

**Frantz Fanon and the Issue of Identity**  
**Hemida Abdel Ati Ali**  
**English Department, Faculty of Arts, Minia University**

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The black man has two dimensions. One with his fellows, the other with the white man. A Negro behaves differently with a white man and with another Negro. That this self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation is beyond question. (Fanon, 1952: 17)

**Abstract:**

During the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, when the signs of change appeared and the decolonization movement spread out all over the colonized countries, especially in the African ones, a controversy about the choice of language erupted and pursued writers and critics around the world, especially Black writers and critics. Many schools of thought, like that championed by the Kenyan active writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1938- ), urged and recommended the use of indigenous native African languages. Western/European languages in general, and English and French in particular, are considered as part of the neo-colonial structures that repress progressive ideas and distort the native cultural identity of the previously colonized peoples. Therefore, it is obvious that since the forties until now, postcolonial African writers currently are exerting many efforts in order to reconstruct and prove their cultural originality and influence the global academic world. Their challenging task has been grasping their multiple and various investigations, discussions, and debates underlying their literary productions, in order to create a discernible identity for themselves and their literary works. This research paper, entitled "Frantz Fanon and the Issue of Identity", sheds light on some biographical and career information concerning Frantz Fanon and his distinctive relation to decolonization and postcolonialism. Moreover, it deals with Fanon's constant calls, especially in his book *Black Skin White Masks*, to reconstruct and reclaim the Native African identity. Fanon's argument here is that the Native African identity has been distorted, deviated and confused as a result of long years of colonization. Consequently, this paper will furthermore include a discussion of the nature, the themes and the techniques of decolonizing a new image and of reclaiming native identity.

**Objective of the Study:**

As it can be found in many different writings, and since its beginning to the contemporary period, it is obvious that the African writing is a series of attempts and efforts by black people to attain a specific recognizable identity and gain and achieve certain kind of respect and appreciation in the larger Western world. As a minority group that suffered from long years of European colonization and its consequences of racism and oppression, the Native Africans inside Africa and also in the diaspora constantly attempt to have their own voices outside the white Western/European mainstream culture. For the Western white majority, the existence of native African writing is unknown, overlooked or even neglected. Thus, the native African writers struggle to have their own voices in order to express their visions of life, and to reaffirm a positive and respectable cultural identity among others.

Therefore, this paper attempts to discuss the possibility of decolonizing the native image through reclaiming the self and reviving the cultural identity of the

natives by referring to Frantz Fanon (1925-1961). The main aim of this study is to underline Frantz Fanon's diagnosis and recommendation concerning the issue of how colonization and racism can affect the colonized's culture in many sides, culturally and linguistically in particular, both negatively and positively, and the role of native language in reclaiming and reviving the native cultural identity. However, according to Fanon, more focus is going to be on the negative sides of this effect.

#### **Method of Research:**

In order to express the abovementioned points in this research paper, the researcher attempts to adopt an interdisciplinary approach for the purpose of analyzing the psychological, literary and critical discussion of Frantz Fanon to the issue of identity. Thus, analytical, historical, psychological, linguistic and sociological elements will be taken into consideration when examining Fanon's portrayal of colonization's effect and the role of the native languages in reclaiming and raising the status of the cultural identity of the African peoples.

#### **The Identity Crisis in Africa:**

In the special case of the African Continent, which was the main center of colonialism for long decades, it is obvious that Africa has been suffering from many serious problems and crises concerning its true independence, native culture, humanity and identity. These and so many similar issues have become the subject of intense recurrent philosophical and psychological debates and discussions. It is also argued that “this lack of individuation is at the root of the African crisis in identity and in the failure of the continent to sufficiently address its problems” (Kochalumchuvattil: 108). So, there is a constant and recurrent search for African true self-independence and existentialism. As Robert Birt states

Blacks alone are reduced to being a color . . . and though they are not the only victims of racism, blacks alone have been set apart, degraded and ostracized exclusively on the basis of race and color. Thus the striving to create and affirm our identity and humanity in defiance of racial essentialization and domination forms the common ground of the black liberation struggle. The struggle for identity entails a struggle for a liberated ‘black consciousness.’ (qtd in Gordon, Lewis R. *Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought*)

