucinations of White people, who deny the existence of racism but fetishise the privileged position that White people assume in global society (Andrews, 2023). As the title depicts, Andrews' work resonates in the self-righteous rhetoric of protest that reviles in Black radical tradition, whose narrow parlance of separatism and black nationalism delineates the suffering of victims in a racist world. Repeatedly couched in the politics of race, culture, and ethnicity, Andrews' work is challenged by issues of white psychology, whose mythical currency of black liberation is overshadowed by cultural repertoire and the struggle of psychic representation and social reality.

To read Andrews' work is to encounter arguments situated within a long tradition of Black political thought and debate, from figures such as Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, and Louis Farrakhan. These traditions reflect sharply different approaches to questions of race, class, and liberation, whose politics are reviled in emphasising racial division and complicate efforts to build cross-racial working-class unity against broader systems of inequality, including capitalism. The conceptual tension in *The Psychosis of Whiteness* lies in how it consolidates the ideas of "white privilege" and "white supremacy" within a broader cultural construction of whiteness. The text suggests that these notions are not separate phenomena, but are instead dispersed and reinforced through what it describes as the cultural mythology of whiteness. Andrews' provocation, which may be the jagged testimony of truth and value, signifies the displacement and defilement of the 'Colonial Other' (the victims of whiteness), whose symptoms of the anti-racism industrial complex are deeply entrenched and depicted in the Western mythology of white superiority.

More than two years after its publication, Andrews's work on *The Psychosis of Whiteness* has generated mixed reviews from academic and media commentators. For instance, Afua Hirsch's review amounts to a sheer doffing of the hat in echoing the view that the history of white supremacy is replete with the demonstration of hallucination, delusion, and failure to adhere to reason, especially in the way in which black people have been demonised, racialised, and oppressed (Hirsch, 2023). Ben Sixsmith, and Howard and Carter posited other commentaries that diverge from Afua's position (Sixsmith, 2025). Sixsmith critiqued Andrews' position that "paranoia is the hallmark of the psychosis of Whiteness", questioning whether xenophobic attitudes of Black South Africans against other Africans are the reflection of the psychosis of whiteness. In furtherance of this, Howard and Carter credited the work for portraying the current 'psychotic' state of affairs, where educating the minds of White people is unlikely to be of any value in changing the racist status quo. However, Howard and Carter critiqued the work for its

failure to articulate tools that can enable and empower the victims to challenge the racist architecture, and for failing to contextualise the peculiarities of racism and how it manifests in settler colonies such as Australia (Howard & Carter, 2025). These reviews depict that Andrews' work does not have a purchase on the structural context in which whiteness is experienced, practised, and reproduced in the contemporary global epoch. This critical commentary argues that the conditions under which the notion of whiteness ensued and was reproduced are grossly obscured in Andrews' work. Therefore, a review of Andrews' work is particularly salient for addressing four key issues that this paper seeks to articulate below: Is there a White Psychosis, the class character of Whiteness, the Black face of British imperialism, and the question of what is to be done.

## 2. The Myth of Whiteness

The starting point of the critique of Andrews' work is the questioning of the notion of whiteness. What whiteness means is the privilege that white identity confers on white people, which can somewhat lead to white supremacy when it is used to perpetuate racial privilege, reproduce racism against non-white people, assume racial superiority, and secure the acceptance of dominance. However, Marxist studies have critiqued the notion of whiteness as a myth that does not explain racism (Cole, 2009a, 2009b). Whiteness, in my contention, is a myth constructed following the development of capitalism, as capitalist social relations evolved during the Industrial Revolution (Ogunrotifa, 2023; Ogunrotifa, 2024a).

Whiteness, as Cedric Robinson argues in his work, *Black Marxism*, does not emerge during the feudal era. Robinson argued that the Roma, Irish, and other groups who were white people within Europe were subjected to colonisation and racialization by dominant white countries during the feudal era, similar to how non-European populations were colonised later (Robinson, 1983). In the foreword to the 2000 edition of Robinson's *Black Marxism*, Robin Kelly noted that the first European proletarians were *racial* subjects (Irish, Jews, Roma or Gypsies, Slavs, etc.) and they were victims of dispossession (enclosure), colonialism, and slavery *within Europe*. Indeed, Robinson suggested that racialization within Europe was very much a *colonial* process involving invasion, settlement, expropriation, and racial hierarchy. Robinson's observation implies that whiteness only became known after the feudal era. This is because if Irish, Jews, Roma or Gypsies, Slavs were whites, then whiteness does not exist during feudalism because their white identities would not be the yardstick for their slavery and colonialism with Europe (Kelley, 2021). Although some may argue that whiteness does not extend to this group of white people, and if this is so, then whiteness is not based on the racial and biological identity of being white, as Andrews insinuated.

When capitalism emerged on the historical stage, its emergence was never a peaceful process, as it involved genocide, brutal exploitation, slavery, and colonialism. With the development of capitalism, the European ruling class utilised the notion of whiteness to rally the European population to justify why 'inferior races'

must be colonised, why slavery was necessary, and why the exploitation of other races' resources is needed for the civilisational development of the West (Ayodeji, 2026). The notion of whiteness was deployed as a strategy of the Western ruling class for domestic consumption to manipulate and convince the local European masses that colonialism and slavery were pivotal to their development as global powers. There are two instances to demonstrate this profoundly. In the United States, Whiteness ensued when the colonial ruling class used racism to divide the black slaves and white indentured workers from uniting to challenge the American colonial system (Ogunrotifa, 2024a). Following the Bacon rebellion in 1677, which united the black slaves and white workers against the colonial government and plantation system, the colonial ruling class used different forms and methods of racism to divide the people and prevent their unity as the toiling masses (Ogunrotifa, 2024a). This divisive method has been successfully utilised from the colonial to the contemporary epoch to divide the American working class along ethnic and racial lines to forestall revolution against the capitalist system that is responsible for their predicaments.

