

AHMED DRAIA UNIVERSITY – ADRAR  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS AND LANGUAGE



An Analytical Examination of the Postcolonial  
Psychopathology and the Mental Decolonization in  
Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black  
Skin, White Masks*.

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Degree in Literature and Civilization

**Presented by:**

Nour El Houda Haddadi

**Supervised by:**

Mrs. Hadjer Belhamidi

**Board of Examiners**

Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

Chairperson

Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

Supervisor and Reporter

Prof./ Dr./ Mr./ Mrs./ Miss/ Ms.

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## **Dedication**

First, I thank Allah for the grace He gave me to  
complete this research.

I would proudly dedicate this work to my revered  
mother who was always by my side to push me further and  
who was always hoping to see me reach the horizons.

To the precious man in my life, my Father, who trained  
me how to overcome life difficulties and to achieve my  
goals, whatever the circumstances I face might be.

I am especially thankful to my superb brother, to whom  
I wish the best of luck in his life, for he always protects  
me and considers my everything in this life.

Finally, special thanks go to my second family, my  
classmates, for the two years we spent in joy and  
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## Abstract

For so long, superiority and power were held by the whites while the blacks experienced different types of discrimination and violence. They lived under the whites' control and domination. The racist societies viewed the blacks as sub-humans and just bodies without minds. Therefore, this mistreatment triggered the non-white people to fight for their rights and status to retrieve their dignity as human beings all over the world through what is known as postcolonial theory and Negritude movement, the fact that can change the negative image of the blacks. Frantz Fanon, who is known as the leader of postcolonial theory, used his thinking to transform the blacks' position and give them the possibility to live equally with the whites and to erase the differences. The postcolonial theory came up to help the blacks change their miserable conditions and make them valuable. In addition to that, it allowed them upraise from the discriminatory circumstances they were living in into a new life with a new nation where there is freedom and liberation from the constraints imposed by the colonizer. Concerning this issue, the work focuses on two books written by Frantz Fanon: *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks* to examine how postcolonialism in general and postcolonial writers in specific portray the struggle of blacks in the whites world to restore their position in the world . In addition to that, the work examines how the blacks strived to achieve their decolonization and become independent.

**Key words:** Postcolonialism, discrimination, Decolonization, mental decolonization, retrieving the identity, Cultural Revolution.



## المخلص

تمسك البيض بالتفوق والقوة لفترة طويلة بينما عانى السود من أنواع مختلفة من التمييز والعنف. كانوا يعيشون تحت سيطرة البيض وهيمنتهم. نظرت المجتمعات العنصرية إلى السود على أنهم شبه بشر وأجساد بلا عقول. لذلك، أدى هذا سوء المعاملة إلى دفع الناس غير البيض إلى الكفاح من أجل حقوقهم ووضعهم لاستعادة كرامتهم كبشر في جميع أنحاء العالم من خلال ما يعرف بنظرية ما بعد الاستعمار وحركة السود، وهي حقيقة يمكن أن تغير الصورة السلبية للسود. استخدم فرانز فانون، المعروف باسم قائد نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار، تفكيره في تغيير وضع السود ومنحهم إمكانية العيش بالتساوي مع البيض ومحو الفروق. ظهرت نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار لمساعدة السود على تغيير ظروفهم البائسة وجعلها ذات قيمة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، سمحت لهم بالانتقال من الظروف التمييزية التي كانوا يعيشون فيها إلى حياة جديدة مع أمة جديدة حيث توجد الحرية والتحرر من القيود التي فرضها المستعمر. فيما يتعلق بهذه المسألة، تم التركيز بهذه المذكرة على كتابين لفرانز فانون: المعذبون في الأرض (*The Wretched of the Earth*)، و*بشرة سوداء* و*اقدعة بيضاء* (*Black Skin, White Masks*)، لفحص كيف يصور ما بعد الاستعمار بشكل عام وكتاب ما بعد الاستعمار بشكل محدد صراع السود في عالم البيض لاستعادة موقعهم في العالم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يدرس العمل كيف سعى السود لتحقيق إنهاء الاستعمار والاستقلال.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** ما بعد الاستعمار، التمييز، إنهاء الاستعمار، التحرر من الاستعمار العقلي، استرجاع الهوية، الثورة الثقافية.

## Résumé

Pendant longtemps, la supériorité et le pouvoir ont été détenus par les Blancs tandis que les Noirs ont subi différents types de discrimination et de violence. Ils vivaient sous le contrôle et la domination des Blancs. Les sociétés racistes considéraient les Noirs comme des sous-humains et des corps sans esprit. Par conséquent, ces mauvais traitements ont incité les non-blancs à se battre pour leurs droits et leur statut afin de retrouver leur dignité d'êtres humains partout dans le monde à travers ce qu'on appelle la théorie postcoloniale et le mouvement de la négritude, le fait que cela peut changer l'image négative des noirs. Frantz Fanon, qui est connu comme le leader de la théorie postcoloniale, a utilisé sa pensée pour transformer la position des Noirs et leur donner la possibilité de vivre à égalité avec les Blancs et d'effacer les différences. La théorie postcoloniale est venue pour aider les Noirs à changer leurs conditions misérables et à les rendre précieuses. En plus de cela, cela leur a permis de passer des circonstances discriminatoires dans lesquelles ils vivaient à une nouvelle vie avec une nouvelle nation où il y a la liberté et la libération des contraintes imposées par le colonisateur. Concernant cette question, l'ouvrage a choisi deux livres écrits par Frantz Fanon : *Les Damnés De La Terre* et *Peaux Noires Masques Blancs* pour examiner comment le postcolonialism en général et les écrivains postcoloniaux en particulier dépeignent la lutte des Noirs dans le monde blanc pour restaurer leur position dans le monde. En plus de cela, le travail examine comment les Noirs se sont efforcés de réaliser leur décolonisation et de devenir indépendants.

**Mots-clés :** postcolonialism, discrimination, décolonisation, décolonisation mentale, récupération de l'identité, Révolution culturelle.



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# General Introduction

Literature in general can be referred to as the replica of people's issues in their surroundings. Several writers use literature to reveal and discover all aspects of the human living conditions, to illustrate humans' complexity and demonstrate how this complexity is shared amongst them. Postcolonialism is a contemporary literary theory which aims to highlight a different understanding of the world and the conditions in which humanity has found itself in the past century, especially after colonial and imperial movements. What postcolonial writings have in common is that they emerged out of the experience of colonialism. During the colonial period, people in general and those of the third world in specific, were under the colonial rule and domination trying to cope with the situation they were living in on the one hand, and trying to get rid of the colonial discrimination on the other. The era after colonialism was namely referred to as postcolonialism.

Equally to other literature, postcolonial literature was meant to focus on the descendants of the colonized countries, trying to deal with their experience under the colonial rule. In addition to that, it re-analyzed the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Additionally, the aim of postcolonial theory is to explore how colonialism shaped and influenced the colonized people's psychology, especially the blacks who were always considered as inferior beings. The non-white people are the most people affected by the culture of the whites who see themselves as superior or as having the right to discriminate and marginalize black as well as non-white people. This negative image produced by the whites pushed many theorists, such as Frantz Fanon, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, and writers, such as Chinua Achebe, and others to use their works to change this racist picture through their writing and support. They attempted to ameliorate the blacks' position vis-à-vis the whites.

Concerning this issue, this thesis studies two famous books, *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, both of which were written by one of the major writers of postcolonialism, Frantz Fanon. In his books, Frantz Fanon depicts the consequences of colonialism on non-white people from multiple dissimilar perspectives.

The study aims to use these two books to analyze the discriminatory conditions in which non-white people lived under the colonial rule, in addition to the ways that the non-white people took to liberate themselves from the whites' restraints.

## **1. Statement of the Problem**

The whites have oppressed the blacks for a very long time, justifying their actions by the sense of superiority. Therefore, the blacks, non-whites or people of color revolted to upraise themselves from this harmful behavior. They started to fight for the resistance by trying to get rid of marginality and discrimination. Negritude, for example, was an anti-colonial movement that was very useful in the liberation of the blacks from the colonial subjugation and racial segregation. Numerous writers were influenced by the slogans of this movement which cemented their willingness to free the blacks from inferiority. Literary works were produced, such as Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, as noteworthy works that aim to analyze the influence of colonialism on the colonized peoples' psychology. In addition to that, this work depicts how the whites viewed the colonized people of color under the colonial period. Using these books as a framework, this research highlights many ideas that were tackled by Fanon, such as racism, marginalization, superiority, and inferiority. In addition to that, this research investigates how colonial racism influenced the non-white people.

## **2. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this study is to analyze the impact of colonial racism on the non-white people. Besides, this research ventures to propose another view, which might change the racist view of the blacks. In addition to that, these two books show and demonstrate how the blacks struggle to form an independent and national identity under the struggle of decolonizing their minds.

## **3. Significance of the Study**

This work will be significant in many fields. First, it might be referred to as a source for future researchers who are fascinated by postcolonial studies. Moreover, this study stresses on the problems the blacks faced under the colonial domination. Furthermore, the significance of this study lies in how the non-white people plan to liberate their minds from the colonial way of thinking to build a free nation.

## **4. Primary Questions**

This kind of study paves the way to different questions related to racism and postcolonialism. The central questions are:

- To what extent can violence achieve decolonization?
- How were the blacks treated and portrayed in these two books?
- What are the methods of exploitation used by the whites to forbid the blacks from living a normal life?

## **5. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The 15<sup>th</sup> Century marked a new era: The Age of Discovery, an era which was characterized by the exploration, colonization and exploitation of different cultures, especially Africans. By the end of this era, colonialism acquired a relatively modern term. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became overwhelming and touched different fields such

as economics, culture, politics and all social life. Later, came the age of decolonization, with which people became more conscious about the rights that they had lost and forgotten for centuries. Therefore, this study focuses on the postcolonial decolonization through these two books *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*.

## **6. Methodology**

### **6.1. Research Materials**

This work examines the influence of colonial domination on the colonized peoples' psychology through *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*. Therefore, the basic primary sources used in this research are these two books in addition to the use of some subordinate and secondary sources such as books, articles, and other scientific research materials that are related to postcolonial literature and its role in enlightening people to achieve decolonization.

### **6.2. Research Methodology**

This work falls under literary studies and recreation, therefore, the research methodologies involved are analytical as well as descriptive research methodologies, in order to analyze the colonized peoples' psychology and describe their problems within the colonial rule. The first paradigm, descriptive research methodology, is used to describe colonial life and its effects on the postcolonial mindset, while the analytical research methodology is used to analyze the major ideas in the two books and associate them with real life situations in former colonies, especially to highlight the struggle resulting from discrimination.

## 7. The Structure of the Work

This study is an examination of two books, thus, it is divided into three chapters. The first chapter includes definitions of the major postcolonial concepts discussed in addition to the literature review of the scope limiting decolonization as opposed to assimilation.

The second chapter is dedicated to the study of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. It discusses the mental effects of colonialism, and the significance of the peasant class in achieving decolonization. Finally, it discusses how violence as a major tool used by both the colonizer and the colonized to satisfy their needs.