Obviously, there is no doubt that “colonialism inaugurated a crisis of the postcolonial African identity” (Oraegbunam 228). It is argued that in the successive colonial epochs in any place around the world, “every colonial project involves a contact between two cultures in which one establishes a control and applies pressure over the other with the effect that the former seeks to change in some degree the way of life of the latter” (Oraegbunam 228). The latter, here namely the African, suffers what could be called as a real crisis of culture and identity, or what can collectively be called ‘the cultural identity crisis’. Before any further discussion or elaboration on the identity crisis of the African, it is relevant to first look at the principle of identity:

In logic, “the principle of identity asserts that if any statement is true, then it is true.” This has been referred to as a tautology in the sense that it is a necessary truth. Analogously, the question of

identity with regard to a human being would state that if a person is an African, for instance, then he is an African. He is not a European for if he is both an African and a European, which would definitely go against the 'principle of contradiction.' Nor can he be half Africa and half European or in the middle way between the two. That would contravene the logical 'principle of excluded middle.' Therefore, it is either an African is an African or if he fails would have his being contradict the laws of thought and in this case also of being. Yet the African person of today seems to have just done that and become a victim of identity crisis. (Oraegbunam 237)

It is argued that the identity crisis of the native African is clearly portrayed in his trying to "make himself look like "Whiteman in black skin" as Fanon observed" (Oraegbunam 237) in his work *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). Moreover, it is always argued that "western colonialism digs shatteringly into the dignity and authenticity of the African" (Oraegbunam 229). Observers also notice that Western/European colonialism did not allow simple incorporation, cultural diffusion or even free borrowing of the Western Culture by the African to integrate it in the African way without losing his identity. It is strongly argued that what the colonizer really seeks is the complete deviation and devastation of the native African cultural identity.

Many scholars and observers, such as Tongkeh Joseph Fowale, argue that without doubt colonialism was a turning point in Africa's history, culture, identity and destiny. It is also argued that "colonization accelerated and hastened the pace of devastation" in the entire fields of African life, especially concerning identity and culture, "initiated by the long-timed slave trade" (Fowale: par. 5). Many scholars also argue that before slavery and the slave trade that dominated Africa for long years, Africa had lived for centuries and as such had unique and traditional ways of life, languages and values. But all these original features were distorted and deviated with the advent of slavery and then colonialism. When a native black African perceives or is made or obliged to accept the colonizer's language, values and culture as superior or perfect, he/she is made or enforced to define himself in terms of the colonizer. In other words, it can be said that the native "African sees himself from a Whiteman's worldview, thereby, aspiring to be like the Whiteman and losing that uniqueness and distinctive aspect of the African person". In this way, he internally and psychologically changes and "becomes a total stranger to himself and this prevents him from self-realization" (Oforkaja 91). It can be said that "He witnesses 'a crisis of conscience' which impinges greatly on African development" (Oraegbunam 237). So, Oraegbunam argues that the crisis which makes an African lose his true native identity, individuation and confidence, also affects the integral development of Africa. Nowadays, this is expressed and supported in another form of colonialism termed 'neo-colonialism'. Oraegbunam asserts, "The colonial intentions are still sustained by neo-colonial structures which are regarded as obstacles to integral development" (Oraegbunam 229).

In the same concern, in Walter Rodney's words, it is argued that "colonialism completely destroyed what remained of the political, economic and socio-cultural

achievements of Africa and left in its place nothing of compensatory value” (Rodney 147). This “colonial havoc” was considered the basis of Fanon’s philosophy of violence. Not surprisingly, its test ground was Algeria where Fanon saw for himself what he later called “the psychiatric disorders of colonialism.” Fanon was strongly angered by this bestiality of colonialism, concluded that the Algerian revolution had created “an irreversible situation for the entire African continent” (Fowale: par. 5).