In the UK, racism was used by the Conservative government in the late 1950s and early 1960s against Black and other minority ethnic groups (BAME) when they first migrated to the UK (Miles, 1982; Carter et al., 1987). In this regard, the British government racialised against BAME communities to protect the Whiteness character of the British state against Black and Asian immigrants from Commonwealth countries (Banton, 2025), and the consequences of such racialisation were the enactment of the 1962 Immigration Act, which critics have described as a racist law. The New Commonwealth migrants (Blacks and Asians) came to the UK in the 1950s and 1960s at the time of the decline of British capitalism as an imperialist power (Miles, 1982), and British capitalism was experiencing an organic crisis despite modest economic growth. This crisis of British capitalism, as Till Geiger observed, was reflected in a wide range of social problems around dilapidated infrastructures, housing problems, unemployment, and education (Geiger, 2017). If British capitalism had resolved these social problems of housing, unemployment, and education, the problem of racism would not have degenerated into violent protests and riots; rather, it would have been reduced to cultural differences among the ethnic groups (Ogunrotifa, 2024b).

Whenever British capitalism experiences recession and unemployment, exclusionary practices are legitimised against BAME in terms of access to resources—employment, housing, and education. The crisis of British capitalism led to widening unemployment rates in the 1980s and into the 1990s, following deindustrialisation and recessions, and later in 2008 when the global financial crisis ensued and the business closures and banking collapse (Ogunrotifa, 2022a). From the 1950s to date, the UK government has deployed and reproduced racism to divide British society in the form of widening the racial and ethnic disparities among the ethnic groups to placate the White population. Capitalism as a system thrives on distraction and divisive practices for survival and sustenance. For instance, divi-

sive practices under the capitalist system manifest in the differences between Bosses and Workers, white workers and black workers, white indentured workers and black slaves, and later, men vs women workers, with different pay and different conditions of work. In the period of recession and economic problems, capitalism maintains its position by fanning the ember of division in society. In other words, capitalism requires division or divisive practices to sustain itself; otherwise, it would have been overthrown.

The notion of whiteness is one of the divisive methods used by the capitalist ruling class to divide the working population along ethnic and racial lines. It is not in the interest of the capitalist ruling class for black workers and white workers to unite and form a formidable force to challenge the capitalist system as a unified opposition. Whiteness was a weapon deployed by the capitalist ruling classes to divide the working class from uniting along the class line to challenge the capitalist system (Allen, 2012). The capitalist ruling class and its allies in state institutions and media weaponised a myriad of issues to divert people's attention from the real problem of society. In returning to Andrews' parlance, whiteness is a cultural and historical practice that has been deeply ingrained and inscribed into the veins, subconscious, beliefs, or attitudes of White people. However, Whiteness was never a cultural matter, but rather emerged and entrenched as capitalism developed in Europe and North America.

In Andrews's view, Whiteness is a cultural affiliation and identity that White people possess. If it is their culture that confers whiteness on white people, then whiteness cannot be relinquished because it has now become the cultural property of white people. Nobody can take away the culture of a people because it is a way of life. Therefore, the idea that white people must give up their whiteness is unrealistic because nobody can give up their cultural property. Also, the faultline in Andrews' thought is that culture does not fall from the sky; rather, it emanates from the material conditions of society. Our culture is not a random product of our mind, but they have a root source, which is the material condition that shapes the prevailing social relations of any given society. Therefore, culture does not have an independent foundation outside of the material conditions and the social relations of production that gave rise to its existence. Culture develops in response to changes in material conditions and social relations of production, such as primitive communalism, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism. If Whiteness is a cultural property as Andrews claims, then whiteness arises from a culture rooted in material conditions and social relations of production, which capitalism exemplifies.

If whiteness has become deeply embedded within the social and cultural fabric of white society, or if white culture itself functions as the basis through which whiteness is reproduced, then whiteness cannot be abandoned without transforming the material conditions and social structures that produced it. Whiteness is, therefore, a cultural myth that cannot explain racism in both personal and structural contexts.

### 3. Is There White Psychosis?

The central thesis in Andrews' work is that "Whiteness" is a racial consciousness that resembles mental illness or psychosis. Psychosis, in Andrews' terminology, is the rationality of whiteness that infiltrates fantasies of white supremacy, which are divorced from logic, evidence, and reality. This irrationality is expressed when individuals, institutions, and societies that weaponised racism as a tool of oppression against the colonial others are now denying that racism exists. To deny that white privilege exists, or to deny that racism exists, means such an individual is suffering from white psychosis. Psychosis is a collective disease that has invaded the minds of white people, creating a condition where 'white supremacy necessitates delusional thinking in order to sustain itself' (Andrews, 2023: p. 19). This delusional thinking is a defining feature of white psychosis. Using examples of far-right individuals like Pier Morgan, Donald Trump, Boris Johnson, Jair Bolsonaro, and conservative media that deny racism or discuss it only to minimise and marginalise the issue, Andrews notes that psychosis is a collective delusion and hallucination expressed violently as irrational defences 'that masquerade as reasonable thought in society' (Andrews, 2023: p. 27).