Finally, the last chapter discusses another book written by Frantz Fanon entitled *Black Skin, White Masks*. It tackles the issue of psychopathology caused by colonialism in addition to the psychological oppression that was imposed on the colonized, especially non-whites. Furthermore, it highlights how and why the non-white people are alienated.

The first book to start with, in the second chapter, is *The Wretched of the Earth*, instead of Fanon's former book, which is *Black Skin, White Masks*. This is because, even though both books speak about racism, struggle, revolution and freedom, yet *The Wretched of the Earth* is broader because it speaks deeply about the decolonization and violence and how the blacks struggle to achieve their aims. In addition to that, to some extent, this book really demonstrates what was and what is happening in our society. For example, in some Algerian societies, if someone does not speak the French language, he would be considered as less than the others or non-human, and the contrary, if someone does, he would be considered as a human being and he would be given a valuable place in the society. The literary production will not change the prevailed racist view, but at least it can make the black people and the dehumanized ones in general, aware of their

value, rights and duties, and aware of the manner in which they can restore their dignity and elevate from the miserable status.

**Introduction**

As it is known, racism is considered as an act of showing difference in people according to their race and identity. According to Oxford Dictionary, “racism is defined as the unfair treatment of other races or belief that some races of people are better than others” (15). In other words, it is the belief that race accounts for differences in human characters or the possibility that a particular race is superior to others and it is a term used to describe the negative feelings of one ethnic group or people towards another. It means that a particular race of a particular country views that it is upper class to the other races in the world.

In addition to that, racism symbolizes race based on prejudice, violence, dislike, and discrimination or oppression. This kind of superiority is usually based on skin color. As it is known, peoples around the world are divided into different races and colors. Moreover, the racist powers use different strategies or ideologies in order to put down the power of other races by treating them as lesser humans and inferior, so they can control their religion, their culture or traditions and even their way of behaving and thinking.

**1.1. Background of the Study**

Before the middle ages, there was no clear racism in other cultures or in the world in general. The world was driven by the whites, who are considered as the leading power rather than the blacks who are considered inferior beings. For centuries, blacks have encountered oppression and discrimination because of the biased treatment and the whites’ domination. The blacks have failed to have equal situation with whites, their destiny was usually related to whites.

This discriminatory treatment caused a serious problem on people’s psychology, especially the blacks all over the world. That is to say, Frantz Fanon’s writings are

considered as a tool, which helps people, especially blacks to liberate themselves from the restrictions they faced and achieve their freedom from the colonial domination.

## **1.2. Literature Review**

### **1.2.1. Critics Whose Ideas Are Consistent with Decolonization**

One of the major critics of postcolonial theory is Frantz Fanon (20 July 1925- 6 Decembre1961), a leading postcolonial critic who, through his two books *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, analyzed the psychological effect of colonialism on both sides, the colonizer's and the colonized's. According to him, in an attempt to deal with the psychological imperfection, the colonized people wanted to be as white as possible by borrowing the western values, religion, culture, and by rejecting their own culture. Fanon refers to this phenomenon as an attempt of putting on a white mask over the black or colored skin, a hypocritical method that would lead to a duality that deceives the colonized more than the colonizer. Moreover, Fanon argued that when the blacks or the natives realized that they could not become truly white, it caused them to develop a psychological complex that is resulted from the colonial system, where they started fighting each other.

In the book of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon suggests the idea of a *national culture* acknowledging the importance of cultural nationalism, leading to collective awareness. He had to defend the pan-African cause, as the blacks had to design their own history and culture. Fanon recommended three stages in which a national culture is established. First, the natives, under the colonizer's domination ought to imitate the colonizer's culture in what Homi Bhabha calls *mimicry*. In the second stage, the colonized or the native recognizes that he can never become white or treated equally as a white



person, so he returns to study and evaluate his own culture. In the third stage, the native must acknowledge that he is truly an anticolonial (Fanon 75).

Another major critic is Salman Rushdie (19 June 1947), a postcolonial writer and critic, who argues that literature reflects what is happening in the society. In most of his works, he depicts the different problems that are the consequence of the colonial power where the theme of *displacement* takes place. In addition to that, Salman's essential aim is to illustrate that postcolonial narratives have a big impact on education as well as identity formation. Among his works *Midnight's Children* is considered as a representation of the colonial period where the colonized people get back control and authority, thus recovering their voice (Rushdie 101).

The Algerian postcolonial critic and thinker Malek Bennabi (28 January 1905 – 31 October 1973) is one of the most significant intellectuals in Algeria and Islamic history. His ideas were somehow similar to Fanon's ideas about the process of *decolonization*. He argues that *Decolonization* should not be only political, but also psychological. Furthermore, he claimed that, in order to free oneself from colonialism, one must liberate themselves from its cause, which is *colonizability*. For him, colonization was not only the colonizer's cause but also the cause of the colonized people themselves (Bennabi).

The postcolonial writer Aimé Césaire (26 June 1913 - 17 April 2008), aimed to disprove the argument presented by the colonialists which assumes that the blacks are sub-human unlike the whites who are considered human and superior. Furthermore, he argues in his discourse that the blacks have their own traditions in which they can uplift from inferiority imposed on them by the westerners. Aimé Césaire is the founder of the Negritude movement, which established his idea that the blacks have the ability to regain

their self-confidence and value by building new ways through unity and support (Césaire 200).

Another major figure in postcolonialism is George Lamming (8 June 1927), a Bajan novelist who first won critical acclaim with his debut novel *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953). According to his experience and contact with colonialism, he emphasizes on language because it is considered as the first tool by which people interact and communicate. G. Lamming considered language as a means of colonialism and support to imperial resistance. In addition to that, he sees that the lack of cultural identity is the result or the outcome of the colonial rule because he concentrated on themes of history and identity, especially racial identity in his literary production (Lamming 13).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (5 January 1938) is one of the most well-known African writers under postcolonialism, and he is known for his use of multitude and diversity in discourse and literary production, often dealing with postcolonial themes such as race, colonialism, and conflict. In addition to that, in Ngugi's writings, he chose to write about the struggle of the Kenyan people under the colonial rule. He emphasized on language, which he described as a way in which people, not only describe the world, but also understand and express themselves. According to him, the use of English language in Africa is considered as a *cultural bomb* that supports the process of colonialism and acts as a means of installing the different forms of European dominance and imperialism (Ngugi).

Bill Ashcroft (1943), a postcolonial critic, and the co-author of *The Empire Writes Black*, argues that the postcolonial perspective tends to be international including literature from all over Africa. In addition to that, he tackles the term *cosmopolitan*, which also refers to the magazine that is published in different languages and covers topics of

general interests focusing upon issues such as immigration, cultural assimilation, liberalism, and national identity. Ashcroft's book titled *Postcolonial Transformation* gives an innovative view about the ways in which the postcolonial world responded to colonial domination (Ashcroft13).

Albert Memmi (15 December 1920 – 22 May 2020) is amongst the pioneering authors of postcolonialism. In his assumption, he emphasizes on the notion of *decolonization* because his aim is to make the distinction between the experiences of people of color under the colonizer's rule. In addition to that, he maintains that colonialism is a tool whereby Europeans use power. Memmi was inspired to write his postcolonial writings from his personal experience because he is a Jewish man who lived in a Muslim country where he considered himself as an *other*. He lived within colonialism where he focused on racism because he was considered as a stranger who suffers from a double identity. Furthermore, he is considered both as a colonizer for being a European and as a colonized for being a Tunisian, the fact that made him suffer anti-Semitism (Jean Willette).

### **1.2.2. Critics Whose Ideas Are Consistent with Hybridity and Assimilation**

Homi K. Bhabha (6 May 1949), is an Indian English scholar whose central ideas is the term of *Hybridity*. The term is defined as the mixture of different cultures that lead to what is known as multiculturalism. Bhabha not only tackled the notion of Hybridity, but also emphasized on *Ambivalence* which is defined as the duality in culture as well as the identity which gives birth to mixed feelings of both sides, the colonizer and the colonized (Ashcroft).

Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak (24 February 1942), is another post-colonial critic, she referred to the notion of *Subaltern* in postcolonialism as the duality or the pair related terms. In her chapter entitled “Can the Subaltern Speak”, she aims to defeat the duality or the differences between subjects. Spivak borrowed the term of *Subalternity* from Gramsci’s work to represent the voiceless people who are considered inferior beings. Furthermore, Spivak drew attention to how anti-colonial nationalism make-believe a distinctively bourgeois character. By *subaltern*, Spivak means the oppressed and abused subjects.

Edward Said (1 November 1935 – 25 September 2003), is another figure among the pioneering writers of postcolonialism, his arguments are based on the literary works that followed the colonial period. He assumes that the production of literature in the postcolonial era is the consequence of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. In addition to that, Said argues that the postcolonial theory focuses on the falsification of the natives, who are the colonized people by the dominant power, who are the colonizers, the fact which proposes a new way of reading that gives a space to the imperialist ideologies (Edward)

Samir Amin (3 December 1931 – 12 August 2018), is an Egyptian Marxist who referred to postcolonialism as the mixture of capitalism and Marxism. He has given priority in his writings to the phenomenon of cultural difference between the colonizer and the colonized .Not only this, but also he argued that the result of such differences is known as *the in-between*, which resulted in hybridization of identities. He claims that this is because of what is known as the *cultural difference* is the major result of colonialism based on his experience of being Jewish and Egyptian at the same time (Balibar and Wallerstein).

Abdul Janmohamed (1 September 1954- present), is among the most influential figures of the postcolonial theory. He defined postcolonialism as the body of thought which contains different disciplines such as economic, historical, and social disciplines. In addition to that, he also argued that this latter englobes various interventions but they all share one sense which claims that the world cannot be understood unless there is a relationship between imperialism and colonial rule with addition to the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Moreover, he claimed that postcolonial theory shapes the way we perceive things, and influences the way we read texts. Finally, he claimed that postcolonial theory is considered as and remains one of the most important and influential keys in the world (Janmohamed).

Edward Kamau Brathwaite (11 May 1930 – 4 February 2020) is one of the major voices in postcolonial era, poet and historian. According to him, postcolonial theory is the fruit of the mixture of the colonial experiences upon the natives, which lead to *hybridization* where the new hybrid personalities invested to build themselves and reclaim their lives in the world (Brathwaite).

Antonio Gramsci (22 January 1891 – 27 April 1937), is an Italian Marxist philosopher and communist, and a leading political thinker. In postcolonial studies, the term *Subaltern* was not only tackled by Gayatri Spivak, but also by Antonio Gramsci who used this term to identify the social groups which were excluded, marginalized, and displaced from their motherlands. Gramsci is best notable for his theory of *cultural hegemony*, which describes how the state and the ruling class practice domination and impose rules upon the lower societies to maintain power. In Gramsci's collection of essays entitled *The Postcolonial Gramsci*, he discusses a new theoretical framework to strengthen the postcolonial issues. Furthermore, the term *hegemony* was used by Gramsci

to express the mastery of one group over another to exercise various forms of exploitation and domination (Gramsci and Dombrowski).