Therefore, in the last years, African and Arab studies and research produced many writings and discussions focusing upon the effects of colonialism on the internal and external linguistic, cultural, political, social, and economic circumstances of contemporary African and Arab countries. In this concern, in the essays “Overstating the Arab State” (2001), by Nazih Ayubi, and “Is Jordan Palestine?” (2003), by Raphael Israel, the authors primarily deal with “the psychologically fragmented and distorted identity, as determined by the political and social, cultural and economic effects of Western colonialism in Africa and the Middle East” (Wales and Sanger, ‘Postcolonialism’, par. 29). In these texts, it is argued that

The fragmented national identity remains a characteristic of such societies, consequence of the imperially convenient, but arbitrary, colonial boundaries, geographic and cultural, demarcated by the Europeans, with which they ignored the tribal and clan relations that determined the geographic borders of the Middle East countries, before the arrival of European imperialists (Wales and Sanger, ‘Postcolonialism’, par. 30).

So, it is obvious from the previous quotation that there is a particular focus of study which is concerned with “the matter of Western discourses about the Middle East, and the existence or the lack of national identity formation” (Wales and Sanger, ‘Postcolonialism’, par. 31). This can also be seen in the following quotation from P.R. Kumaraswamy (2006):

Most countries of the Middle East, suffered from the fundamental problems over their national identity. More than three-quarters of a century after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, from which most of them emerged, these states have been unable to define, project, and maintain a national identity that is both inclusive and representative. (1)

Obviously, the loss of identity or even the failure to construct a true native identity after long years of culturally destructive occupation has been the focus of many studies and research. For example, according to Larbi Sadiki, independence and the end of colonialism, in Africa and the Middle East, have not really ended social fragmentation, cultural deviation and civil wars in these places. For instance, in *The Search for Arab Democracy: Discourses and Counter-Discourses* (2004), Sadiki strongly argued that because Western/European colonial powers drew frontiers and borders discounting peoples, “ancient tribal boundaries and local history, the Middle East’s contemporary national identity problem can be traced back to imperialism and colonialism” (Sadiki 122).

In the same concern, Larbi Sadiki continues his logical argument adding that the problems and crises of national identity in the Middle East are consequence of the Orientalist's, and/or specifically the African's, indifference of the European empires when they demarcated and drew the political borders of their colonies and settlements. This kind of separative and dividing procedures ignored the local history and tore down the geographic and tribal boundaries observed by the natives, in the course of establishing the Western/European version of the Middle East (122). According to Sadiki's point of view:

With notable exceptions like Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, most [countries] . . . had to [re]invent, their historical roots after colonialism. Therefore, like its colonial predecessor, postcolonial identity owes its existence to force. (2004: 122)

### **Frantz Fanon as a Major Postcolonial Figure:**

Obviously for the aforementioned reasons, the struggle and resistance against oppression and aggressive occupation was the central thesis of Frantz Fanon's revolutionary philosophy and ideology. His writings confirm that all forms of colonialism, especially in Africa, were the target of his fury and attack. Throughout his short life, Fanon condemned and attacked colonialism in the bitterest terms and he advocated violence in its most extreme form to confront this plague. In his words, "colonialism is not a thinking machine nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its most natural state, and will only yield when confronted with greater violence" (quoted in Fowale: par. 2). This distinctive revolutionary outlook is clearly reflected in Fanon's works and speeches, among which include: *Black Skin White Masks* (1952), *Toward the African Revolution* (1959), *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) and *A Dying Colonialism* (1964).

Biographically and historically speaking, Frantz Fanon was born on July 20, 1925 on the French-controlled Caribbean island of Martinique and died on December 6, 1961. He was a black psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary, and author. Many critics, like Fowale and Gates among many others mentioned above, consider him very influential in the field of post-colonial studies, critical theory and humanities. He is also considered the pre-eminent thinker of the 20th century concerning issues like resistance, decolonization, the psychopathology of colonization, culture and identity. In addition, it is obvious that his works have inspired anti-colonial liberation movements all over the world for more than five decades and many writers around the world have been affected by his ideas.

Moreover, Fanon is considered "a political psychologist whose approach to revolutionary theory was grounded in his psychiatric practice," especially in Algeria, and this actual and real experiences is what makes Fanon distinguished from others. During his years in Africa, especially in Algeria, "he published clinical studies on the behavior of violent patients, the role of culture in the development of illness and

the function of the psychiatric hospital as a social milieu” (Singh and Kaur, ‘Frantz Fanon’, par. 2).