The psychosis of whiteness manifests when 'the mind develops psychosis to deny a problem, to distort a person's connection to reality so thoroughly that the utterly irrational becomes logical' (Andrews, 2023: p. 27). Psychosis here is deployed as a metaphor to understand the delusional thinking that is necessary to maintain a racist Western society. In this regard, Western society creates myths and distortions that help to keep the racist system, such that white supremacy necessitates delusional thinking to sustain itself. To Andrews, the delusional and irrational manner in which debates on racism and its effects on victims are presented in the media, or by some white individuals, constitutes a form of psychosis because the deluded thinking underlying such positions disconnects from reality. The implication is that white people who do not believe racism exists or deny its daily impacts on victims are irrational and unable to engage in honest conversation and debate. In this context, they are delusional, and such delusion indicates a failure to distinguish what is real from what is not. Since racism is real, the deluded individuals deny its realness and effects on victims as a psychological strategy of upholding white supremacy and sustaining the white privilege they enjoyed.

To broaden this position, Andrews attributed this form of deluded and irrational thinking to the collective disease of white people who lost touch with reality and suffer the collective hallucinations following the experience of recurrent symptoms of paranoia around the 'fear of a threat of immigrants, a fear of losing their traditions, and a fear of Black people in general' (Andrews, 2023: xv). To deepen this position profoundly, Andrews noted that the deliberate decision to elect some controversial white men who held racist, misogynist, and neo-fascist views into public offices by the majority white population was a reflection of delusions of grandeur on the part of the White voters.

However, Andrews' thesis is provocative and requires a thorough review. This

review involves scrutinising whether white psychosis actually exists or not. Questioning the basis of white psychosis here is about challenging the premise in which the idea of white psychosis was conceptualised, and this would require stripping the conception of psychosis naked to unpack its essentialities. Andrews argued that Whiteness is a societal psychosis because the views and positions of far-right individuals, and those of the conservative groups and media on racism and its effects on victims, are not rational. This implies that the positions of far-right individuals like Piers Morgan, Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, Nigel Farage, Viktor Orban, and Geert Wilders are far removed from all logic and evidence.

In this regard, the conception of white psychosis hinges on irrationality that emanates from the views of some far-right individuals in Western society. If irrationality is the basis of white psychosis, then Andrews' position is flawed and problematic. This is because these far-right individuals and conservatives are much more rational in their positions, on the contrary, and they are consciously pursuing their agenda. In fact, they are calculating, understanding what they want and how they want their society to look, and they are consistent in the ideology, dogma, and positions they project into society. They are conscious of their positions, can assess society's mood and impulses to determine when their views are socially acceptable, and are rational in how they present their positions in public or national discourse. Their views are guided by the ideology they share, and such ideology is the central principle behind their politics, polemics, and narratives about the direction they want their society to take. They are conscious reactionaries who can sometimes falsify history to defend and justify their positions.

In contrast to Andrews' thesis, these conservatives and far-right individuals are not delusional. Others may consider their views and positions as dreadful, delusional, and irrational; they are ideological and set in their ways, and they are conscious and rational in pushing their agenda and narratives to the mainstream discourse. Ideologically, the far right is characterised by nativism, authoritarianism, and includes ideologies that are exclusionary and hierarchical, often manifesting as a range of beliefs that are racist, sexist, anti-immigrant, and hostile towards non-binary and trans communities. Nativism is the idea that non-native elements form a threat to the homogeneous nation-state. Evidence has further revealed that far-right individuals are consistent in their views on racism (Mondon & Winter, 2020; Isaloo, 2023; Sengul, 2024), immigration (Yilmaz, 2012; Davis & Deole, 2017; Karapın, 2022), and nationalism (Ausserladscheider, 2019; Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2019; Kerr & Kerr, 2025). The far-right individuals are often openly racist, have clear ties to fascism, and may operate either outside or within the realm of electoral politics, or both.

Therefore, if Whiteness as a societal psychosis is premised on irrationality and delusional thinking, as Andrews posited, then psychosis is just a myth that does not explain whiteness that Andrews purported to undertake. This means that whiteness, as Andrews claimed, does not translate into psychosis. Therefore, the premise of irrationality in which white psychosis is established is inaccurate,

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faulty, and conjectural.

#### 4. The Problem of Sweeping Generalisation

The second issue in Andrews' work is the problem of sweeping generalisation. Andrews argues that White people are collectively suffering from delusions and hallucinations that constitute psychosis in social life. The fundamental questions that might be asked include: Are all white people suffering from psychosis? Do all white people deny racism and its consequences on victims because of the privilege they enjoyed? These questions are fundamental drawbacks in Andrews' work because of the assumption that all white people are experiencing psychosis. This problem of sweeping generalisation finds an important echo in Mike Cole's critique of Critical Race Theory for homogenising white people, as if they are a single or homogenous group (Cole, 2009a, 2009b). The conception of white psychosis is misleading due to the vagueness associated with its expression, especially regarding the sweeping categorisation of White people as a single or homogenous group. Can Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in the UK, along with Jewish and Eastern European migrants—who have experienced both colour-coded and non-colour-coded forms of racism—also be described as denying racism and its effects on victims? If not, then who are the “White people” to whom Kehinde Andrews was referring?