### **1.3. Postcolonial Theory**

Admitting the effect of colonialism on various things such as language discourse, cultural institutions have managed to stress on hybridity, or the mingling of cultural thinking between the colonizer and the colonized. Fanon, as a leading figure of the postcolonial movement, has adopted the approach of *Decolonization*. According to him, the colonial world can be referred to as the struggle between two forces which are the colonized and the colonizer. Thus, the colonizer imposes rules and tries not only to dominate but also to exploit all the resources the colonized might have. That is why Fanon's emphasis was on decolonization which is considered as the liberation which can be achieved through nationalism by destroying the colonizer's culture and building a new identity.

Another scholar and major figure of postcolonialism is Edward Said who is known for his theory of *Orientalism*. This term can be defined as the imitation of Eastern cultural aspects. Homi Bhabha is also among the founding fathers of postcolonialism. His theory was about *Mimicry*. Mimicry can be referred to as the imitation of the colonizer's way of life which makes the colonized people have a double identity. Therefore, they would develop a double vision, recognizing both the culture of the other and their own alienation from it. Mimicry is thus the attempt to adopt some of the colonizer's culture by the native inhabitants of the formerly colonized country, especially under the cover of globalization, which is commonly understood as welcoming everything from the colonizer's culture.

**1.3.1. Origin and Definition of Postcolonial Theory**

The field of postcolonial studies emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s immediately following World War II. The concept of postcolonialism alludes to the ways in which culture, human identity, and race are depicted in the contemporary phase, after the independence of different colonized countries. Nevertheless, there are critics who describe this concept as the influence of imperialism from the period of colonization until the moment. In addition to that, this latter, investigates the relation between the colonizer and the colonized.

The Europeans saw the twentieth century as a turning point because they were containing so many weak countries such as India, Senegal, Sri Lanka, etc. Thus, the literature that was written in these countries after gaining independence has become the object of postcolonial studies because it demonstrates their suffering and the colonial domination, which gives the term of postcolonialism popularity and prominence. Moreover, one of the most important reasons postcolonial literature has become well welcomed is a due to a large part of theorists such as Said, Spivak, Fanon, Bhabha, and others who have glorified the importance of literature with relation to history, politics, and philosophy.

Numerous theorists and critics are themselves descendants of postcolonial countries and so they speak out of experience. These theorists attempt to authorize themselves and their literary production about postcolonialism to change people's perception about the colonized people by passing through different challenges. Postcolonial theory's aim is the reconstruction of history or rather is to show that history is human made as Salman Rushdie wrote:

History is a natural selection. Mutant versions of the past struggle for dominance; new species of fact arise, and old saurian truths go the wall, blindfolded and smoking last cigarettes. Only the mutations of the strong survive. The weak, the anonymous, the defeated leave few marks... History loves only those who dominate her: it is a relationship of mutual enslavement. (Rushdie 133-134)

### **1.3.2. Historical Development of Postcolonial Theory**

Postcolonialism is a keep going process of resistance and reconstruction, thereby, it involves a discussion about experience of various kinds such as slavery, displacement, emigration, suppression, assimilation, difference, racial and cultural discrimination, and resistance. Postcolonial theory can be considered as an essential organ that holds various disciplines such as political, aesthetic, artistic, and economic which impacted the European colonial world from the 18<sup>th</sup> until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That is to say, we cannot understand the world we live in unless we get in touch with the world of imperialism and colonialism.

Postcolonialism is similar to any literary theory that exerts criticism on literary works to find out various meanings or interpretations from its intended perspective. Postcolonial criticism can be referred to as the checkup of history, culture, and particularly literature of different countries and subcontinents. Specifically, postcolonial criticism can also be defined as the study of the power and the colonial structures that intervened in the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition to that, post-colonial critics are interested in literature produced by colonialism and those who are and were colonized. Postcolonialism also investigates issues of power, politics, religion, culture, and how these components are interrelated.



### 1.3.3. Major Post-Colonial Concepts Discussed

Post-colonial concepts have been defined in this thesis for different reasons. On the one hand, these concepts are defined to direct the research, and on the other hand, defining these concepts is like guiding and showing the reader what are the concepts and the elements of postcolonial theory, or what this theory consists of. Moreover, these concepts are related to decolonization because achieving decolonization is the aim of this research as well as the aim of the colonized people because it enlightens them and shows them the path to restore their rights and build a free nation with a different way of thinking far away from that of the colonizer. In addition to that, one of the major reasons to discuss and relate to these concepts, is to illustrate the traces of colonialism that still exist in the former colonies.

Postcolonialism involves a large number of theoretical concepts, approaches and interventions which deal with multiple effects that resulted from the interaction between the colonizer and the colonized. This is due to the fact that the focus of the postcolonial theory is very varied and enlightened by different schools of thought, thus, the following section disambiguates the postcolonial phenomena and movements that are significant to the examination of Fanon's two works.

**Colonialism:** It is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. The difficulty in defining colonialism is that it is hard to distinguish it from imperialism, because the two concepts are considered synonymous sometimes. Like colonialism, imperialism engrosses political and economic control. (Marx 44).

**Postcolonialism:** It is a period that comes after colonialism and focuses on the human consequences of the colonizer's control and exploitation of the colonized. In

addition to that, post colonialism's aim is to examine not only the social and political ties between colonialism and neo colonialism, but also the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, and to analyze how colonialism influenced the way of writing in postcolonial era. (Mclead).

**Neocolonialism:** Neocolonialism is defined as the policy of using control upon the less developed countries by developed countries through indirect and direct means. It can also be referred to as the strategy of a powerful nation in obtaining political and economic dominance over an independent nation. The term neocolonialism was first used after World War II to refer to the keep going of dependent colonies on the foreign countries, but its meaning enlarged through time to refer to places where the power of developed countries was used to produce a colonial exploitation. Later, the term broadened and was used to refer to a form of generalized power which uses forms of exploitation of developing countries.

The term neocolonialism was originally applied to European policies that were viewed as the major powers to control African countries and other dependencies. The event that marked the emergence of this term was the European Summit in Paris 1957, where six European heads of government were okay to include their overseas territories within the European common market under trade arrangements that were viewed by some national leaders as presenting a new form of power or authority.

Jean Paul Sartre (21 June 1905- 15 April 1980), referred to neocolonialism as the planned and continued survival of the colonial system. Noam Chomsky (7 December 1928), defined neocolonialism as the influence of developing countries upon the less developed ones. In postcolonial background, neocolonialism is used by the postcolonial critics to refer to the engagement of powerful countries in the affairs of the less ones. In

addition to that, this term suggests that the powerful nations behave like a colonial role to experience power over the weak nations. The issue of neocolonialism was tackled and used by Kwame Nkrumah in most of his works where he discussed the issue of imperialism and neocolonialism with the struggle of Ghanaian people. He assumes that “the forces that unite us are intrinsic and greater than the superimposed influences that keep us part” (Guoqiang200).

Control and power of the strong countries was due to different motives such as trade, religion, politics, and valuable resources. These motives pushed industrial powers to expand their control over weak territories, and this way was referred to as imperialism. This thesis will discuss this phenomena to show how the colonized people were under control in different ways.

**Imperialism:** Imperialism and Colonialism are two different concepts that are used interchangeably sometimes because both of them incorporate political and economic control over a dependent territory. Imperialism is the exploitation of the agricultural poorer or weaker countries' resources by industrial nations in order to enlarge their countries and make them into economic empires, such as the US, France, Britain and China. Colonialism, however, is the policy or the practice by which a powerful country controls the less powerful ones by exploiting and using its resources to increase its own power and fortune. It can be referred to also as the subjugation of one people to another.

Both Colonialism and Imperialism involve the defeat of one group of people by another. In addition to that, both of them stretch over space and time with remarkable geographical and historical reach. However, colonialism is the practice where one nation takes control over another using hard power or coercion, whereas imperialism refers to political, cultural or economic control.

The etymology of both terms provides some signs about how they differ. On the one hand, the term *colony* is derived from the Latin word *colonus*, which means farmer, meaning that colonialism commonly concerned the transfer of people to a new territory, where the comers live as permanent settlers. On the other hand, the term imperialism originates from the Latin word *imperium*, which means supreme power. It first became common with its sense in Great Britain. During the 1817's it was used with a negative connotation to refer to the ideology of extension or a country's domination over foreign nations. Imperialism attracts attention that one country practices power over another through different approaches such as settlement and sovereignty.

Wolfgang Reinhard (10 April 1937) is a major thinker in this field. He refers to colonialism and imperialism as the control of one people over another. Another thinker is Bartolomé de las Casas (1484 – 18 July 1566), a thinker who referred to colonialism as the corruption of the colonizer's mindset. The Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre (15 March 1900 – 18 July 1987), referred to both terms as the expansion of colonial rule in the poorest countries. He makes this analogy with the master and slaves.

**Cultural Imperialism:** Cultural Imperialism is defined as the exercise of domination and authority in cultural relationships in which the values of the powerful culture are forced upon other native cultures. Thus, it can be referred to as the practice of favoring the culture of the powerful nations over the less powerful ones.

This term is employed in different fields such as history, cultural studies, and postcolonial theory. In addition to that, cultural imperialism can take dissimilar forms such as an attitude, a formal policy or military actions. For example, fast foods and beverage brands are considered among the cultural imperialism aspects; when we look at

their commercials in varied countries we can see that they adopt the American style of living.

**Capitalism:** Capitalism can be defined as the human desire to extend one's territory and to create wealth through trade and exploitation of natural resources. After the Industrial Revolution, the problem aroused is how to collect enough resources to feed the factories for more productivity. The answer might be by the use of colonialism and power exercises upon the less powerful countries.

Karl Marx (5 May 1818- 14 March 1883) is considered as a key thinker of capitalism. He argues that Capitalism was nothing more than an important step for the progression of man, which would than witness a political revolution. Marxists define capital as a social, economic relation between people rather than between people and things. Capitalism is a system in which private people own and control property according to their interests, and demands. The essential aspect of capitalism is the intention to make benefit and earn.

People around the world were fed up of colonialism and oppression, so they decided to revolt and restore their dignity. After the Second World War, most former colonies said that they have the right to govern themselves and build an independent nation by achieving what is called decolonization. This research will demonstrate some aspects of decolonization to show how the non-white people became independent from the colonizer's control.

**Decolonization:** Decolonization can be referred to as the destruction of colonialism, the latter being the method whereby a nation institute and maintain its domination. In addition to that, it can be defined as the process by which colonies become independent from the colonizing countries. Decolonization was used to refer to the switch

from the colonial empire's world to a world of nation-states in the years following World War 2. People all over the world referred to the changes after this period as self-determination, liberation or revolution to achieve what is known as decolonization. Decolonization became a large movement in many colonies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and a reality after 1945.