In addition, many critics, like the reviewer David Tresilian, argue that when discussing Frantz Fanon, it seems important to remember well why for him resistance, struggle, decolonization and the self-determination of the then colonized world were the burning issues of the day that needed more attention. He thinks that without the strong process of decolonization, and “without the new humanism that it would bring in its train when all could look upon all as equals, the world would continue to be divided into opposing camps regarding each other with suspicion and with fear”, and even they may regard each other with contempt. In such a general situation, it is argued that “local attempts at self-valorization were doomed, since they were carried out in the shadow of the domination of the greater part of the world by the smaller” (par. 8).

It seems clear that Fanon has been very aware of his noble role. Having strong passion, minute awareness and deep knowledge of African life and the difficult conditions that prevailed in Africa for long years, his writings, books and even his speeches appear like close studies of the African people and the problems occasioned by the collapse of national traditional order, culture and traditions as a result of long years of colonialism and oppression. His far sighted visions regarding the possible development of the African nation and also Africans in the diaspora, his constant calls for social justice are easily obvious in his writings and ideology.

Moreover, Fanon's books *Black Skin White Masks* (1952), *Toward the African Revolution* (1959), *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) and *A Dying Colonialism* (1964), and other essays such as “Vision of the Postcolonial State” and “Philosophical Reflections about Continental Africa” explore the effects of colonialism on both the conquerors/occupiers and the conquered/occupied. These books are considered by many critics to be the bible of many anti-colonialist activists around the world. It can be strongly said that these writings profoundly influenced 20<sup>th</sup> century thinking about the dignity, image and value of the person, decolonization, violence in Third World countries, native identity and culture, independence, the problems of post-independence middle-eastern and African countries, and nationalism and national consciousness.

A common major characteristic in Fanon’s writings is that he makes use of the critical, psychological and sociological analysis in his writings and discussions. He does that whether directly or obliquely, while presenting the conflict between traditional African values and traditions and imported Western/European culture. Moreover, he speaks out for and on behalf of his adopted societies and communities, with an unbiased and objective mind. While carrying out this noble and hard task, Fanon assumes various roles as a teacher, moralist, psychiatrist, revolutionary, philosopher, theorist and, most importantly, as a humanist.

It is argued here in this concern that as a French black citizen, who feels sympathy with the weak people, Fanon fought with the Resistance during WWII. Then, after earning his degree in psychiatry, he has been given a position in Algeria to work as Chief of Staff in Blida Hospital. After meeting the psychotic patients who came to his clinic, it was there that he began expressing his anger and then his rage and fury against colonialist policies in general, and against the French policies in

Algeria in particular. This new real and actual knowledge led him to join in the struggle and resistance to free Algeria from the French oppressive rule. As a result, he was eventually exiled from the country and fled to Tunisia where he continued with the fight and struggle.

In the same concern, Tongkeh Fowale argues that “in calling on the African masses to resort to violence against colonialism,” Fanon did not have to search too far for reasons and proofs to convince his audience and/or readers. He pointed to the exploitative relationship that existed between the Western/European settlers and the native Africans. According to Fowale, “the settlers used every means possible to secure their economic interests, including extreme brutality” which Fanon describes as “bayonets and caning.” Therefore, in so many cases in the history, violence and cruelty are considered major features of colonialism, whether from the conqueror or the conquered side. Thus, “Fanon pressed on the need to counter this violence “with greater violence.” According to Fowale, even at the cost of 45.000 lives in Setif, 90.000 in Madagascar, 2000 in Kenya and 250000 in German Tanganyika, among many others in other places, Fanon urged Africans to answer violence with violence. “This was only part of the price Africans had to pay for carrying the “Whiteman’s burden,” the imposed weight of colonialism” (Fowale: par. 7).

In addition, it is clear that “Fanon blames the diametrical relationship existing between Africa and Europe entirely on colonialism”. In Fanon’s words, “the wellbeing and progress of Europe have been built on the sweat and dead bodies of Negroes.” Fanon strongly claimed that “Europe is Africa’s creation.” Therefore, according to Fanon, the colonized man only “finds freedom in and through violence.” In the course of this struggle, Fanon warns that the native should be prepared to “sacrifice everything and water their native soil with their blood.” He further cautioned seriously that as a strategy in this struggle, the native can accept a “compromise with colonialism, but never a surrender of principle” (Fowale: par.8).