It is my contention here that White people are not homogeneous in terms of class composition. For instance, there is the White ruling class, the White middle class, the White working class, and the White underclass, who may be white in terms of their ethnicity, but not in the context of their class status or position. This class classification has demonstrated that White people are not homogeneous, as they are divided by their class positions and interests regarding the power structure and capitalist system in Western society. For instance, most U.K. towns are replete with substantial numbers of White homeless people. Is the concept of White Psychosis applicable to these White homeless people, too? The homeless White people and the destitute, in my reckoning, are part of the White underclass, who are also the victims of the capitalist system, like the Black underclass and Black working class.

The problem of sweeping generalisation in Andrews' work is the tendency to assume that all white people are collectively suffering from societal psychosis. This position, which I regarded as declarative, fallacious, and subjective, is not grounded in evidence. The psychosis of whiteness, in my contention, was hastily conceived and generalised based on insufficient evidence, and consequently, draws conclusions from general claims that are unjustified and untrue (Botting, 2019). With sweeping generalisation, the analytical utility of white psychosis as an idea has been undermined by its substantive weakness in evidence. This has further weakened its explanatory power in analysing the problem of whiteness when addressing the personal and structural context in which racism has been entrenched and sustained.

## 5. The Class Character of Whiteness

Andrews' conception of white psychosis was premised on the conversation with Piers Morgan on racism, asking whether Winston Churchill was a racist or not (Andrews, 2023: x). The response of Morgan, which denied the racist inclination of Churchill, led to the rethinking of Whiteness as a cultural parlance that has been infused with irrationality, hallucination, and the collective psychosis of white people. If denying or minimising the effect of racism on victims makes some individuals like Piers Morgan, Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, and Nigel Farage appear White, can Kemi Badenoch, Priti Patel, Suella Braverman, Tony Sewell, and other minority ethnic individuals who dismissed racism and questioned the effects of racism on victims be regarded as white? This question broadly constitutes a problem in Andrews' conception, which generally reflects the sidestepping of the class character of whiteness.

The question of whiteness is not about being white in terms of race or colour, but the class interest that underpins whiteness. The disparaging remarks and derogatory commentaries made by Kemi Badenoch (a British of Nigerian descent), Priti Patel (a British of Indian descent), and Suella Braverman (a British of Indian descent) about Black and other minority ethnic groups are worse than what an average white person will say about Black and other minority ethnic groups. In fact, disparaging commentaries and derogatory remarks, which white people dare not say about Black and other minority ethnic groups, are what these individuals are saying about the ethnic communities they belong to. For instance, Kemi Badenoch said the British economic growth was not fuelled by colonialism and slavery, thereby minimising the impacts of slavery on the British Empire's growth, and accusing historians of exaggerating the importance of colonialism and the slave trade to the growth of Britain as a World power (Badenoch, 2024). Badenoch argued that it was British ingenuity that drove UK growth, and not colonialism and slavery (Badenoch, 2024). Badenoch's commentary was made not only when she was a British Equality Minister, but also at the time when the UK Prime Minister at the time, Rishi Sunak (a British of Indian descent), refused to apologise for the British role in the slave trade and commit to paying reparations (Adu, 2023). Badenoch further claimed that slavery reparations are a scam, and the British Empire should be remembered for ending slavery rather than its role in the Transatlantic slave trade.

The position of Badenoch that slavery is a choice of Black people, coupled with her resistance to calls to teach more Black history in British schools, broadly aligns with some views of some white people, especially conservatives and far-right individuals. The question here is whether these commentaries made Badenoch a white person.

Furthermore, Priti Patel (a former Home Secretary) opposed the Black Lives Matter (BLM) demonstrations following the gruesome murder of George Floyd in 2020, and regarded them as "dreadful" (Parveen, 2021). Patel later dismissed the gesture of taking the knee associated with the BLM protests as "gesture politics" (Stone, 2021). Furthermore, Suella Braverman (a former Home Secre-

tary/Minister) condemned police officers who took a knee as a gesture of supporting the BLM protests (Zakir-Hussain, 2023). Are these individuals deliberately throwing the ethnic communities to which they belong under the bus for the sake of whiteness? The answer is negative, and this implies that the question of whiteness extends beyond an ethnic or racial issue. As far as I am concerned, Kemi Badenoch, Priti Patel, Suella Braverman, and Tony Sewell are not fundamentally different from Piers Morgan, Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, Tom Robinson, and others who Andrews claimed are suffering from psychosis of whiteness. What unites them is the class interest. These individuals, whether they are black or white, are the visible face of Western imperialism. They are not promoting whiteness to defend white privilege or defending Western Civilisation on cultural terms, as Andrews claimed; rather, they are interested in defending the capitalist system that powered Western Civilisation.

The common denominator of these right-wing individuals is that they are either members or supporters of the Tory party. The Tory party, in my reckoning, is an Imperialist Movement. These individuals, whether they are White or not, are the cadres of the Imperialist Movement (in some cases, Western Imperialist Movement). The decline of Western capitalism (and by extension, imperialism) is the decline of Western civilisation and its influence on the Global South. An attempt to defend Western civilisation is an attempt to prevent the collapse of capitalism, which has brought fortune and transformed Western imperialism into its current hegemonic position globally. This is about the class interest they represent, not cultural or racial sentiments.