Frantz Fanon (20 July 1925- 6 December 1961) was one of the major thinkers supporting decolonization. For Fanon, decolonization is the strategy to overcome colonial thinking. In post colonialism context, it is the process of getting rid of colonization. In other words, it is the act of freeing a country to become independent from another country. Moreover, Frantz Fanon who is considered as the major figure and the leader of postcolonial theory tackled the concept of decolonization. He defined decolonization as the *independence, which* is viewed as the attempt to build an independent nation with separate identity by having self-reliance and has self-sufficiency (Lexington).

**Ambivalence:** is a state of having conflicts, of beliefs towards something or someone. In other words, in postcolonial context, ambivalence is defined as the experience of having both negative and positive attitude towards something or someone. Additionally, this term can refer to the instability in opinion between wanting one thing and wanting its opposite at the same time. Homi Bhabha tackled this theory where he has focused on the colonial domination, which interrupts the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. (Mambrol).

**Alterity:** It is the state of being different from the traditions. Many theorists and philosophers to refer to the change in the western perceptions of the relationship between consciousness and the world adopted this term. Additionally, this term can refer to “Otherness” in order to show the notion of difference (Mambrol).

**Diaspora:** It is a term used to refer to the displaced peoples who have been separated from their native homelands through the movement of migration. In a different context, Diaspora refers to people living outside their traditional homeland. This term originated from *Dispersion*, which means multiple journeys. Diaspora studies, focuses on and analyzes conflicts and issues of the immigrants in the new lands. In *Imaginary Homeland*, Salman Rushdie analyzed the issue of immigration. Many writers have tackled this term. Bill Ashcroft defines it as “the voluntary movement of peoples from their lands into new regions” (4). Robert Cohen describes it as “the communities of peoples living together in one country who acknowledge that the old country often buried deep in language” (Cohen).

**Ethnicity:** This term has been defined in the postcolonial context as the attitude of minorities in the countries that are once colonized by other nations. Additionally, this term was used to describe or refer to people who are small in numbers and their struggle in different fields, such as political, economic, and religious issues (Sidhwa).

**Hybridity:** This term is used to refer to a mixture of cultures. Moreover, Hybridity commonly pertaining to the creation of new cultures produced by colonization. In postcolonial context, this term refers to the amalgamation of various cultures, which give birth to a third and a new form of culture, which is hybrid. In addition to that, this concept was mostly tackled in Homi Bhabha’s works who aimed to analyze the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. It also emphasizes on what is known by the in-between culture, which is the consequence of colonialism. (Ashcroft and Griffiths).

**Cultural Identity:** In the postcolonial context, cultural identity refers to the interaction between different identities and cultures that resulted in mixed identity. Stated

in another way, culture is defined as the values, beliefs and behaviors that are learned and shared among a group of people. In addition to that, this latter serves people by giving an identity to a group, ensuring survival and enhancing the feeling of belonging, as well as reflecting the common experiences and shared cultural codes where people are being judged about whether they are part of that group or not. This belonging can be achieved through different and various ways such as dress, speech and celebrations (Saman 96).

**Subaltern:** It is a term used in postcolonial contexts to refer to the inferior beings who are considered as subordinate. This term was adopted and tackled by Antonio Gramsci to symbolize the workers of the lesser classes who are subjected by the colonial rule. Moreover, this concept was used in Gramsci's most writings, which came as a commentary on Spivak's work entitled *Can the subaltern speak!* The Subaltern writer's aim is to make their writings valuable and recover their loss, which is the consequence of colonial domination (Mambrol).

**Language:** In postcolonial contexts, Language became or it was used a means for both colonization and resistance. It was argued by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari "make language stammer or make it wail, stretch tensors through all of language, even written language, and draw from it cries, shouts, pitches, durations, timbres, accents, intensities" (Deleuze 115). Language is often considered a central idea in the postcolonial studies. In the colonial period, colonizers imposed and encouraged the dominance of their native language onto the peoples colonized which made the natives forbid their mother tongues (Vaidhi).

**Allegory:** This term is defined as a symbolic narrative in which different features of literature all joined together to refer symbolically to some actions or situations. Moreover, Allegory is also defined as a work of art in which the characters or the events



act as symbols which means “to speak so as to imply something other” the work of Plato “Allegory of the Cave” can be considered as a representation of this term (Crisp).

**Postcolonial discourse:** this concept is used in postcolonial contexts to refer to a literary production that has meaning. Generally, this term is used to describe and address the indigenous people especially questions related to political and cultural issues. In addition to that, raising questions about race and peoples who face struggle with social and financial poverty (Mignolo).

**Indigenous people:** It is a concept used in postcolonialism to refer to those being first on a particular land or territory. Moreover, these peoples are considered in the frontline of the post-colonial struggle, trying to fight for survival in different aspect such as economic, political and cultural aspects (Thompson Hall).

### Conclusion

The theoretical background discussed in this chapter gave an image about the different manifestations of postcolonial phenomena (including neocolonialism, imperialism, cultural imperialism, hybridity, assimilation etc.), along with the postcolonial movements (Cultural Revolution, decolonization) as well as the major things faced in the postcolonial era starting from the beginning of colonialism (i.e.: the beginning of postcolonial era). Prior to that, the literature review discussed the various philosophies of Postcolonialist thinkers whose ideas gave various messages about their philosophy concerning the topic.

The thinkers selected included writers as well as critics, whose ideas in the form of postcolonial literature, theory and criticism are torn apart between those who are pro-cultural revolution and mental decolonization and those who are pro-assimilation and hybridity, i.e. those whose ideas are consistent with Fanon’s and those whose ideas are

consistent with assimilation. This theoretical discussion, thus, portrays the interdisciplinary of the post-colonial concepts, such as imperialism, neocolonialism and colonialism, and illustrates how far they are essential in the discussion of Fanon's works in that they illustrate how far Fanon's ideas were realistic. In other words, he predicted these phenomena and many of them became factual.

## **Chapter Two: An Analytical Study on Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth***

### **Introduction**

*The Wretched of the Earth* was written by Frantz Fanon in 1961. This book is considered as an examination of colonialism from Fanon's own personal perspective as one who experienced the struggle for liberation in Algeria. In addition to that, Fanon aimed to cover several and various themes through this book such as the mental effects of *colonialization*, the violence of colonialism, and the importance of the peasant class in the decolonization process.

As a psychiatrist, Fanon was interested in how colonialism affects the psychological development and mindset of the colonized. Through the analyses, we can see that colonization was not only psychological, but it also had crucial economic and political outcomes. In addition to that, this examination is about the Cultural Revolution, which was a way to revive the archaic ideas, cultures, and customs, in addition to the mental decolonization, which means getting rid of the whites' way of thinking. The following are the major ideas discussed related to violence in *The Wretched of the Earth*:

#### **2.1. Violence and Coercion in *The Wretched of the Earth***

Violence is the most current theme in the postcolonial production. Violence and coercion involve the tyrannical act of oppression resulting from the hatred of the *other* scorned native, acted out in *violence* under various pretexts. Furthermore, Violence seems to be an obvious result of colonialism. However, there are other unseen causes for violence. The former colonized peoples still face the challenge of a unified language as a result of the fact that the settlers coerced them to abandon their mother tongue.

Fanon in particular is interested in showing how different forms of violence operate repeatedly throughout his writings. Moreover, Fanon makes it clear that

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*Liberation* and *Decolonization* cannot be achieved without violence because the colonial world stressed on the oppression of the colonized people. Fanon's argument about violence in this book is seen in his statement. Fanon says, "Not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state, and it will only yield when confronted with greater violence" (Fanon 61).

Fanon defined violence as the practice of colonialism, and such violence was needed to resist and defeat the colonial rule. Most of Fanon's patients were native Algerians, many of whom suffer from mental and psychological disturbances that are the consequence of the colonial oppression.

### **2.1.1. Coercion to Abandon the Mother Language**

Language is often considered as a key question in the postcolonial studies. During colonization, colonizers usually enforce their language onto the peoples they colonize, forbidding the natives to speak their mother tongue because the colonialists want to convey their thought, beliefs, and their customs through imposing their language. This is shown in the example of the French occupation in Algeria that resulted the deterioration of the Arabic language. Algeria was a French colony for over a century, where its identity was considered French due to its traumatic history. During the colonial period, the French officials legislate laws to subvert the native population and its culture by undermining the teaching of Arabic and replacing it by the French language and its culture. For example, during the colonial occupation of Algeria, the French destroyed the main mosques that served as Qur'anic schools and replaced them by churches. Not only this, but they also banned the Algerians from studying Arabic and the Quran with its explanation. The French considered that the Quran would enlighten the Algerians' thought and make them regain their freedom against the colonial domination.

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### **2.1.2. Scrambling for Africa: Coercing the Colonies' Fragmental Division**

Another example of violence is the Scramble for Africa. As the name suggests, European colonizers scrambled towards Africa, dividing it into fragments and pieces as a pie, creating new maps that suit their interests. This weakened the ethnic groups they separated them by new borderlines that affected them even after their independence. Various ethnic groups were separated, the fact that created local wars and genocides, as well as wars with neighboring countries, international wars that helped the colonizers open a market for their old weapons in order to sell them and make new high tech weapons to compete in the Cold War. On another level, it created local wars or genocides (an attempt of extermination of an entire ethnic group resulting in a massacre). This example happened with the case of Zimbabwe when the ethnic group of Shona did several attempts of extermination against the Ndebele under the pretext that they belong to South Africa, not Zimbabwe.

### **2.1.3. Civil War: An Inescapable Postcolonial Outcome**

The violence of the Algerian Civil War was affected by the violence of the French colonialism. The quest of identity after independence is sometimes more difficult than retaining independence itself, and may take a longer time than the colonial period. Even after the independence, France still stretched its tentacles over Algeria in a form of neocolonialism or indirect imperialism, thus, it is in the French interest that Algeria never regains its lost identity. General De Gaulle himself addressed an Algerian Muslim deputy, contending to him that after independence, Muslim collaborators would suffer, stating, "you will suffer" (qtd. In Cohen 108).

After the colonizer wipes out the language and culture of the colonized until cultural clash becomes a local issue, a civil war would happen inevitably to reclaim one's

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identity, especially after 30 years, which marks the birth of a new generation. This is what happened in the case of Algeria, a civil war after independence, just as the American civil war following their independence, even though it took longer than 80 years. However, the civil war in Algeria became unholy for it was still taken over by international forces that tipped the scale of the war to their interest, resulting the opposite results it was intended for. This bloody dark decade that resulted in the mass murder of the brightest brains amongst civilian citizens, however, seems to have been followed by an obvious cultural change in the society after all, though the reasons of this cultural change were different.

The Algerian civil war was between the Algerian government and various Islamic rebel groups. It began slowly as it first appeared; the government had successfully broke up the Islamist movement. In this case, violence took place when armed groups emerged to fight jihad. The war has been referred to as the “dirty war” because it witnessed extreme violence and brutality used against civilians (Pope Francis 70).

Moreover, this civil war pitted Islamist groups against the government and against one another. Each group had a different interpretation of Islam and a different political goal. For many of the original nonconformists, the goal was fair political representation and elections free from FLN intrusion. On the one hand, the groups wanted the ability for Islamists to come to power and stay there through the polls. Another group believed that voting for a change was a lost cause to install truly an Islamist regime. They believed they would have to overthrow the FLN completely.