Furthermore, a key and basic tactic of colonization “is to portray the Indigenous culture and values as negative and irrelevant to modern society”. They are portrayed as “decadent and backward” (Zigzag and Keyway Long 1999: par. 8). Fanon argues that “Once this belief is entrenched within the Indigenous person they have no alternative but to assimilate and conform to the colonialist society” (Fowale: par. 8). Frantz Fanon expresses this internal, unconscious feeling of the native saying:

Thus the native discovers that his life, his breath, his beating heart are the same as those of the settler. He finds out that the settler's skin is not of any more value than a native's skin; and it must be said that this discovery shakes the world in a very necessary manner. All the new, revolutionary assurance of the native stems from it. For if, in fact, my life is worth as much as the settler's, his glance no longer shrivels me up nor freezes me, and his voice no longer turns me into stone. I am no longer on tenterhooks in his presence; in fact, I don't give a damn for him. Not only does his presence no longer trouble me, but I am already preparing such efficient ambushes for him that soon there will be no way out but that of flight (Fanon, 1961: 45).

What can be understood from the previous quotation is that Fanon has a strong belief that the native Africans will exert their best efforts to liberate themselves from the

physical bonds as well as psychological shackles of the colonizers/settlers. Now, the native blacks don't fear the colonizer anymore for they have discovered that they are really equal to them. Fanon further made it clear that this feeling of equality will push the natives all the more to seek real liberation and also push the colonizers to leave the settled land for its real proprietors.

Furthermore, Fanon strongly condemned and attacked the physical partition as well as the spiritual division of Africa which was another major damaging aspect of colonialism. It is obvious that it was "under colonial rule that Africa was split into several halves and pieces for European domination". Needless to say that colonialism controlled African different resources such as land, minerals, petrol and other things "mainly for European economic enterprise." It was under Western colonial rule that "Africans were graded, degraded and finally classified into natives and assimilés" (Fowale: par. 9). Ironically enough, according to Diana Fuss, colonialism obliged Africans to carry identification badges on their own land.

On a more dramatic scale, "colonialism dissected Africa along the Sahara and prided the northern part of the continent with civilization because it bordered Europe, the land of achievement and wonder". Accordingly, the Southern part of the continent was termed "barbaric" and "uncivilized." Consequently, "this "primitive" part needed the civilization missions from Europe, hence the justification for European "paternalism" in Africa" (Fowale: par.9). Moreover, it is argued that these deliberate continuous attempts at tearing Africa apart was "the handiwork of colonialism and a forerunner of the "divide and rule" policy that marked the colonial rule" in all times. Added to this puncture and division on Africa, "was the tendency to implant and enforce the notion of tribalism, racism and ethnicity which have today set Africa ablaze" (Fowale: par.9). In this concern, Fanon observes that

We have said that the native's violence unifies the people. By its very structure, colonialism is separatist and regionalist. Colonialism does not simply state the existence of tribes; it also reinforces it and separates them. The colonial system encourages chieftaincies and keeps alive the old Marabout confraternities. Violence is in action all-inclusive and national. It follows that it is closely involved in the liquidation of regionalism and of tribalism. Thus the national parties show no pity at all toward the caids and the customary chiefs. Their destruction is the preliminary to the unification of the people. (Fanon, 1961: 94)

As a consequence, Fanon continues arguing that "this legalized racism . . . maintained in the very depth of the consciousness of the African people can only be combated by force." He stresses "No diplomacy, no political genius, no skill can cope with it except force" (qtd in Fowale: par. 13).