Whilst Piers Morgan, Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, and Tom Robinson are the white faces (or poser boys) for American and British capitalism or imperialism, Kemi Badenoch, Priti Patel, and Suella Braverman are the black faces of British capitalism or imperialism. They are united by their class interest in defending the system of capitalism and their respective capitalist ruling classes. In posing the questions again, what is the class interest of Piers Morgan in portraying whiteness in media space? What class interests do Winston Churchill, Donald Trump, Nigel Farage and Tom Robinson represent in the context of whiteness or the reproduction of racism? What does Piers Morgan stand for that Kemi Badenoch and those who have written off racism and its effects don't? What these right-wing individuals have in common is a class interest, which has enabled them to defend Western capitalism or imperialism.

Studies have revealed that capitalism is the culprit responsible for racism, such that racism developed following the changes in the development of capitalism (Cox, 1970; Miles, 1982; Allen, 2012; Ogunrotifa, 2024a, 2024b). Therefore, the discussion on racism and its impacts on victims is marginalised or shut down by conservative and far-right figures because questioning racism in public discourse means questioning the system of capitalism that is responsible for its development, and provides a fertile condition for its reproduction and sustenance. The conversation on racism is a discussion about equality in the distribution of re-

sources among the ethnic groups. The equality of black and white people is not in the interest of the capitalist ruling class, whose stock-in-trade is to create artificial division along ethnic lines to prevent the unity of the working class and distract their attention from societal problems. White privilege, if it exists at all, is a psychological tool used by the capitalist ruling classes and their agent within the state institutions to tie white people to capitalism, despite its crisis and contradictions, and sustain the capitalist system by preventing them from uniting with other working classes of different ethnic groups to challenge the system as a unified force.

Therefore, when conservatives, far-right individuals, and their mainstream media discuss racism, they marginalise the discourse and reduce it to a cultural war because they need to do that to divert people's attention from reality. Sometimes, they need a distraction to draw people's attention away from their problems. The role of conservative media is to distract the attention of the public from the problems of society, in which capitalism is culpable. In this sense, cultural war represents a significant way of doing that. Reducing racism to cultural war and anti-wokeism is a perfect way of marginalising discourse on the victims of racism, by dismissing it as unimportant, exaggerated, and blaming the victims. What this implies is a subtle way of informing the white public to ignore the propaganda around racism. The class interest involves downplaying and marginalising the discourse on racism to avoid linking it with capitalism, because that will mean questioning the capitalist root of racism, which might end up uniting the working class, either black or white, on the issue. In this regard, capitalism was the bane of racial and ethnic disparity, and it is a system that allows the reproduction of racism. Defending whiteness means avoiding or marginalising discussion on racism and its impacts, which has a class character and capitalist interest in its underpinnings.

Therefore, it is not the race, culture, or personality of individuals that matters in the defence of whiteness; rather, it is the class interests they represent. The likes of Kemi Badenoch, Suella Braverman, Tony Sewell and Priti Patel are not just dancing to the government tune or constitute "house negroes" engaging in the act of "cooning", as Andrews posited, rather, they are cultural warriors, capitalist apologists, imperialist cadres and gaslighters fighting for the defence and survival of British imperialism with Black face. They are playing this role consciously because their class interests intersect with those of the British capitalist ruling class. They are working in the interest of the British capitalist elite and British imperialism due to their shared class interest. What is the class interest that Piers Morgan has in portraying whiteness? What class interests do Winston Churchill, Donald Trump, and the far-right individuals represent when portraying whiteness or reproducing racism? What class interest does Talk Radio, a right-wing media outlet, represent? The answer to these questions, which has been provided above, reflects the weakness and limitations of the notion of white psychosis.

## **6. Sidestepping the Role of Capitalism**

Ignoring the role of capitalism is widely expected in Andrews' work because of a

broader tendency within some strands of racial analysis to prioritise questions of race and identity over class-based interpretations of political and economic systems. To acknowledge the role of capitalism in whiteness discourse is to circumvent the primacy of race over class that has been the hallmark of Black radical scholarship. Andrews argued that ‘racism is a global system that developed from European nations devastating the Americas, plundering Africa, and conquering the globe. We cannot simply focus on the obvious violence of settler colonies like the USA while former seats of empire like Britain, France, Spain, and the gang that have built on colonial violence just as much’ (Andrews, 2023: p. 21). Andrews further argued that racism is the tool by which the global system is dominated by Western society, and whiteness is the key mechanism of the actualisation of this racist project. This is the view that was reiterated in his previous book: *The New Age of Empire: How Racism and Colonialism Still Rule the World* (Andrews, 2021). Whiteness, in this sense, is regarded as the key mechanism for maintaining the global political and economic system. Andrews further argued that White supremacy is the ‘engine that powered five centuries of colonial brutality’ (Andrews, 2023: p. 27), such that ‘the wealth generated means that legacies of slavery continue to shape the present and an honest accounting of those legacies is impossible if the status quo is maintained’ (Andrews, 2023: p. 27).

In contrast, Whiteness is not the tool that Western society used to dominate the World. Rather, it is capitalism. The process of capitalism started when capitalism had fully developed the means of production and distribution in the Western European nation-states, and there was no more room for further expansion, and hence the need for colonisation, where the colonial power created a set of clientele patronage of the indigenous ruling elite and local bourgeoisie to expand capitalism beyond the European shores and maintain global domination. This is not whiteness; rather, it is a capitalist system where the class interests of different capitalist ruling classes across the world intersect. With capitalism, we now have an integrated global system controlled by the West in which different ruling classes in each country of the global south are either tied hand and foot to Western imperialism or become an appendage of Western capitalist domination. Nevertheless, capitalism is a system of dog-eat-dog where different capitalist ruling classes are looking after their own class position and capitalist interests, and are not concerned about whiteness.