These conflicts provided a comparison of two Algerian cases of an extended violence. Although separated and distinct, they are similar in many ways. Specifically, each contains fighters for a political goal, despite the fact that those goals differ in scope.

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The existence of an armed struggle shows that the people have decided to trust violent methods alone. Fanon never stopped arguing that the only language understood in former colonies is that of force.

### **2.2. Repercussions of the Colonial Coercion and Tyranny**

As a psychologist, Fanon's focus was on the anticolonial movement's violence, which is considered as a revolution against the colonial world. He claims that the anticolonial violence is essential in order to achieve two important objectives. The first is the riddance of the colonizer and then, the mental decolonization of native Algerians because Fanon noticed that Algerians were discriminated under the colonial rule. On November 1, 1954, the Algerian national movement known as the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) began the struggle for independence with violent attacks against the French military. This movement was constituted to guide this violence against the colonizer, the fact which aims to construct and affirm a positive identity with national consciousness emancipated from the colonizer mindset. Fanon states, "At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force, it frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect" (94).

The *anticolonial violence* for Fanon was an act of rebirth. He argues that it is "The veritable creation of new men" (Fanon 36). Furthermore, the aim of this movement is to tie up people together under the umbrella of national solidarity in which all are concerned with the struggle against the colonial domination. Thus, violence was set to model the Algerian awareness as the people became responsible for gaining their freedom. The main notions *The Wretched of the Earth* highlighted in relation to the natives are:

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### **2.2.1. The Natives as the Settler's Own Creation**

In the first chapter, this idea was declared in this statement, “It is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence” (Fanon 35). By this, Fanon means the idea of the native as the outcome or the invention of the settler's own thinking. Thus, the settler could sculpt the natives in different shapes, and that is what made them seen as a game.

- Example:

The French philosopher Jean-*Paul Sartre* analyzed and tackled a similar case in his book *Anti-Semite and Jew* (1948), stating, “if the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him” (Sartre 2). The treatment the natives received from the settlers is damaging and especially to the psychological side. Fanon calls this, “a systematic negation of the other person who is the native. The settler denies the other person all attributes of humanity” (Fanon 50). In other words, the settlers literally do not see the natives as members of the same species. The example is the case of Palestinian cause where Israel considers the Palestinian people as unhuman savages.

### **2.2.2. Colonized People Being Reborn Through Violence**

Another main idea that implies Fanon's view about violence in *The Wretched of the Earth* is that Fanon shows how the violence of colonial domination goes against the settler because colonialism argues that, in order to dominate the natives, violence must be used. Concerning this claim, Fanon replies that a violent rebellion makes the natives able to figure out themselves. Throughout Fanon's analyses of the postcolonial era, and based on his personal experience by living during the Algerian revolution, he claims that violence must be used by the natives to get rid of the settlers. Fanon was referring to the



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colonial era myths in finding ways for the committing of mass suicide which is one of the pieces of evidence which indicate that violence was always there during the colonial rule.

In addition to that, Fanon defends the right of the colonized people to use violence to gain independence by outlining the processes and efforts leading to national independence or decolonization during the decolonization movement that swallowed up much of the world after the Second World War. In defiance of the use of violence by colonized peoples, Fanon claims that human beings who are not considered as such by the colonizers shall not be restricted by principles that apply to humanity in their attitude towards the colonizer. To demonstrate this, Fanon made extensive trips across Algeria mainly in the Kabyle region to study the cultural and psychological life of Algerians.

- Example

His study of *The Marabout of Si Slimane* is an example. These trips were also a means of clandestine activities, particularly in his visits to the ski resorts of Chrea which hid an FLN base. The native has shown the way he should take it if he is to become free; the violent way. Thus, the argument the native chose has already been held by the settler because the relationship established between them is a relationship of violence and struggle. The violence of the colonial regime, and the *counter-violence* of the natives, balance each other and respond to each other in an extraordinary reciprocal homogeneity.

The natives discovery of who they are is the adventure to take a new way of fighting that is known as the *Revolution* which is going to create disobedience against the settler's orders. However, the question is whether violence would die out and result in neocolonialism, or it would form a new nation.

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### **2.2.3. Oppression and Mental Health as a Consequence of Violence**

A current theme discussed in *The Wretched of the Earth*, is considered as an analysis and investigation of the psychological effects of colonialism. During the Algerian War of Independence, Fanon was particularly interested in the psychological impact of colonialism on the colonized because the colonial situation was based on racism and violence that keep the colonized living in an unstable and unbalanced situation causing different trauma which Fanon named rage. Fanon explores this anger and its role as a cause of Algerian criminality with addition to his description of different forms of the psychological damage, such as brainwashing and physical torture.

Throughout this book, the act of violence and colonialism is psychologically damaging, to both sides the colonized and the colonizer. This was proved after Fanon 's treatment of different cases from both sides where he concluded that these disturbances are "psychotic reactions" which are the consequence of the colonial stress (Fanon 395). Fanon argues that:

When colonization remains unchallenged by armed resistance, when the sum of harmful stimulants exceeds a certain threshold, the colonized's defenses collapse, and many of them end up in psychiatric institutions. In the calm of this period of triumphant colonization, a constant and considerable stream of mental symptoms are direct sequels of this oppression" (Fanon 191).

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon effectively argues that the practice of colonialism is psychologically damaging to both the colonized and the colonist.

### **2.3. Economy and the Emerging Nation**

*The Wretched of the Earth* portrays the encounter between colonialism and the natives, and the struggle against the imperial rule in the colonized countries. It is also a

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merging of capitalism and socialism. Through this book, one can deduce that socialism is more suitable than capitalism to build a nation, especially a former colony. For example, the third world is considered as a group of underdeveloped countries that are the focus of attention of different powerful spheres, especially during the Cold War. In addition to that, these underdeveloped countries have been exploited by capitalist forces who took their resources and invested them abroad.

### **2.3.1. Capitalism, Socialism, and the Third World**

The third world is often categorized as the relationship and the encounter or the showdown of capitalism and socialism. In 1961, when Fanon wrote this book, the Cold War was in back and forth movement that complicated the colonial situation and the struggle for independence in the colonized world further. The Cold War divided the world into either socialist or capitalist countries even the third world was asked to choose a side to follow.

Through *The Wretched of the Earth*, socialism can be seen as more suitable to the needs of a developing nation. Fanon argues that nation building requires capital, thus, it only makes sense for the third world to follow a capitalist economic model because, for Fanon, the Cold War and capitalism versus socialism is not the initial issue of the time. Instead, the primary issue is colonialism. Fanon argues that:

It is clear therefore that the young nations of the Third World are wrong to grovel at the feet of the capitalist countries. We are powerful in our own right and the justness of our position. It is our duty, however, to tell and explain to the capitalist countries that they are wrong to think the fundamental issue of our time is the war between the socialist regime and them. (Fanon 07)

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Moreover, this book is a critical look at colonialism; the practice of taking political control of another country with the intention of establishing a settlement and exploiting the people economically. Colonialism began in Europe around the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and it is still practiced today in some parts of the world. Fanon had a personal interest in colonialism and his book focuses on the ways colonialism historically sought to oppress and subjugate much of the third world through racism and repeated violence. In addition to the system of racism, Fanon argues that colonialism is also a system of violence, which seeks to control and oppress the colonized through violent means. From the beginning, Fanon claims that: “the colonial situation was colored by violence and their cohabitation or rather the exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer continued at the point of the bayonet and canon fire” (Fanon 75).

Additionally, the Colonial control was taken by violence because the struggle was between the two forces, the colonized and the colonizer. Fanon argues that, “for the colonized, all he has ever seen on his land is that he can be arrested, beaten, and starved with impunity” (Fanon 111). Thus, Fanon implies, there is no end to the violence of colonialism. It does not stop once power is established. Rather, violence has constant presence in the front and center of the lives of all colonized individuals.

Fanon refers to the widespread violence in colonial countries as *atmospheric violence*; i.e. violence has spread everywhere that it can be inhaled. For Fanon, the proof and justification of this persistent violence is that colonialism cannot be overcome through peaceful means. The colonized masses, Fanon claims, “intuitively believe that their liberation must be achieved and can only be achieved by force” (Fanon 33). For the colonized, violence is a purifying force and it also rids them of the inferiority complex that was forced upon them by the racist ideology of colonialism.

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### **2.3.2. Decolonization vs Neocolonialism and Social Class**

Decolonization, neocolonialism and social class are among the essential themes tackled in this book. *The Wretched of the Earth* is considered as a series of events that follows the struggle of the colonized nation and its transfer from colonialism to independence in a process known as decolonization which is the collapse of colonialism with all its forms. The first step in which a new nation is built is through the development of a collective national consciousness which is considered as a shared identity that gathers people as one entity under the slogan independent nation.

However, the trouble with national consciousness according to Fanon is that creating and forming a collective identity that covers all members of a nation is somehow impossible. This is because of the fact that the national consciousness of a newly appearing nation revolves around the national bourgeoisie who are the ruling class of the colonial society and the developing nation who lives a westernized form of life. In addition to that, for Fanon, the suitable way to avoid neocolonialism in the new nation is to integrate agrarian populations into the government with the very lowest class who are known as the lumpenproletariat in order to be rid of the social class and come up with a balanced and just nation.

### **2.3.3. The Role of Rural Farmers in Achieving Decolonization**

Decolonization and liberation cannot be achieved without the peasant masses who are known as the largest social class of the third world. Rural farmers live traditional lives that still resemble precolonial culture particularly the lumpenproletariat who are important to revolution. National politics neglected the peasant masses and considered them unwanted. But for Fanon, the lumpenproletariat are considered as the most valuable revolutionary forces of a colonized people. They must be called up first and decolonization cannot be achieved without them because the act of decolonizing is the

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concern of the entire nation where both classes must come together in fighting against the colonial power. The lumpenproletariat are an important group in declaring a revolution because they are always prepared to make sacrifices, willing to give all they have. Fanon says, "When the classes come together, it can produce an explosive mixture of unexpected power" (Fanon 398).

For Fanon the teamwork is all that is needed to decolonize a country and build a new nation. Arendt argues that, "Decolonization, therefore, implies the urgent need to thoroughly challenge the colonial situation. Its definition can, if we want to describe it accurately, be summed up in the well-known words: The last shall be first. Decolonization is verification of this. At a descriptive level, therefore, any decolonization is a success" (Fanon 107). Moreover, Bhabha states, "The struggle for a national liberation is not a question of bridging the gap in one giant stride. The epic is played out on a difficult, day-to-day basis and the suffering endured far exceeds that of the colonial period" (80).

Decolonization is always a violent event at whatever level because it involves both sides and each one has its own goal to achieve through a revolution. On the one hand, the colonizer strives to spread control and manipulate the other side, and on the other hand, the colonized aims to be rid of the colonial role and build an independent nation with self-sufficiency and reliance.