In addition, Frantz Fanon has been the pioneer thinker and critic to shed light on what is called "the inferiority complex" of the African people. His viewpoint is that as Indigenous, namely African, people during long years of colonization have acquired an inferiority complex through the oppressive lifestyle that they have become accustomed to, their initial, natural reaction maybe to overthrow their oppressor by force and gain control of the reigns. Fanon also has the opinion that is



very important for the Indigenous African people to understand that the colonial/oppressive society is almost destructive and that even if there are few positive aspects resulting from settlement, they are the only beneficial and positive components that the native should make use of them in the process of decolonization. It is also argued that it is not reasonable or practical for a previously colonized Indigenous Nation to return to a totally traditional lifestyle, “as their mentality and environment has been drastically transformed”. However, it is recommended that “an incorporation of positive aspects of modern and developed society and ancestral Indigenous ways will contribute to overcoming the effects of inferiority and identity crisis” (Zigzag and Keyway Long 1999: par. 13).

According to Fanon’s philosophy, colonialism is violent in its nature. He argued that colonialism in Africa is violent in the sense that during the process of occupation, which sometimes takes long time, and as a result of national resistance, it took a violent direction to invade and defeat the African countries. As Fanon noticed, “colonialism destroyed African native identity, its original socio-political, psychological, cultural and economic structures” (Oforkaja 68). Fanon also observed that one basic dominant feature of colonialism is “injustice”, which can be seen clearly in the exploitative relationship that existed between the native Africans and the Western/European conquerors as well as in the manner of treatment which led to the alienation of the native by the settler. Simply put, “colonization has been a violent process that destroyed old ways of life and robbed Africans of their native means to live with dignity” (Oforkaja 68).

In the same concern, C.B. Okolo gave a rather different, but somewhat comprehensive, meaning or definition of colonialism. It seems that he perceives colonialism from an evil point of view. He strongly argues that colonialism mainly ‘exploits the colonized/native of their economy. Thus he avers:

Colonialism is an evil for it is a political, social, economic oppression and exploitation of another, the domination of the weak by the strong, the poor by the rich; the developing by the developed nations. It is a total invasion of alien consciousness for the sake of subjugation and exploiting weaker people and nations. Colonialism thus establishes radical inequality between the colonizer and the colonized. (Okolo 11)

For all these reasons mentioned above, Fanon advocated and recommended thorough and complete socialist revolution using violent armed means to fight the Western colonial/oppressive power. Fanon further stated that out of this violence, a new, different, humane man would arise and create a new world, a new identity and a new culture (Oforkaja 68). However, Fanon was not alone in calling for violent resistance as the only way to get rid of colonialism and neocolonialism. Che Guevara in 1964, also made it very clear that

The only way to solve the problems now besetting mankind is to eliminate completely the exploitation of dependent countries by developed capitalist countries, with all the consequences that this implies. (‘On Development’, Speech delivered at the Plenary

So, it is argued that this loud call and support to using arms in the resistance explains the spread of violence throughout Africa in the 1940s till the 1980s. Fowale argued that “the eventual success of liberation forces in Africa lent credit to Fanon’s dictum that “only violence pay.”” Even in 1963, an African continental body called “the Organization of African Unity” (OAU) was formed to help freeing the remaining colonized African countries from colonial oppressive rule. This organization also recognized the need for violence by establishing a “Liberation Committee”. “Its task was to use every means possible, including violence to end colonial rule. And this it did” (Fowale: par. 6).

So, it is clear that Frantz Fanon’s entire thesis and philosophy basically center on and mainly aim at the complete liberation and real independence of colonized African countries. Whether it is variously called liberation, emancipation or decolonization, Fanon’s major ambition was to achieve complete and real freedom and independence for Africa. He strongly argues that inequality and injustice prevail during all epochs of colonization. As a consequence, “in his quest to achieve his lifelong ambition of liberating Africa, Fanon believes that justice, liberty and equality are paramount . . . For Fanon, justice means to be free and equal with the colonizer” (Oforkaja 82). He argues that the native can only achieve this real freedom, true equality and desired justice by opposing the force or violence of the colonizer with a greater violence. What Fanon regards as features of injustice are “the alienation, segregation, suppression, degradation and economic exploitation of the native by the colonizer” (Oforkaja 82). Hence, he says

The society of the settler is a cohesive and homogeneous community. The class distinctions internal to it are maintained, . . . . The worker, the priest, the merchant are first and foremost settlers. . . . The cohesiveness of the settler community is maintained against and in reference to the colonized, whose existence is fixed and frozen as the permanent underclass of this set up. (Quoted in Serequeberhan, 82 – 83)