Under global capitalism, each country is now looking after its own national interests. National interest, in Marxist parlance, is the class interest of the capitalist ruling elites of that country. The local capitalist ruling class is not interested in whiteness or the idea that they are being controlled by whiteness; rather, they are more interested in their class interests and positions within the global capitalist system. The economic interests of the richest persons in Africa, India, South America, and the Gulf countries are tied to the capitalist interests of Western imperialism, where they together formed the “Transnational Capitalist Class” (Robinson & Harris, 2000; Sklair, 2000, 2001), and shape global, re-

gional, and industry agendas through the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland.

Capitalism as a system does not work based on whiteness, but based on the exploitation of the working class and access to cheap credit to maintain capitalist domination. The capitalist ruling classes, whether they are in the global south or global North, are not different in terms of their capitalist inclination and class interest, and the division between them is not based on their race or skin colour, but based on their class interest and what they want to gain from the capitalist system. As long as the local bourgeoisie has access to expertise, technology, and finance from Western Capitalist institutions, including the World Bank, and can maintain their class positions, and protect their capitalist interests and businesses, they have no problem with whiteness, blackness, or being brown.

A further example can be drawn from recent International Solidarity for the Palestinian People against the genocidal operation of the Israeli state against the people of Gaza. Why did the Arab ruling classes in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Bahrain, and other Gulf Cooperation Council countries (GCC) pay lip service to the genocidal operation of the Israeli government in Gaza and Lebanon? The answer is that the Arab government (by extension, the Arab ruling class) has similar class interests to the Israeli ruling class. And that class interest is to prevent a popular revolution in the Middle East that will overthrow the monarchies and the ruling class there. The US military bases in the Middle East are not there to project power or defend the Arab countries from external attacks, but to defend the capitalist interests of the United States and Western governments by preventing revolution in the Arab World or the Middle East that will topple the feudal ruling elite (monarchy).

Most opponents of the Zionist state have attributed its survival to Western, mainly American, support. This is not entirely accurate. Rather, the greatest protection Israel has is the string of dictatorships across the Middle East (Arab ruling classes), that keep a lid on the explosive hatred hundreds of millions of ordinary Arab Muslims have for the state of Israel, which they see as a Western colonial garrison in the Middle East. This is the main reason why the Western capitalist ruling class (including its governments and liberal NGO) never gives even rhetorical support to democracy or democratic rights in the Middle East, unlike most of Africa, South Asia, and Latin America. Whiteness, therefore, is not the basis for why Western imperialism paid lip service to democracy or democratic rights in the Middle East or maintained domination over the region. Rather, it is the capitalist interest of both Arab and Western ruling classes.

The presence of an open, largely white colonial outpost in the Middle East, the Zionist state of Israel, makes Western demand for democracy or democratic rights impossible, and that is why the type of democracy the West has allowed across most of the global south cannot be permitted in the Muslim Arab world. If genuinely free and fair elections were held in the Middle East, the provocative presence of an openly colonial settler state there would mean that virulently anti-Israeli

regimes would sweep to power across the entirety of the Arab world, uniting almost half a billion people against the West. Nothing unites the Arabs more than the issue of Israel and its holocaust in Gaza, and this exposed the complicity of the Arab ruling classes in the oil-rich Gulf kingdoms, who are considered Western puppets in the region. This is where the risk lies for Western domination and control, where maintaining the support for the status quo is critical. Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza, its attack on Lebanon, and, recently, Iran had everything to do with destroying the emergent threat that can challenge and undermine the capitalist interests of Arab, Israeli, and Western ruling classes in the Middle East.

The Arab ruling classes needed the support of the Israeli ruling class, and hence, the lip service to the plight of Palestinians, who are also Arabs. This is not about a race question but a class interest that is at stake in Middle East politics. The plausible explanation of Andrews and other Critical Race Theorists might be that the Arab World has been infected with the psychosis of whiteness, which prevented them from resisting Western domination and control. As simplistic as this explanation might sound, the negation of the role of capitalism would inhibit the understanding of how class interest intersects across different national contexts. The stability of the Gulf monarchies and their ruling classes can be linked to their integration into the global capitalist system, which shapes their domestic governance strategies and external alliances. Within this framework, there are situations in which the interests of ruling classes across the region and those of the Israeli state may converge, particularly in relation to regime security, regional stability, and the containment of internal unrest. In this regard, Israel is sometimes viewed as a potential strategic partner within regional security arrangements, whom they might count on to ward off local rebellion and revolution against their rulership (of Gulf monarchies) in future.