*The Wretched of the Earth* is interweaved with that of Jean Paul Sartre who wrote the introduction of this book. Sartre was a major figure in the existentialist school which values the freedom of humans to create their own world. It asserts that the world starts with the free actions of human individuals. Sartre was interested in Fanon's view about violence; in particular, the role violence plays in affirming the power of the colonized. Neil Roberts explains Sartre's reading of Fanon stating that, "Violence is fundamentally

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an activity emerging from the category of agency .Agency here refers to one's ability to act. Beyond simple questions of acquiring control or potency, it involves a person's ability to make decisions" (Roberts 143). Sartre concludes that Fanon's stress on violence is the first step that shows the path to freedom through concrete things the colonized were doing rather than abstract ones.

*In The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon argues that it is only through the different means of violence that the colonized nations can declare a revolution and come up to an absolute change. Fanon's focus was on the peasant workers and their role in the revolution because they are people who have the will to fight against the colonial domination with a concrete motivation. Moreover, Fanon describes the revolution to independence as emotional, focusing on individual feeling and black consciousness.

*The Wretched of the Earth* is considered as a psychiatric and psychological evaluation based on Fanon's own experience as a psychiatrist whose first aim behind writing this book is to explore and interpret not only the influence, but also the impact of colonization on both the individual and the nation. Furthermore, this book views the colonized world from their perspective like in Foucault's book *Discipline and Punish* where he questioned the basic assumptions that underlie society. Fanon did the same thing when he questioned the basic assumptions of colonialism. Foucault argues:

But the punishment –body relation is not the same as it was in the torture during public executions. The body now serves as an instrument or intermediary: if one intervenes upon it to imprison it, or to make it work, it is in order to deprive the individual of a liberty that is regarded both as right and property. The body according to this penalty, is caught up in a system of constraints and privations, obligations, and prohibitions.

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Physical pain, the pain of the body itself, is no longer the constituent element of the penalty. From being an art of unbearable sensations punishment has become an economy of suspended rights. "(Foucault 75).

Fanon wanted to know whether violence is a policy or an approach that should be used to wipe out colonialism. In addition to that, Fanon wanted to probe whether or not the native intellectuals who are influenced by the western way of thinking and call for decolonization are with or supporting the same method of technology the white world used in order to colonize. In all these questions, Fanon wanted to uncover the methods of control the white world used to dominate the colonized, and this is what pushed Fanon to call for a radical change with colonial culture by rejecting their ideas and culture in order to come up with a pure revolutionary consciousness. Fanon glorified violence as a necessary step that must be taken to heal from the rupture that was caused by colonialism.

Furthermore, Fanon and Foucault think differently about technologies. On the one hand, Foucault sees them as a prison of France. On the other hand, Fanon sees that the white world is the core of power. In other words, the natives are the real ones who exert power, while the white world is seen as a victim who is just imitating. Thus, Fanon wanted to classify whites, and native intellectuals who choose to follow the western values as opposed sides. Fanon fails to see how what Foucault calls the natives as the stream of power and control and the white world as victims. Furthermore, in Foucault's article "Discipline and Punish", he refers to the disciplinary society meaning that power and control are nowadays exercised through disciplinary means in different institutions such as schools, prisons, etc. Thus, Fanon lists many colonized people as mentally ill, as it is shown in the last chapter of the book where he presents various cases of children, and adults who have been fallen mad because of colonialism where he used the thought's



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systems and technologies that Foucault refers to as a symptomatic western disciplinary society.

Jean Paul Sartre (21 June 1905-15 April 1980), a French novelist and the existentialist philosopher, is the first one who wrote the preface of the first book where Fanon argued that the colonized people cannot be free from the colonial rule unless by purifying and cleaning all aspects of European culture from their societies. In addition to that, for Fanon, a nation had to achieve its own cultural, political, and social sophistication before achieving national liberation. He refers to the United States in this context as an example of an unsuccessful revolution because the colonies had kept using the cultural and political traditions of the British. *The Wretched of the Earth* picks up the damage caused by colonization with all its forms at all levels, ranging from the economic, the political, the cultural, to the psychological level.

### **2.4. Culture and the Emerging Nation**

Culture or national culture can be referred to as the values and attitudes shared by individuals from a specific country. These values are the most important thing that differentiates one country from another because a country without culture is a country without heritage. Nationalism seeks to preserve and promote a nation's traditional culture and encourage pride in achievements and how one nation lives in solidarity.

#### **2.4.1. The Role of Culture in Creating Nationalism**

The role of culture is another theme discussed in this book, where Fanon argues that one of the ways in which colonial forces oppress colonized people is through the erasure of their culture, typically black culture. Racist colonial powers claim that colonized countries, especially the African continent, are deprived of culture. In addition

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to that, the absence of culture is considered as the extreme meaning of barbarism, and colonialism assumes that during the precolonial era, Africa was similar to a darkness of the human soul. As an important move in decolonization, Fanon therefore maintains in proving the existence of one's culture and exerting it on a worldwide stage when he argue that, "the recognition of a national culture and its right to exist is important in building a new nation" (Fanon 315). With the widespread decolonization of Africa came the establishment of Negro culture, which is defined and considered as a unifying black culture that recognized all cultures of Africa.

Fanon, however, asserts that establishing a universal black culture is impossible, nor it is helpful to decolonization, because black culture is not universal and it is not considered as a culture for the settler. Instead, Fanon claims that that individual struggle for nationhood is the unifying black culture, and this cannot be appreciated on a continental level. Moreover, Fanon explains negritude as an affirmation of African culture and patrimony, which attempts to bring a combined black culture to the world stage. For example, colonized literature in Africa has not historically been a national literature but a Negro literature. Thus, colonized literature examines the continent of Africa as a whole rather than the individual countries and cultures that make it up. Negritude reached Africa as well as North America, where the black world came into being, and it included all black cultures affected by colonization, including those in Ghana, Senegal, Mali, and even those in the United States.

The Negritude movement considers these cultures collectively as a black culture, and does not consider them individually as independent nations. However, Fanon states that, "the African culture rather than an individual national culture leads African intellectuals into a dead end" (Fanon 50). Fanon contends that a unifying black culture

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cannot be established because it ignores important aspects of individual black culture and it works against the process of decolonization.

Fanon mentions black American writers, including Richard Wright and Langston Hughes, who were unable to build a collective black culture in the United States. Black Americans realized that their existential problems differed from those faced by the Africans, since each black experience is different, and Fanon says that these experiences cannot possibly be presented by one single culture. The culture of Richard and Langston, Fanon says, is “fundamentally different” from those faced by Jomo Kenyatta, an anticolonial activist and the prime minister of Kenya, and Léopold Senghor, a Senegalese poet, and the co-founder of Negritude. These conflicting and contradicting histories again suggests that one unifying black culture is impossible. In fact, Fanon argues, “the only common denominator between the blacks from Chicago and the Nigerians or Tanganyikans was that they all defined themselves in relation to the whites” (Fanon 50).

In other words, each black culture is unique and unrelated. Fanon states that the black or Negro culture broke up because a unifying Negro culture attempts to express black culture on a continental scale which, Fanon says, is impossible to the cause. According to Fanon, culture is the expression of national consciousness, which also means that national consciousness is the highest form of culture and it is established during the building of a nation. Bhabha argue that:

The colonized intellectual should not be concerned with choosing how or where he decides to wage the national struggle. To fight for national culture first of all, means fighting for the liberation of the nation, the tangible matrix from which culture can grow. One cannot divorce the combat for culture from the people's struggle for liberation. For example, all the men and

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women fighting French colonialism in Algeria with their bare hands are no strangers to the national culture of Algeria. The Algerian national culture takes form and shape during the fight, in prison, facing the guillotine, and in the capture and destruction of the French military positions. (Bhabha 100).

### **2.4.2. The Anti-Colonial Resistance**

Fanon as a psychiatrist played an active role in the Algerian war of independence from the French colonial rule. He remains a key thinker on decolonization and in the struggle to gain freedom. Fanon's focus was on the role of rural peasants, the urban working class, and political leadership in the anticolonial struggle and importantly, the role of violence as a necessary element to achieve decolonization and the construction of a postcolonial national culture and identity. According to Fanon, the colonial world can be understood as the confrontation between two forces, those of the colonial settler and the native population.

Colonial rule was imposed by European states in order to exploit the resources of the colonized area, and indeed, for Fanon Europe is literally the creation of the third world. A central aspect of the oppression of the native people is their dehumanization and the attempt to destroy their national culture. This is achieved by the use of language that degrades the natives to the status of animals. In fact, the oppressive colonial machinery constrains the native population and enforces colonial rule, and this is exactly what triggers and gives rise to the aggression and resistance of the natives. As Fanon puts it "the symbols of social order are at one and the same time inhibitory and simulating" (Fanon 35).

In the colonial system, the urban working class is the part of the native society which is most necessary and irreplaceable if the colonial machine is to run smoothly

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leading to a privileged position in the colonial system. It follows that, as opposed to the rural peasantry who have nothing to lose during the violent anticolonial revolution. Nevertheless, despite the aggression, resistance and revolutionary character of the rural peasantry, Fanon emphasizes on the need for carefully organizing the anticolonial struggle. An important factor in organizing the anticolonial resistance, in order to overcome internal conflicts between the natives, is the unification of the people under a revolutionary national identity. In addition to that, a central element to establish that and identity is the use of violence.

As we recall, it is the violence of the colonial system itself that advances the aggression and resistance of the native people. Moreover, the violence used by the settler upon which the entire colonial world is built, proves to the natives that violence is the only language used and understood by the settler. Furthermore, in order for the native population to persist in their struggle, the people must know where they are going and why. What is needed to achieve a real decolonization is a truly independent national identity and culture, formed by searching the past and reclaiming the native's history on the one hand, and by looking to the future in order to find a new and independent direction to development on the other.

### **2.5. Mental Liberation as a Path to Decolonization**

Another theme, which was discussed throughout this book, is the ideal of liberation with its different forms, not just the land. Fanon argues that decolonization will not only liberate the colonized from exploitation, but will also free his mind. A persistent theme throughout *The Wretched of the Earth* is the different forms of consciousness, or self-awareness, that liberation and independence can bring. The most important one for Fanon is a national consciousness, or an awareness of oneself as belonging to a free and

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absolute nation. There is the example of Africans under the European colonialism. Africans have no nation, because they are under the control of the European authorities. However, in decolonization, Africans are liberated to think of themselves as having control over the conditions of their life. The freeing of their land from colonial control is also a freeing of their minds from repression and subjugation.

On the one hand, Fanon narrates the history of decolonization, in particular how people come into a consciousness that leads them to overthrow colonialism and how people are organized during and after independence. Fanon is also theorizing about why events spread out the way they do, drawing upon both Marxist theories of class and revolution and psychological theories about the mental state of men under conditions of violence. By merging history and theory together, Fanon makes a powerful argument about how decolonization happens, and why it is important. In addition to that, *The Wretched of the Earth* is an investigation in the psychology of the colonized and their path to liberation.

