

## **Frantz Fanon and the resistance to post-colonialism**

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**Abstract:** The research delves into the emergence of post-colonial discourse, tracing its roots to the decline of European empires in the mid-20th century. It highlights Frantz Fanon's pivotal role in this discourse, emphasizing his critique of colonialism and advocacy for liberation. Fanon's analysis focuses on the psychological effects of colonialism on both the colonized and colonizers, challenging notions of racial superiority. The summary also explores Fanon's examination of colonial literature, particularly Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness," and its portrayal of colonial brutality. Overall, the summary underscores Fanon's enduring impact on post-colonial thought, inspiring ongoing struggles against oppression and injustice.

**Keywords:** Post-colonial, Discourse, Frantz Fanon, Colonialism, Resistance, Liberation, Racism, Decolonization, Intellectuals, Psychological impact, Oppression.

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### Post-colonial discourse

Post-colonialism studies grew up on the basis of the collapse of European empires in the forties of the twentieth century and fifties and sixties with the repercussions of the Cold War and the emergence of the Third World Countries: a phrase that was launched by the French demographer Alfred Sauvy and propagated by Jean-Paul Sartre.

In this regard, is usually cited the work of activist and psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, who was considered as the prophet of the Third World and "the purveyor of the transgressive and transitional truth"<sup>1</sup>. Many considered Fanon as the pioneer of the post-colonial theory especially in terms of his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, which was presented by the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre.

The post-colonial theory, or post-colonial discourse, did not know its way into existence only in the late seventies of the last century. The book of the American academic and intellectual postcolonial theorist Edward Said *Orientalism* is considered as a foundational, if not critical in this area.

Clearly, then, that the theory of post-colonial discourse emerged in the cultural landscape of the Anglophone countries, especially the United States of America. It been associated with Columbia University, then it associated with "new Aristotelian" in critics at the University of Chicago, and gender studies and women writing at Indiana University. These were launched by immigrant minority communities or of post-colonialist, in the forefront of those leading the trinity: Edward Said, the Indians Homi Bhabha and, the defending women colonized, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. All these are sons of the third world who have offered personal experiences and colonialism scars, to the first world (American) to teach in its major universities. It is worth mentioning that there are many other names attracted to the horizon, which offered the theoretical level to address many issues related to history, anthropology, geography, literature

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<sup>1</sup> Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London. P40.

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and criticism, such as: Sandra Harding, Benita Parry, Ella Shohat and Robert JC Young.

Edward Said has sought in *Orientalism* to study what he called the New Orientalism, which appeared at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, all in the perspective that led him also to study the Orientalism of the twentieth century as the heir to the nineteenth century Orientalism. He dealt with Orientalism as a significant content, and in this regard he indicated that "it has been estimated that around 60,000 books dealing with the Near Orient were written between 1800 and 1950; there is no remotely comparable figure for Oriental books about the West"<sup>1</sup>. It does not seem strange that these texts are a tool for hegemony, behind that innovative or imaginary image, and since ages, for the East the innovative and imaginary East.

Orientalism was studied as a cultural project of the West, or in other words: "the result was the production of material about the Orient, methods for studying it, and exempla that even Orientals did not have."<sup>2</sup> In the light of this single cultural does not seem strange that the relationship between East and West power relationship that is complex. The same amount that is being used by Orientalism on the superiority or what Edward Said sees as epistemology and ontological discrimination between East and West along with the false ideology, or as Rudyard Kipling said in a line of his famous poem *Barrack-Room Ballads* in 1892 "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet".

The subject of Orientalism and post-colonial studies are still in the research area, and despite a drop in classical Orientalism for the benefit of Orientalism of another kind: practical Orientalism; its strength is the experience and specialization. However, that does not help at all abandoned cultural strategy in the relationship, confrontational, that links between America and the Arab.

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<sup>1</sup> Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. P204.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, P127.