Finally, the recent changes in the global capitalist system have revealed the empty-shell nature of whiteness in explaining Western domination of the World. The global capitalist system is now shifting its trajectory away from Western domination (G7 and EU) to the Eastern and BRICS blocs. In the latest report, the GDP of the BRICS bloc is greater than that of the G7 in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) (Statista Research Department, 2026). The development of alternative payment systems (away from the Western-dominated SWIFT system), the use of local currencies for trading among countries of the global south, and the use of stablecoins and cryptocurrencies to bypass the Western financial system have gradually chipped away at the dominance and control of Western society after the Second World War. Given the shifting trend in the global capitalist order towards the BRICS+ Bloc, it is likely that there will be a multi-polar world where alternative global trading systems, payment mechanisms, and the use of local currencies for international business (away from the dollar, Euro, and Pound Sterling) will reduce the influence of the Western World by 2035. Therefore, what is the role of whiteness in shaping this global capitalist development? If Whiteness has no role, then this implies that whiteness is a myth that cannot explain how Western dom-

ination emerged, became global, and how changes in the global capitalist system are ebbing away from Western domination.

Whiteness is just a hollow concept that cannot explain the racist World and the dominance of Euro-American domination of the global capitalist system, as Andrews wanted us to believe. Therefore, Andrews' argument that 'the rise of China and other Third World nations is not the turning point that many often assume, as their ascendance is predicated on embracing the system of white supremacy, not overturning it' (Andrews, 2023: p. 200) is open to challenge. While it is true that emerging powers operate within a global system historically shaped by Western dominance, it is reductive to characterise their rise as dependent on the perpetuation of white supremacy. In many respects, the growing economic and political influence of countries such as China reflects a shift toward a more multipolar global order, which complicates, rather than simply reproduces, earlier hierarchies of power that were based on whiteness.

In conclusion, capitalism—rather than whiteness alone—provides a more convincing explanation for Western colonisation and global dominance. While Andrews foregrounds racism and the concept of whiteness as the primary drivers of global inequality, this perspective can overlook the central role of the capitalist system in shaping patterns of expansion, exploitation, and control. Focusing exclusively on race risks obscuring how economic imperatives structured imperialism and continue to organise global power relations. Although Western influence has historically been deeply embedded in global capitalism, this system is not static. Shifts in economic power suggest a gradual reconfiguration of global dominance that cannot be fully explained through the lens of whiteness alone. For these reasons, Andrews' claims may be seen as overstated, as they do not sufficiently account for the complexity and evolving nature of global capitalism.

## 7. What Is to Be Done?

The final issue in Andrews' work is broadly related to the question of what is to be done (or what is the solution to the problem posed by whiteness). What is problematic in Andrew's work is not the lack of a solution, but rather how realistic the proposed solutions are. Andrews articulated two solutions, which were considered central to addressing the problem of racism posed by whiteness. First, Andrews adopted the strategies of Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS), which argued that the processes of whiteness can be uncovered and overcome through rational conversation. The purpose of establishing Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) is 'to shed light on the concept of whiteness so that it can be addressed, dismantled and/or overcome, and often attempts to be essential to the liberation of people of colour around the globe' (Andrews, 2023: pp. 32-33). This implies that if White people admit that whiteness is real and exists, and talk about it, then they will admit that racism exists and needs to be changed. Central to the strategies of CWS is critical pedagogy, which involves educating White people to confront their whiteness and thus open their eyes to the uncomfortable truth (Andrews, 2023: p.

34). The illusion in Critical Pedagogy was adopted by Andrews, who noted that the liberation of people of colour around the globe can be resolved by dismantling, overcoming, and addressing the concept of whiteness:

Critical Whiteness Studies is seen to be a development of our understanding of racism as it identifies that it is White people's responsibility to change, instead of putting the responsibility on the shoulders of racialised minorities, and it is meant as a decolonising call to action. By forcing White people to confront their complicity in the system, it aims to rebirth them as allies to the dark oppressed people of the world by taking a 'comprehensive theoretical approach to expose and dismantle whiteness' (Andrews, 2023: p. 33).

Since Whiteness is a psychological wage that all white people benefit from, critical pedagogy will become transformative because it will help to uncover 'the silences and irrationalities that underpin whiteness that permeates society' (Andrews, 2023: p. 34). Andrews argued that the reason why far-right elements like Donald Trump, Kemi Badenoch, Candace Owens, and some conservative political figures rallied against Critical Race Theory (CRT) is that it contains critical pedagogy, whose education serves as the primary tool for social change. In 2021, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to prohibit federal funds from going to K-12 public schools that teach critical race theory (CRT), bar educators from teaching divisive concepts like white privilege and racial equity, and direct federal agencies to end trainings related to the discussion of inequality. Andrews further argued that prohibiting critical race theory (CRT) and teaching issues around inequality, white privilege, and racism in the school system will open society's eyes to the reality of White Supremacy.

By deconstructing whiteness, the solution proposed here is not a progressive step to social justice or heralded in ending racism. Without addressing the systemic nature of racism, in which capitalism and class structure are implicated, critical pedagogy will end up as a mirage. No level of education can change those who have been indoctrinated by the capitalist system and the ruling elites. Racism (including Whiteness) is systemic because it is a tool used by the capitalist state and the ruling class to manipulate society, and it creates the illusion for poor whites that they are superior to blacks and others. The illusion of whiteness was a tool employed to sustain capitalism and prevent it from being challenged by the unity of the working class (Ogunrotifa, 2022b). Therefore, the opium of whiteness in which White people have been manipulated cannot be deconstructed by mere critical pedagogy without withering the capitalist system that created and sustained it.