### **Conclusion**

Fanon's book *The Wretched of the Earth* is a psychiatric analysis of colonization. That is to say, he analyzes and refers to colonialism as a kind of mental illness that negatively affects both the mental health of individuals and that of societies. In addition to that, colonialism can be referred to as a kind of slavery, because the world of colonialism consists of master and slave, colonizer and colonized. Moreover, whatever good aim the European colonizer might have allegedly had, colonialism according to them is also necessitated as Fanon argues, "White people may speak out of humanitarianism, their actions suggest the opposite. Europeans are never done talking of

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Man, yet murder man everywhere they find them, at the corner of everyone of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe” (Fanon 45)

Fanon's aim is to call for the colonized to rebel against their masters who are the whites, so that the third world can start a new history of man, or invent a new social order independent from the European values and traditions.

## Chapter Three: An Analytical Study on Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks*

### Introduction

Fanon was born in Martinique. During the Second World War, he joined the Free French Army, and then he moved to Lyon to finish his studies qualifying as a psychiatrist because he took the experience from his teacher Aimé Césaire. In 1952, Fanon wrote his first book entitled *Black Skin, White Masks*. Then he moved to Algeria where he worked in a psychiatric hospital treating both the French soldiers who had been traumatized by torturing Algerians as well as the Algerian tortured victims of colonialism. The experience Fanon took from his teacher helped him to investigate this field deeply, it influenced his psychology as well, and he progressively began to focus more on supporting the Algerian liberation efforts. The book *Black Skin, White Masks* was written during a time of dramatic change in world history.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Victorian social standards had given the chance to more progressive and experimental manners of behavior, and this social transfer is so related to the coming of psychoanalysis, which began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and elevated in popularity during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most influential and pioneering psychoanalytic theorists are Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung who have encouraged people to think differently about several and various issues such as sex, family, and morality, smoothing the way to writers like Fanon to use psychoanalytic theory to examine several phenomena at a larger scope. As a backdrop to all of this, the first and second world wars were the cause of global rebellion. The serious distress they caused came in parallel with developments in science, which led many people to lose their religious faith and switch to systems like psychoanalysis to explain human behavior instead.



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In the introduction, Fanon emphasizes on racism where he ought to understand the relationship between the black and white people. He argues that in this case, psychoanalysis is a useful method for understanding the black experience, and that, through this analysis the destruction of psychological complex that has developed because of colonialism could be demolished. Additionally, Fanon through this book gives a general overview about racism and ends up arguing that it is hard to understand the real nature of black people's experience because white society or what is known as colonialism has created a hurtful superstition and denigrated their reputation.

#### **3.1. Alienation and Colonialism**

The first theme that can be discussed in this book is *Alienation* and *colonialism*. At this level, the central idea must be on Language which is considered as the first and major tool used to communicate and engage with people around the world. In addition to that, the importance of language is one of the most significant themes in postcolonial studies. As Fanon demonstrates, "language is not simply a neutral tool through which people express themselves, rather, language gives people a sense of their own identity" (Fanon 35). Fanon developed the idea that colonialism encouraged or pushed the colonized population to get rid of their identity, heritage, culture, and way of life. This is one of the most significant ways that colonialism used to foster feelings of self-hatred among the colonized people.

In addition to that, the black people are not only oppressed by the whites, but they contradict each other as well. Fanon emphasized the idea of kindness, generosity, and love, though he was not too much convinced that these elements are enough to erase and get rid of racism, because racism is so deep, and it is ingrained in people's psychology. Instead, people should understand how their way of thinking has been

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formed and shaped by racism. Moreover, this theme is also concerned with the idea that black people are not considered as humans within the colonial mind and, thus, are not treated the way humans should be treated. This becomes something of brutality, because the more the whites treat black people as less than humans, the less convinced they become that black people are human. In other words, the black people gradually lose their self-confidence as humans and this is the consequence of colonial racism. As Fanon argues, "All colonized people, in other words, people in whom an inferiority complex has taken root, whose local cultural originality has been committed to the grave, position themselves in relation to the civilizing language :i.e., the metropolitan culture" (Fanon 205).

In David Livingstone's book titled *Less than human*, he refers to this idea of dehumanization where he argues. "We all know, despite what we see in the movies, that it's difficult, psychologically, to kill another human being up close and in cold blood, or to inflict atrocities on them" ( Livingstone 502). An example of Alienation happened during the Holocaust, when the Nazis referred to Jewish people as rats. Slave owners throughout history considered slaves as subhuman and as animals.

#### **3.2. Psychological Oppression as a Consequence of Colonialism**

This is another theme discussed in this book because this is Fanon's field of interest. As a psychiatrist, Fanon is concerned with understanding and examining both the psychological and material dimensions of colonial rule. This way of thinking about colonialism was rebellious at the time of Fanon's production, where western beliefs about people's psychology of color tended to be unrefined. In fact, Fanon refers frequently that the whites or the western culture cannot understand the black peoples' suffering. Subsequently, Fanon's significant goal in *Black Skin, White Masks* is to demonstrate how

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formerly various documents of colonial reality have molded the psychological experiences of black people by colonialism.

In addition to that, in this book, Fanon's aim is to examine and analyze the impact of racism on blacks. The clearest example about this is Fanon's experience when a child saw him and shouted, "Maman, look, a Negro! I'm scared!" (84). This experience implies how black people are viewed as a symbol of frightening and a sign of ugliness which damages their self-image meaning that the experience of racism has a bad effect on people's psychology and made them feel alienated from their own selves. Fanon argues, "The negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation" (Fanon 42). Moreover, the effect of racism on black people caused negative consequences that are called in the postcolonial context *psychopathology*. The latter is defined as the abnormality in a person's psyche and how this person thinks about himself as well as the world he is living in.

Moreover, the blacks also were experiencing another form of racism that is known as negrophobia. This term means the fear of black people and it is the consequence of colonialism. This naughty treatment of the blacks pushed Fanon to study about the psychology of oppression, which is defined as the way of understanding psychological fragility as a product of social dehumanization and oppression. Alice Walker argues in his book entitled *The Way Forward Is with a Broken Heart*, that "the definition and critical analysis of oppression has left out the complexity, voices, and lived experiences of individuals who have been severely impacted by injustice and oppression" (174 Walker). Furthermore, we might be asking, what the reason for oppression might be. We understand that oppression occurs when individuals are systematically subjected to political, economic, cultural, or social degradation because they belong to a certain social

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group. Thus, this inferiority caused what is known as *psychopathology* which can be referred to as the abnormality or disease caused by several factors such as dehumanization and treating humans as sub-humans. Finally, racism and colonialism cannot be only practiced on the oppressed but also on the oppressor but in different ways.

#### **3.3. The Effect of Colonialism on the Colonized's Psyche: Self-Image vs Self-Hatred**

An additional theme debated in this book is how colonialism can affect the people's psyche. Colonialism has badly affected people's psychology and it changed their understanding of themselves. This is among the factors that led the blacks change their view of themselves and make them develop a desire to be white because they see that the white people have increased opportunities and profit to live the way they want. The wish to be white causes a psychological damage and loss of oneself. As mentioned in chapter Seven, "The Negro and Recognition", when Hegel argues, "self-consciousness exists in itself and for itself, in that and by the fact that it exists for another self-consciousness; that is to say, it is only by being acknowledged or recognized" (Hegel 183).

In other words, the black people do not consider themselves as blacks until a white recognizes them and forces upon them a sense of inferiority. This implies that identity is always originated from interaction and relationships that classify people in different social locality. On the account of the recognition that is entangled in identity, white people create their own sense of superiority by claiming that blacks are inferior. As a result, getting rid of an inferiority complex in black people is not just a question of correcting a psychological matter; rather it requires the rearrangement of the whole society in which this structure of inferiority and superiority is maintained. In addition to that, colonialism made black people hate themselves and made the white society hate

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them, the fact which caused the feeling of shame and self-hatred. Fanon describes the desire of black people to become white as *shame and self-contempt Nausea*.

The inferiority of the black people is not only the outcome of colonialism, but also the division among the blacks themselves, especially those who helped to spread the power of the colonizers as superiors and forbid black people from seeking power and revolt against the whites. Moreover, even within black communities, colonized subjects themselves are instructed to hate their own blackness because of all these circumstances since they believe that the blacks are a stereotype of negativity as Fanon argues, “this kind of self-hatred fractures black people’s sense of their own identity. Anyone who is taught to hate a fundamental part of themselves will not only be tormented by self-contempt, but will also feel confused about who they are” (75). As a result, the marginality of the black people gives the feeling of *Alienation*. Thus, the whites will never have the chance to understand black’s experience about self-hatred that is why it is difficult for the blacks to understand themselves. Fanon claims, “Hatred is not a given; it is a struggle to acquire hatred, which has to be dragged into being, clashing with acknowledged guilt complexes. Hatred cries out to exist, and he who hates must prove his hatred through action and the appropriate behavior in a sense he has to embody hatred” (100).

Furthermore, colonialism makes the black people hate themselves through treating them as sub-humans because of their skin color. This is what pushed them to hate themselves because of their lower self-esteem. The example of self-hatred is enslavement. Slaves are treated like animals and goods to be exchanged by businessmen and between slave traders.

### **3.4. The Complex of Inferiority Instilled by Racism**

Racism can be referred to as the belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to the race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races. Thus, the colonized people want and try to be as white as possible in order to avoid what is known as inferiority and this is what caused the people of color to lose one's self. In addition to that, inferiority can be defined as the feeling of doubt and uncertainty about oneself.

*Black Skin, White Masks* is considered as an analytical study which analyzes and investigates the experience of black people in a white racist society. This racism affected and influenced their psychology in a negative way. For example, a white child told his mother, "Mama, look, a Negro, I am frightened!" (84), this expression implies that racism was taught since childhood, and to children who are supposed to be considered as a tabula rasa. Thus, Negrophobia or hatred of black people is implanted since childhood in the white world. In Australia, for example, the Australian Aborigines are the native people of the Australian continent and they were seen as less than humans and they were mistreated when Britain took control of Australia and its laws in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Black and non-white people in general witnessed the deconstruction of their esteemed values during colonialism, the fact that caused them to have this psychological defect of scorning themselves and their own culture by themselves. As discussed in the previous chapter, Fanon related the treatment of this psychological condition to the retrieval of the past, especially the cultural past.

**3.5. The Loss of Identity and the Delusion of Assimilation**

After the destruction of the colonized peoples' cultural heritage, and after causing them to view themselves as inferior, the colonizer sought to instill and brainwash the colonized to think of structuring their identity once again by the delusion of assimilation, i.e.: by wearing the white mask. Under the colonial rule, the non-white people were fooled by this white mask for a while, and the movement towards assimilation started, but sooner they realized that it was a mere delusion. The colonized realized that assimilation is hypocritical, and that, if the whites did not accept their looks in their origin, how could they accept their fake new looks. The non-white colonized people realized that their inferiority is not something new, but it is inherited in the structure of white societies, especially the modern ones. For instance, whites are always synonymous with being a human, whilst blacks are the symbol of lesser humans. Thus, racism and inferiority are the consequence of blackness being conditioned as essentially evil. The notion of blackness and racism has been incorporated within everyone from the black women to the black men.