### **Frantz Fanon and the resistance difference**

The importance of Frantz Fanon is in the nature of his inception. He is one of the French colonies sons, and through the exercise of the profession of psychiatry, he fell in the problem of racism, and the implications from the oppression and dispossession of culture. Fanon found that the revolution goes through three stages, the first is about the settler's violence, in the second mounting internal divisions on society, and third is about the divisions and internal contradictions about the same colonizer. He did not lose sight of the importance of studying the role of intellectuals in the process of change. Through the similarity of the cultured with the culture of the colonizer, and then the stage of doubt and anxiety, leading to shift intellectuals to advocate for change, and regarding Fanon, "the body of his work splits between a Hegelian-Marxist dialectic, a phenomenological affirmation of Self and Other and the psychoanalytic ambivalence of the Unconscious."<sup>1</sup>

By virtue of the subsequent specialization psychiatry he realized that the world is a complex colonial and its durability depends on the delivery of both sides. If the colonizer did not agree on the continuation of this world, it would have collapsed on the spot, "that familiar alignment of colonial subjects – Black / White, Self / Other – is disturbed with one brief pause and the traditional grounds of racial identity are dispersed, whenever they are found to rest in the narcissistic myths of negritude or white cultural supremacy."<sup>2</sup>

The project of Frantz Fanon is based on the erosion of colonial racism and bias based on ethnic discrimination, as addressed in his book *Black Skin, White Masks* that "the Negro is not. Any more than the white man"<sup>3</sup>. This result to psychological damage to the practice of ethnic on the colonized and oppressed, through studies filed by patients from both

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<sup>1</sup> Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London P41.

<sup>2</sup> Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London. P40.

<sup>3</sup> Fanon, F. (1986) *Black skin, white masks*, Pluto, London. PxxIII

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parties, and is reflected in his book *The Wretched of the Earth*. In addition to the analysis of social structures and economic development through Marxist perspective, as we find the criticism of the elites that exercises the mechanism itself, which was brought by the colonizer, without any interest in building a society that has been undermined by colonialism. These elites, as described by Fanon “the black skin of these compradors was ‘masked’ by their complicity with the values of the white colonial powers”<sup>1</sup>.

Fanon absorbed the meaning of colonialism and realized the amount of damage which can affect the psychological structure of a black person. He began to track and address the moral impact on the human colonizer and colonized, through the exercise of the treatment clinical psychological which play a major role. Here Frantz Fanon's experience of understanding the meaning of the difference when a white girl saw him and her reaction to the colour of his skin, saying: “Mama, see the Negro! I’m frightened!”<sup>2</sup>.

If Fanon has the ability to challenge the racism, Toni Morrison made Sethe in the story of *Beloved*, the former slave forced to kill her kid to save her from all that what was ugly and the atrocities of colonialism. Toni Morrison imagined conditions of black representation in which many of realism, depth and sympathy when Sethe said: “Those white things have taken all I had or dreamed... and broke my heartstrings too. There is no bad luck in the word but whitefolks.”<sup>3</sup>

Edward Said has made of Frantz Fanon the defender counter-narrative of liberation, who belongs to the era of post-modernity, but Homi Bhabha hewed ideas from Fanon of post-structural theory of the Third World. While Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak emerged Frantz Fanon in its truest forms and the most simple and convincing as: a psychiatrist who went out from among the sons of the country in order to analyse in depth and

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<sup>1</sup>Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, Routledge, London, 1998, P 99

<sup>2</sup> Fanon, F. (1986) *Black skin, white masks*, Pluto, London. P84.

<sup>3</sup> Toni Morrison, *Beloved*, Ch. 9, P89.

force, as reflected in that terrible and complex mirror: cultural imperialism.

Edward Said thought that Frantz Fanon raised issues at the heart of the theory of post-colonial discourse, such as "slaves of modern times"<sup>1</sup> and decoding of colonialism from where it is" becoming historical and a violent phenomenon that required "absolute violence"<sup>2</sup>. The "violence in Fanon's text"<sup>3</sup> as described by Edward Said is the violence itself, for which Sartre was accused to support it, describing his introduction "which is even more bloodthirsty than the text itself"<sup>4</sup>. No one could compete with Frantz Fanon, in his writings, his positions, and at the level of preaching the theory of post-colonial discourse, but the poet Aime Césaire in his book *Discourse on Colonialism*, and Jewish Tunisian Albert Memmi in his book *Portrait Du Colonisateur*, and the Senegalese ex-President Léopold Sédar Senghor and many others who fall within the resisters of colonialism of the revolution.