So, it seems from the previous quotation that the native colonized/oppressed is ironically seen as a second class citizen in his own homeland. Fanon argues that the native is perceived through the eyes of the settler as an object, “a tool or a thingified biological organism”. He is considered “more or less worthless to the colonizer” (Oforkaja 83). So, in his comparison of the ways of life between the native African and the European colonizer, Fanon argues that

The zone where the natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers. The two zones are opposed, but not in the service of a higher unity. . . . No conciliation is possible, for of the two terms, one is superfluous. The settler’s town is a strongly-built town, all made of stone and steel. It is a brightly-lit town; the streets are covered with asphalt, . . . . The settler’s town is a well-fed town, an easy going town; its belly is always full of good things. The

settler's town is a town of white people, of foreigners. The town belonging to the colonized people, or at least the native town, the negro village, . . . is a place of ill fame, . . . They are born there, . . . . It is a world without spaciousness; men live there on top of each other, . . . . The native town is a hungry town, starved of bread, of meat, of shoes, of coal, of light. The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire. (Fanon, 1961: 38-39)

Consequently, a situation like this naturally inflames a sense of envy and wrath in the psyche and mind of the native towards the settler. The native bitterly feels that he has been robbed off what belongs to him, namely his land, identity and dignity. This is the main crisis in all colonized countries; that is to say, the colonizer/settler raped and plundered everything belongs to the native, though he does not even look at the colonized as an equal human being to him. On the contrary, he considers the native as not having the right to possess these things and resources, as if they belong only to the colonizer/Western.

The look that the native turns on the settler's town is a look of lust, a look of envy; it expresses his dreams of possession - all manner of possession: to sit at the settler's table, to sleep in the settler's bed, with his wife if possible. The colonized man is an envious man. And this the settler knows very well; when their glances meet he ascertains bitterly, always on the defensive 'They want to take our place.' It is true, for there is no native who does not dream at least once a day of setting himself up in the settler's place. (Fanon, 1961: 39)

Obviously, the settler sees the native as "his shadow or his reflection". In fact, Fanon argues that the existence of the Western colonizer necessarily presupposes the non-existence of the native African. It can be said that under the colonization conditions, the natives live their lives for the colonizers. They have lost the sense of true life and living. During the bitter and unjust atmosphere of settlement, the native African is reduced to be like a thingified, senseless entity, "just as the domesticated animal is an agricultural resource – a beast of burden" (Oforkaja 83). Therefore, in a situation like this, Fanon believes that justice must play its course. In his opinion, this justice can only be achieved through violent revolution, or what is called "counter-violence" (Oforkaja 82). He further stresses "For the colonized, violence is the avenue through which freedom and humanity are reclaimed" (Serequeberhan 79).

Moreover, when considering the ill-treatment that the colonized received from the colonizer; Fanon only aimed at real freedom, true equality and complete independence for the colonized. He wants the native African to consider the colonizer a normal human being "who is not a super human or god". Through the eyes and principles of humanism, Fanon perceives the colonizer as being equal to the colonized. He has tried his best to make all people understand that "the biological makeup of the colonizer is the same with that of the colonized" (Oforkaja 83-84).

It can be observed that for Frantz Fanon in particular, Africa is in bad need of recovery from the longstanding injuries/damages that colonialism has caused to the indigenous native languages and cultures, and this healing can only come through complete and real cultural autonomy and self-determination. So, according to Fanon, focusing writing in African native languages is a crucial step toward peculiar cultural identity and true independence from continuing neo-colonial exploitations.