Colonialism or the white world always consider themselves as superior in comparison with the blacks. This is what makes the blacks generate a sense of hatred. In the sixth chapter entitled "Negro and Psychopathology", we can see that the advantage is given to the whites even in the Antilles where most people are black. Still, the role of the hero is given to the whites, while the blacks are considered as inferior beings because of their skin color, the fact that makes them hope to become whites and this is what causes the loss of identity.

### **3.6. Desire and Competition towards Whiteness**

Another significant theme discussed in this book speaks about people of African descent experience and of the widespread racism and discrimination, which make people hesitate in understanding what the world stands for or how people are judged. Is it by their skin color, or their social class? This is what pushed Fanon to generate two main questions. The first one is, “what does man want!”, and the second one is, “what does the black man want!” There is a difference between the man and the black man in the colonized world.

In addition to that, the black people are not considered from the category of people, and that is why the desire to be white for the blacks is always increased. The first thing that should be done to be considered as white, is to speak the French language as Fanon said, “To speak a language is to participate in a world” (Fanon 103). According to colonialism, if speaking a language means participating in a world and adopting a civilization, then the language of the colonizer is imposed by centuries of colonial domination. Moreover, the desire to be white is considered as an interracial desire which is a form of self-destruction. In that sense, there is an exchange of feeling for both man and women. For example, the black woman who desires a white man believes in something fallacious indicating that his body is a bridge to wealth and access.

Mayotte Capécia's novel *I Am a Martinican Woman* (1948) is an exemplary of the black woman's psyche and of the limits of interracial desire. Not only does the black woman desire a white man, but also the black man desires white women whom he had been taught are the symbols of innocence and purity. Fanon inspires this from Germaine Guex's book *La névrose d'abandon* (1950), when he claims, “When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine” (Guex 45). The white body and the black desire for that body function



### **Chapter Three: An Analytical Study on Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks***

similarly as language does in the initiative chapter of this book because the language is considered as the first tool used to contact with people and it is the only thing which shows your social class as well as your race. Thus, in each section of the story, interracial desire is morbid and pathological, not because of the desire of the characters, but because anti-black colonialism is an overall project that has interposed and altered all aspects of lifeworld.

The internalized racism is also present in this theme, where the black people try to distance themselves from blackness and this is proven when black women refuse to marry black men, which is thus a form of self-hatred. As a result, colonialism affected even blacks between each other, not only blacks compared to whites.

#### **Conclusion**

The Book of *Black Skin, White Masks* addressed the complex ways in which identity, especially Blackness, is constructed and produced. In other words, no matter how smart a black person may become, whites will always practice a sense of inferiority. This way of thinking was designed to keep Blacks attached to an inferior positioning within the colonial worldview. The double self-perception of a black subject who has lost his native cultural origin produces an inferior sense in the black subjects which makes them try to imitate the colonizer's culture. Moreover, in order to create a new order that will end racism, the recognition of black humanity is necessary. The black subject should be able to be considered as a full human without a necessary reference to whiteness. The Negritude movement is considered as the umbrella and the open door to make an end to racism and give rise to a universal humanity that is not shaped by the white world or the white existence.

## General Conclusion

This work shows an overall background to this study, in addition to the most famous critics and concepts of postcolonial theory. Moreover, it tackles the historical development of postcolonialism. Therefore, to analyze the feedback and the counter reaction of the blacks against the white domination, this research selected Frantz Fanon's works *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks* for postcolonial literature.

After long centuries of oppression and discrimination, critics and thinkers started to carry out taking the responsibility to reconstruct their motherland. They tried to find solutions to be healed and treated from the psychological and physical injuries caused by the colonial power.

For a long period of time, non-white people experienced different images of discrimination and violence because for the whites, black people are inferior sub human animals, and therefore, they were prohibited from living a normal life involved in the world, and from having equivalent rights with the whites. Moreover, this violent treatment provoked the blacks to revolt and attempt to restore their rights in many forms. In Addition to that, there was no value given to the black people even in the Antilles where most people are blacks, still the role of the hero was always given to the whites because of the prevailed racist thinking. However, after the disclosure of the Negritude movement and the postcolonial theory, the blacks started to take a position nearly as the whites, thus many of the postcolonial writers tried to attack any behavior that was against the blacks to uplift from the miserable status they were living in.

Fanon wrote two remarkable works on decolonization, *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*, and the original name of this latter was *An Essay for*

*the Disalienation of Blacks*. In these two books, Fanon wanted to show how the blacks are discriminated and marginalized because of their skin color. In addition to that, they are symbolized by the whites as the source of ugliness and as a mere body without minds. In other words, they are seen as animals. Therefore, Fanon calls for a psychological or mental independence and decolonization from the mental restraints or complexes that were imposed by the colonizer, and that is by resisting their language and culture.

*The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, white Masks* are considered as a pathway that shows how the colonized people ought to liberate themselves through national reawakening and consciousness in order to restore their nation. Fanon argued, “For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is the first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and above all dignity” (65).

Moreover, Frantz Fanon is considered as a warrior and revolutionary thinker. He took the experience from the struggle against the French army in the Algerian Revolution, and his thinking was always about obtaining freedom and liberation.

For Fanon, violence can be the only way that must be undertaken by the occupied people to achieve decolonization. In other words, the coexistence is not a solution. Moreover, Fanon’s thinking is considered as the backbone without which, there is no hope for liberation. The aim behind these two books as well as the postcolonial theory is to destruct all the constraints imposed by colonialism, in order to fulfill and obtain dignity and freedom from misery and slavery.

In the last decades, the physical colonization turned into a cultural one. That is to say, colonialism affects not only the body, but also the mind and the influences the colonized’s way of thinking in order to uproot their minds.

The black people feel themselves stranger inside their own countries and try to get out from this misery by using the tool of immigration, even if it can cause suffering and risks of death. This can be seen as the emergence of a new reality where people are obliged to confront hard living conditions. That is why the postcolonial intellectuals glorify violence as a means to obtain justice and satisfy the needs of the blacks, and the inevitability of struggle. It is the only way that can defeat colonialism and grant a concrete decolonization, to free the individual and collective minds from the psychological and cultural colonization and to come up to a change. This change can be seen in the rebuilding of the nation and in the birth of new human beings where liberation, freedom, and human dignity will be fulfilled.

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## Abstract

For so long, superiority and power were held by the whites while the blacks experienced different types of discrimination and violence. They lived under the whites' control and domination. The racist societies viewed the blacks as sub-humans and just bodies without minds. Therefore, this mistreatment triggered the non-white people to fight for their rights and status to retrieve their dignity as human beings all over the world through what is known as postcolonial theory and Negritude movement, the fact that can change the negative image of the blacks. Frantz Fanon, who is known as the leader of postcolonial theory, used his thinking to transform the blacks' position and give them the possibility to live equally with the whites and to erase the differences. The postcolonial theory came up to help the blacks change their miserable conditions and make them valuable. In addition to that, it allowed them upraise from the discriminatory circumstances they were living in into a new life with a new nation where there is freedom and liberation from the constraints imposed by the colonizer. Concerning this issue, the work focuses on two books written by Frantz Fanon: *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks* to examine how postcolonialism in general and postcolonial writers in specific portray the struggle of blacks in the whites world to restore their position in the world . In addition to that, the work examines how the blacks strived to achieve their decolonization and become independent.

**Key words:** Postcolonialism, discrimination, Decolonization, mental decolonization, retrieving the identity, Cultural Revolution.

### المخلص

تمسك البيض بالتفوق والقوة لفترة طويلة بينما عانى السود من أنواع مختلفة من التمييز والعنف. كانوا يعيشون تحت سيطرة البيض وهيمنتهم. نظرت المجتمعات العنصرية إلى السود على أنهم شبه بشر وأجساد بلا عقول. لذلك، أدى هذا سوء المعاملة إلى دفع الناس غير البيض إلى الكفاح من أجل حقوقهم ووضعهم لاستعادة كرامتهم كبشر في جميع أنحاء العالم من خلال ما يعرف بنظرية ما بعد الاستعمار وحركة السود، وهي حقيقة يمكن أن تغير الصورة السلبية للسود. استخدم فرانز فانون، المعروف باسم قائد نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار، تفكيره في تغيير وضع السود ومنحهم إمكانية العيش بالتساوي مع البيض ومحو الفروق. ظهرت نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار لمساعدة السود على تغيير ظروفهم البائسة وجعلها ذات قيمة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، سمحت لهم بالانتقال من الظروف التمييزية التي كانوا يعيشون فيها إلى حياة جديدة مع أمة جديدة حيث توجد الحرية والتحرر من القيود التي فرضها المستعمر. فيما يتعلق بهذه المسألة، تم التركيز بهذه المذكرة على كتابين لفرانز فانون: *The Wretched of the Earth*، و*بشرة سوداء* و*واقعة بيضاء (Black Skin, White Masks)* لفحص كيف يصور ما بعد الاستعمار بشكل عام وكتاب ما بعد الاستعمار بشكل محدد صراع السود في عالم البيض لاستعادة موقعهم في العالم. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يدرس العمل كيف سعى السود لتحقيق إنهاء الاستعمار والاستقلال.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** ما بعد الاستعمار، التمييز، إنهاء الاستعمار، التحرر من الاستعمار العقلي، استرجاع الهوية، الثورة الثقافية.

### Résumé

Pendant longtemps, la supériorité et le pouvoir ont été détenus par les Blancs tandis que les Noirs ont subi différents types de discrimination et de violence. Ils vivaient sous le contrôle et la domination des Blancs. Les sociétés racistes considéraient les Noirs comme des sous-humains et des corps sans esprit. Par conséquent, ces mauvais traitements ont incité les non-blancs à se battre pour leurs droits et leur statut afin de retrouver leur dignité d'êtres humains partout dans le monde à travers ce qu'on appelle la théorie postcoloniale et le mouvement de la négritude, le fait que cela peut changer l'image négative des noirs. Frantz Fanon, qui est connu comme le leader de la théorie postcoloniale, a utilisé sa pensée pour transformer la position des Noirs et leur donner la possibilité de vivre à égalité avec les Blancs et d'effacer les différences. La théorie postcoloniale est venue pour aider les Noirs à changer leurs conditions misérables et à les rendre précieuses. En plus de cela, cela leur a permis de passer des circonstances discriminatoires dans lesquelles ils vivaient à une nouvelle vie avec une nouvelle nation où il y a la liberté et la libération des contraintes imposées par le colonisateur. Concernant cette question, l'ouvrage a choisi deux livres écrits par Frantz Fanon : *Les Damnés De La Terre* et *Peaux Noires Masques Blancs* pour examiner comment le postcolonialisme en général et les écrivains postcoloniaux en particulier dépeignent la lutte des Noirs dans le monde blanc pour restaurer leur position dans le monde. En plus de cela, le travail examine comment les Noirs se sont efforcés de réaliser leur décolonisation et de devenir indépendants.

**Mots-clés :** postcolonialism, discrimination, décolonisation, décolonisation mentale, récupération de l'identité, Révolution culturelle.