Frantz Fanon did not believe that the colour is an obstacle for his indulgence as the existence and live a normal life and the entity a human in the total of all mankind. He did not imagine that ever, as he said that he had come to this world to discover the meanings of things, in order to reach the source of this world, but suddenly discovered that it has become a subject in itself, in the midst of other topics. It means that the human in consideration of the black became present in this world, the source of questions and research; it turns into an object of study and of difference. So the black man became a contentious issue different from the white man, while others (the West) are in harmony with themselves, walking in a consistent format in the configuration of the human, and perhaps this was expressed by Charles Taylor on the Self in the space of a moral through the classification of the character in the dependence of colonialism, he said: "in our world, the

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<sup>1</sup> Fanon, F. (1990) *The wretched of the earth*, Penguin, London. P73.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* P36.

<sup>3</sup> Said, Edward. *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays*. P488.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, P. (1993) *Intellectuals*, Phoenix, London. P245.

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supposition that I could be two temporally succeeding selves is either an overdramatized image, or quite false. It runs against the structural features of a self as a being who exists in a space of concerns.”<sup>1</sup>

If Frantz Fanon has called the violence is because it was seen that colonial thought did not invade countries and cultures only by violence, and then the violence is only matched by the violence. In this regard he said “decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder. But it cannot come as a result of magical practices, not of a natural shock, not of a friendly understanding<sup>2</sup>”, and he also thought that “the native’s challenge to the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of points of view. It is not a treatise on the universal, but the untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute.”<sup>3</sup>

Fanon insists in all his writings that the colonizer is the cause of the violence and all violence from people of the country and the movement of the revolutionary is a reaction to the original violence, he says “in the colonies it is the policeman and the soldier who are the official, instituted go-betweens, the spokesmen of the settler and his rule of oppression”<sup>4</sup>, asserting that “colonialism is 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.”<sup>5</sup>

The problem of violence has generated in the writings of Frantz Fanon from the notion that people usurped by the colonial is a colonial problem primarily, and the problem of inferior human especially the black man and his relationship with the white man. These components are fabricated by the white for black, is the image of working on the standardization

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, C. *Sources of the self : the making of the modern identity*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989. P51.

<sup>2</sup> Fanon, F. (1990) *The wretched of the earth*, Penguin, London. P35

<sup>3</sup> Fanon, F. (1990) *The wretched of the earth*, Penguin, London. P40.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* P37.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* P60.

of type or style and personal presence of the black man, therefore, Fanon believes that the process of resistance lies in his veto.

The Problematic based on the physical presence of the black skin does not mean the reality of the problem, but what the result of reflection on the social structure and cultural fact of being black, says Fanon in this regard "when people like me, they tell me it is in spite of my colour. When they dislike me, they point out that it is not because of my colour. Either way, I am locked into the infernal circle."<sup>1</sup>

In his writings, which bear in their titles conviction directly to this practice, which was marked by colonial powers, which have created and developed the bacterium of the white man superiority, and the myth of superiority, as stated in his books *The Wretched of the Earth* and his other book *Black Skin, White Masks*.

This perception can be applied to, some extent, the analysis of all creative work, that deals with the post-colonial study, as is the case with the novel *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, seen by Homi Bhabha that "it is radical perversity, not sage political wisdom that derives the intriguing will to knowledge of the long shadow of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* falls on so many texts of the postcolonial pedagogy?"<sup>2</sup>.

Who reads the *Heart of Darkness* of Conrad finds that it falls in the ideas of Frantz Fanon, because it exposes the colonialists and expose their practices, and reveal to us the significance of the novel that the power of the colonizer is only the strength of a cross, and fleeting, no matter how long it takes, because the actions of the colonizer invites land owners to meet violence with violence through the stories told by Marlow, when he was on Nellie boat, heading from London to where the darkness will prevail in Congo, in a continuous misery journey that Joseph Conrad took us with him. Journey torments at the time of search for wealth and the enslavement of human beings,

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<sup>1</sup> Fanon, F. (1986) *Black skin, white masks*, Pluto, London. P116.

<sup>2</sup> Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London. P212.