**Conclusion:**

By way of summary, in this research paper, the researcher tries to explain how Frantz Fanon, who is considered one of the pioneers of postcolonial studies, offers a more violent prescription for getting rid of colonial exploitation. He argues that previously colonized peoples would remain hybrids with a miserably schizophrenic identity unless they revolt violently against their oppressors. This collective active behaviour among the whole nation would apparently motivate collective pride among the people, freeing them of their inferiority complexes. It can be strongly argued that the writings and efforts of Frantz Fanon had great influence on many anti-colonialist movements around the world. Many theorists like Jock McCulloch see that “Fanon's death at the age of thirty-six robbed the African revolution of its leading intellectual and moral force. His death also cut short one of the most extraordinary intellectual careers in contemporary political thought” (*Black Soul, White Artifact*: Back Cover Review). Unfortunately, Fanon the humanist, the antiracist and revolutionary prophet, never saw the positive and aimed results of his struggle: nearly full independence of most African countries, especially his adopted ones: Algeria and Tunisia.

Last but not least, it is obvious that in recent years, Fanon readers and fans increase in numbers and his works have been recurrent in postcolonial cultural studies concerning the criticism of colonial discourse. His work is currently considered the real starting point of postcolonial criticism, and many theorists and critics in the field of Postcolonial studies have been affected by his ideas and conceptions in general, and concerning the issue of culture and identity in particular.

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فرانتز فانون وقضية الهوية  
(حميده عبد العاطي علي)

يسعى هذا البحث إلى توضيح تأثير الكاتب فرانتز فانون فيما يتعلق بدور اللغة الأم في إستعادة الهوية الثقافية والحضارية للشعوب الأفريقية. يعتبر فرانتز فانون أحد الكتاب والنقاد المؤثرين في القرن العشرين وقد تركزت كتاباته فيما يخص قضايا الإستعمار والتحرير وما بعد الإحتلال. وقد ركز في كتاباته على الشعوب الأفريقية المستعمرة والتي كانت تعاني من الصراعات والإنقسامات الحضارية والثقافية. وقد حاول بجدية طوال حياته إبراز قيمة الآداب الأفريقية والشعوب الأفريقية ودور اللغات الأفريقية الأصلية في إصلاح التنشوش الحضاري والثقافي عند الشعوب الأفريقية والذي نتج عن الفترات الطويلة للإحتلال. وقد أثرت هذه الأفكار على كثير من الكتاب والمفكرين على مستوى العالم واتخذه الكثيرون مرجعا مهما لهم في التعامل مع القضايا السياسية والثقافية والحضارية الخاصة بالدول المحتلة أو التي كانت تعاني من الإحتلال.

ولذا، تحاول هذه الدراسة توضيح تأثير فرانتز فانون فيما يخص دور اللغات الأم في إصلاح واستعادة الهوية الثقافية والحضارية للشعوب الأفريقية. وقد وضح من كتابات فرانتز فانون تركيزه على إبراز والتأكيد على قيمة الشعوب الأفريقية والأدب الناتج عن هذه الشعوب ودور اللغات الأم في البلدان الأفريقية في إصلاح التنشوش والتخبط الثقافي والحضاري الناتج عن الإحتلال ورؤية الغرب للدول الأفريقية نظرة عدم ثقة في قيمتها الثقافية والحضارية.

ويقدم هذا البحث عرضا شاملا ومفصلا لظاهرة الإستعمار وحركة التحرير، بالإضافة إلى الأهمية التاريخية وظهور حركة "ما بعد الإستعمار" ومظاهرها وإهتماماتها وأهدافها وأهميتها ونتائجها الخ. بالإضافة لذلك، يسلط هذا البحث الضوء على بعض المعلومات الشخصية والحياتية والمهنية لكل من فرانتز فانون وعلاقته بحركات التحرير وما بعد الإستعمار، وكذلك علاقة فانون المميزة بحركات مقاومة الاستعمار وما بعد الاستعمار. وعلاوة على ذلك، يتناول هذا الفصل دعوات فانون المستمرة، خصوصا في كتابه المميز "بشرة سوداء، أفنعة بيضاء"، لإعادة بناء واستعادة الهوية الأفريقية الأصلية. وحجة فانون هنا هي أن الهوية الأفريقية الأصلية قد تم تشويهها وتحريفها نتيجة لسنوات طويلة من الاستعمار. وبالتالي، فإن هذا البحث يناقش أيضا طبيعة، ومواضيع وتقنيات استنساخ صورة جديدة واستصلاح الهوية الأم/الأصلية.

والله من وراء القصد،،

حميده عبد العاطي علي عبد العاطي  
المنيا

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