Under capitalism, men and women are oppressed as part of the working people by the ruling class, and such oppression is sustained by the class structure of the capitalist society (Glassman, 2006; Hill, 2020). If there is class oppression of the White working-class by the White capitalist class, then there is no guarantee that there would not be class oppression of Black workers by White bosses or Black bosses. Racism is sustained by the class structure of the capitalist system and the

structure of control and power of the White ruling class that accompanies and reinforces it. Without dissolving the capitalist system and the structure of the class, power, and oppression controlling it, and establishing a classless society, addressing the problem of racism through critical pedagogy is unrealistic.

Second, Andrews shares the position of new abolitionism that 'white people need to give up their whiteness, in order to acknowledge their unearned privileges and disinvest in them' (Andrews, 2023: p. 36). White people must give up their whiteness, recognise their privileges, combat racism, and change the world. New abolitionism argues that 'If Whites can simply disinvest in their privileges by 'defying white rules', then whiteness itself cannot be systemic' (Andrews, 2023: p. 36). In adopting this position, Andrews noted that giving up the benefits of whiteness would enable the poor whites to understand the 'real conditions' under which they live.

However, the fundamental question is: what do white people, particularly those from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds, stand to lose by relinquishing the social, cultural, or psychological privileges associated with whiteness? Whiteness is a social construction over which white people have no control because of the manipulative processes by which it was foisted on them. Whiteness has no meaning or basis for poor whites, who are languishing in poverty and want. In the UK today, the majority of homeless people on the street are white people. Why is it that whiteness cannot solve the problem of homelessness? If whiteness truly exists, why is it that it cannot solve the poverty question facing the poor whites? How does whiteness solve the homelessness of the white underclass? The reality is that it is the capitalist system that constructed and created the illusion of whiteness and conferred it on people for a divisive purpose. The divisiveness of whiteness means that the capitalist ruling class wanted the White people to believe that they are superior to other people, and that capitalism is the best system that has offered them greatness and superiority. Even when capitalism is experiencing a crisis like economic recession, the illusion of whiteness is mobilised to suppress any idea that tends to challenge the capitalist system.

Whiteness is an illusion that cannot help white people, most especially the poor whites or white underclass, and the white working class. When capitalism emerged on the historic stage, it played a progressive role in history by improving the productive forces of society and granting concessions such as good wages, welfare programmes, free education, free health, free housing, and other concessions that the system can afford. However, the growing spate of poverty, global problems, climate change, debt crises, economic inequality and wealth disparity, home foreclosures and dispossession, hunger, malnutrition, and war have revealed that the capitalist system is fraught with fundamental crisis, especially under neoliberal epoch, and as such, the system can no longer afford to provide welfare programmes, free education, free health, free housing, etc unlike in the past.

The austerity policies and programmes undertaken by most European countries following the global financial crisis lend credence to this assertion (McKee,

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Karanikolos, & Stuckler, 2012; Karanikolos et al., 2013; Macpherson & Smith, 2013; Kohler & Stockhammer, 2022). As capitalism fails to play any progressive role again, the playbook of capitalist ruling classes is to distract people's attention from the real issues using media and other tools of distraction, so that people concentrate their attention on superficial ideas and issues that redirect their attention away from the crisis and failure of capitalism. In this regard, the race card and anti-wokeness are usually utilised as a diversionary tactic to deflect people's attention away from the crisis and problems of capitalism.

In addressing the question of what is to be done, it is only socialists with correct class and Marxist analysis that can challenge right-wing elements in a takedown on racism, not black intellectuals and commentators who want to replace white racism with black racism. It is a socialist project to overthrow capitalism that created, sustained, and reproduced racism and all forms of discrimination, and unite the society in a classless way. This solution is at odds with the interests of Black intellectuals, whose framework on black radicalism, Pan-Africanism, and black nationalism prevents the unity of white workers and black workers from challenging and overthrowing the capitalist system as a potent class.

## 8. Conclusion

Andrews' *The Psychosis of Whiteness* offers a provocative account of how race and racism are understood in contemporary society. It draws on psychological concepts such as collective delusion, hallucination, and irrationality to argue that racism is reproduced through social and institutional processes. In this framing, the legacy of colonialism is seen as continuing through systems that once used race as a mechanism of domination, even as many of the same societies now formally deny the persistence of racism. Andrews' work contextualises whiteness as a cultural notion that is afflicted by serious delusions and bizarre collective hallucinations of White people, who deny the existence of racism but fetishise the privileged position that White people assume in global society. The key insight of the work lies in its analysis of how Western states, institutions, media, and some conservative or far-right actors may seek to marginalise discussions of racism, minimise or reframe its impacts on affected communities, and promote policy approaches that downplay the enduring consequences of racial inequality in global society.

However, a critical review of *The Psychosis of Whiteness* revealed holes at the centre of theorising, and those holes consist of fundamental disregard and disdain for class analysis, and negating the role of capitalism in the reproduction of racism. The consequences of this have led to questioning the notions of irrationality and delusions as contexts for White Psychosis, deconstructing Whiteness as the basis and explanatory factor to explain racism, the problem of sweeping generalisation where White people are collectively regarded as suffering from delusions and hallucinations, the sidestepping of the class character of whiteness, and unrealistic solutions to the problem.

Debunking the notion of “white psychosis” in this context involves critiquing the theoretical assumptions on which it is based, which can be seen as limited and lacking a sufficient engagement with class analysis. A key limitation of Andrews’ focus on whiteness is that it treats racism primarily as a cultural or ideological formation, which may not fully account for how racial inequality is reproduced and sustained across personal, institutional, and structural levels in the contemporary period.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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