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a dark journey “Marlow has much in him of the anti-foundationalist, the metropolitan ironist who believes that the neo-pragmatic universe is best preserved by keeping the conversation of human kind going. And so he does, in that intricate end-game that is best known to readers of the novel as the ‘lie’ to the Intended.”<sup>1</sup>

The novel *Heart of Darkness* explained that in a manner not unequivocal, the colonial project effort to extend the colonialism in the Middle East and shed light on the frame of mind colonial lies behind this project: “there was an air of plotting about the station, but nothing came of it, of course. It was as unreal as everything else –as the philanthropic pretence of the whole concern, as their talk, as their government, as their show of work. The only real feeling was a desire to get appointed to a trading-post where ivory was to be had, so that they could earn percentages”<sup>2</sup>.

It is a novel which takes the reader to unknown spot of the world, where sons of the nations live isolation and deadly a dirty war against the presence of colonial and colonists, turned the sons of the soil into slaves for fear of murder. It is a novel that Edward Said sees in it the prophecy of early American hegemony on the world, as is happening today in the Iraq and Afghanistan war, where the soldier finds himself fortified of neo-colonialism thoughts, guided by the war which have no meaning, especially in the era of post-modernity, which claims to publish freedom and democracy, in the era of electronics. However, as Edward Said said “if the world has become immediately accessible to a Western citizen living in the electronic age, the Orient too has drawn nearer to him, and is now less a myth perhaps than a place crisscrossed by Western, especially American, interests”<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, 212.

<sup>2</sup> Conrad, J., Conrad, J., Knowles, O. & Hampson, R.G. (2007; 1899) *Heart of Darkness ; The congo diary*, Penguin Books, London.

<sup>3</sup> Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. London: Rutledge and Kegan Paul, 1978. P26.

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This comprehensive concept of colonialism, Fanon framed the patterns of containment, exile and violence of people of the Third World in the Thought of the colonial powers. The case refers to the pour face colonialism violence of settler practiced blatant form of racial discrimination. Colonial territories, made Fanon realize the dimensions of colonial domination for colonial community's values and cultures, and the status of the human being as circulated by the concept of colonial violence, which is highlighted in his book *Black Skin White Masks*. This early recognition of the concept of exile which make him philosopher and sociologist at the same time, is a concept which circulated by Walter Rodney on the process of denial of history by colonialism, to cut off between the rights of Africa and its heritage, to deny the ability to communicate, as formulated by Fanon in denying the citizen for himself and his country at the same time.

Thus, we reach to the impact of this writer and activist in the creation of hubs of resistance to colonialism, not at the level of anti-saying and doing of the white colonial, but extended to include criticism sites from the inside, and attempts to define the concept of the national and the construction process of the self and national identity; which can create a free state, preserving the dignity of people and their freedom. As Adil Jussawalla expressed:

“No satan  
warmed in the electric coils of his creatures  
Or Gunga Din  
will make him come before you.  
To see an invisible man or a missing person,  
trust no Eng. Lit. That  
puffs him up, narrows his eyes,  
scratches his fangs. Caliban  
is still not IT.  
But faintly pencilled  
behind a shirt ...  
...

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savage of no sensational paint,  
fangs cancelled.”<sup>1</sup>

Homi K. Bhabha comment on this text by saying: “what is so graphically enacted in the moment of colonial identification is the splitting of the subject in its historical place of utterance: ‘No Satan.../or Gunga Din / will make him come before you / To see an invisible man or a missing person, / trust no En. Lit.’ (my emphases). What these repeated negations of identity dramatize, in their elision of the seeing eye that must contemplate what is missing or invisible, is the impossibility of claiming an origin for the Self (or Other) within a tradition of representation that conceives of identity as the satisfaction of a totalizing, platitudinous object of vision.”<sup>2</sup>

Frantz Fanon made sure that the colonial world is far from the values of equality, it is a world divided into white and black, to the exploiters and exploited, to the colonizer and colonized. In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, he worked on the liberation of humanity from Western individualism narcissism, and their tendency to justify colonial as the white man domination.

Edward Said was influenced by Frantz Fanon when he saw that he should criticise the western humanism from the inside, as “a form of democratic freedom and as a continuous practice of questioning and of accumulating knowledge that is open to ... the constitute historical realities of the post-Cold War World<sup>3</sup>”, colonialism problematic, and extensions cosmic to America the only superpower of the world nowadays.

It stems from the view of humanitarian internationalism beyond ethnic differences, religious and geographical location, favours to the values of truth, justice and freedom, and rejects all that would be based on the enslavement of the other, the confiscation of the right and wealth, and his presence. That is why we see that he represents a movement of liberation in

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<sup>1</sup> A. Iussawalla, *Missing Person (Clearing House, 1976)*, pp. 14-29.

<sup>2</sup> Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London. P66.

<sup>3</sup> Said, Edward. *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*. P47.

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Algeria after years of practical and intellectual struggle against the France's colonial domination in Algeria. There are a lot of artworks that portrays how the colonial keep themselves planting fear in the indigenous people through strikes and brutal oppression and suppression of freedoms.

Perhaps one of the texts that dealt honestly with the colonial, it is a play written by Caryl Churchill called *Cloud Nine*. In the first chapter, Clive the racist colonial administrator, in a British colony in Africa forces his ideals tough on his family and indigenous Africans.

Clive describes indigenous women as brutal creatures, evil and dangerous. After reproaching slaves, he said "You can tame a wild animal only so far. They revert to their true nature and savage your hand"<sup>1</sup>. This statement reflects how the colonial enslave others and cause them damage to the extent that indigenous people would rather die than their oppressor as happened to the *Beloved*, who killed her daughter and said "how if I hadn't kill her she would have died and that is something I could not bear to happen to her"<sup>2</sup>, and the good life is the life they are living in the darkness, because the day with its sunshine and warmth it reminded them the hard work under the white supervision "for years they saw each other in full daylight only on Sundays. The rest of the time they spoke or touched or ate in darkness. Predawn darkness and the afterglow of sunset. So looking at each other intently was a Sunday morning pleasure and Halle examined her as though storing up what he saw in sunlight for the shadow he saw the rest of the week."<sup>3</sup>

Frantz Fanon considered that colonialism committed the most heinous crimes carried out in the right of indigenous people, and the most heinous of these crimes they are scattered of human functions and satisfactory distraction, and drew his unit, as created in the community crash, and broken and bloody tensions. It also created a level of humanity grudge race and slavery and exploited the massacre and even bleeding, which is

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<sup>1</sup> Churchill, C. (1985) *Cloud Nine : a play*, French, London. P43.

<sup>2</sup> Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Vintage, 1997. P200.

<sup>3</sup> Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Vintage, 1997. P24

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expressed by the descendant of slaves poet A. Jin, in her poem *Strangers on a Hostile Landscape*:

One day I learnt  
A secret art,  
Invisible-Ness, it was called.  
I think it worked  
as even now you look  
but never see me ...  
Only my eyes will remain to watch and to haunt,  
and to turn your dreams  
to chaos.<sup>1</sup>

Fanon, according to Homi K. Bhabha, does not pose the question of political persecution as a violation of human essence, as he does not pose the question of human colonial cosmic terms that we find in the liberal humanist. He also this that Fanon does not pose a question about the ontology of human being and that he sees "the colonial subject is always 'overdetermined from without'"<sup>2</sup>.

As it is stated in *The Location of Culture* "it is through image and fantasy – those orders that figure transgressively on the borders of history and the unconscious – that Fanon most profoundly evokes the colonial condition."<sup>3</sup>

After writing this essay, I have come up with a conclusion that Fanon believed that the problem of the black man is his relationship with the white man, or even with environment. Thus the black man should match that image set for him, any representation prior to him, and to act on the shape of the real decree in the mind of the white man, the inferiority and degradation, underdevelopment and indecency all of these components that are fabricated by the white for black. It is the image which works on the standardization of type or style and

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<sup>1</sup>Meiling, Jin. *Strangers on a Hostile Landscape*, in R. Cobham and M. Collins (eds) *Watchers and Seekers* (London: The Women's Press, 1987), pp. 126-7.

<sup>2</sup> Fanon, F. (1986) *Black skin, white masks*, Pluto, London. P116.

<sup>3</sup> Bhabha, Homi. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London. P43.

personal presence of the black man. Therefore, Frantz Fanon believed that the process of resistance lies in the abolition of the image of physical quality first, before that cancelling a picture as an idea in the eyes and mind of the white man, and of course with all accompanying arthroscopic intellectual, philosophical and psychological depth, evidenced by his writings, which are signs of a flare in the contemporary human thought, where it formed a different reading of history based on conflict, metadata, arrogance and injustice.

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