

## Redefining the (Post) Colonial Other

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### Abstract:

*The notion of the other and alterity has always formed the crux for philosophical debate since the days of Plato. Freud imparted a new critical currency to it using a comprehensive psychological model which was later challenged and reconstructed by poststructuralist methodology of Lacanian psychoanalyst. To encounter the Other you don't necessarily have to cross the boundaries. Sometimes 'that other' is just besides us or within. The social, economical, cultural and political framework approaches the question and problem of otherness with their specific methodologies. The rise of minority studies, animal studies, feminism, posthumanism and queer studies has problematized and reshaped the question of otherness.*

*The present paper is an attempt to recast the significance of understanding of the notion of (post) colonial other in the wake of Arab Spring by drawing on the works of anti-colonial theorists like Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Aime Cesaire etc.*

**Key words:** Colonialism, Postcolonial Discourse, Otherness, Fanon, Said, Cesaire

The history of human civilization is plagued constantly with desire to grab 'more'. As a consequence expansionism became the central agenda for any nation. The fall of Berlin Wall signifies the unity of the world, 9/ 11, again reinforced the division between 'good' and 'bad' (Mamdani). One more significant event which has changed the equation between East and West is still unfolding its manifested nature of

functionality. ‘Arab Spring’ or ‘Arab Revolution’, which started to take political form by the end of 2011 is portrayed as a revolution of the same nature of French Revolution. It will be very early to predict the outcome of this ongoing anti-colonial and liberation movement. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and many more countries in the Middle East witnessed an internal colonization by its own despotic rulers which makes it very clear in the postcolonial era- that to colonize we always don’t need the West. Besides many political ideologies, this revolution, if I may call it so, has laid out the framework in which postcolonial notions of alternative modernity, critique of such ‘Modernities’, liberation movement, agency, Islamic fundamentalism etc. have to be reassessed to answer the claims of the present crisis in the Middle East.

Among many postcolonial critics, Hamid Dabashi’s book got the most eye capturing title *The Arab Spring: End of Postcolonialism*. Scott had already marked our times as a “time of postcolonial crisis in which old horizons have collapsed or evaporate and new ones have not yet taken shape” (168). I think the present crisis in the Middle East is going to define the new World Order in which we will need the re-evaluation of the works of postcolonial critics like Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and Edward Said. The term ‘Clash of Civilizations’ has been reused to embrace the essence of this crisis as ‘clash within the civilization’. Dabashi looks at this revolution as a big rupture in the history of Western imperial tradition as he heralds:

... the end of postcolonial ideological formations as we have known them for the past two hundred years. By the end of postcoloniality I mean the cessation of ideological production in colonial contexts and terms- the terms determined by the European colonial domination of the reason, and the tyrannical ‘postcolonial’ states left behind when the Europeans collected their flags and left. (144)

One recent controversy between Niall Ferguson and Pankaj Misra rekindled the enquiry of the dichotomies like the West and the Rest. Pankaj Misra’s scathing review of Niall

Ferguson's book *Civilization: The West and the Rest* for London Book of Literary Review was an attempt to justify the need of non-Western point of view on the growth of civilizations. Pankaj Misra's book *From the Ruins of Empire* promises to unravel the dichotomies further and calls for the role of intellectuals to acknowledge the 'Other's histories'. Denying the severe criticism of Benita Parry (2004), who charged postcolonial criticism deprived of its liberation rhetoric because of the 'post-turns', Graham Huggan (2013) aptly remarks "... that the postcolonial field is torn, and has been for some time now, between competing revolutionary and revisionist impulses, and that much of the intellectual momentum it continues to generate is borne—explicitly or implicitly—out of the dialectical interaction between these." (4)

This form of anti-colonial resistance (Arab Spring) has once again sparked a new debate in postcolonial criticism as "new discourses of resistance" (Williams, 2010 88).

Postcolonialism, we might then say, is a performative mode of critical revisionism, consistently directed at the colonial past and assessing its legacies for the present, but also intermittently focusing on those forms of colonialism that have surfaced more recently in the context of an increasingly globalized but incompletely decolonized world. (Huggan 10)

I think it was Said who in his most visionary tone had anticipated "revolution of consciousness of women, minorities and marginals so powerful as to affect mainstream thinking worldwide" (1995: 350). The present paper is an attempt to inquire the nature of colonial and anti-colonial resistance in the works of classical writers like Frantz Fanon, Aime Cesaire, Edward Said, Jean Paul Sartre etc to justify my claim that in the wake of an anti-colonial resistance, prevalent at the present moment in the Middle East, postcolonial critical framework should be redefined and informed by future possible changes.

## Alterity

The notion of the other and alterity has always formed the crux for philosophical debate since the days of Plato. Freud imparted a new critical currency to it using a comprehensive psychological model which was later challenged and reconstructed by poststructuralist methodology of Lacanian psychoanalyst. To encounter the Other you don't necessarily have to cross the boundaries. Sometimes that other is just besides us or within. The social, economical, cultural and political framework approaches the question and problem of otherness with their specific methodologies. The rise of minority studies, animal studies, feminism, posthumanism and queer studies has problematized and reshaped the question of otherness.

In the context of colonization, it is in the geopolitical sense that the word 'other islands' is used. Later on it was in the cultural sense that a group of people or certain ethnicity was named Other's Other. It is in this geo-cultural sense I am forming my argument in this paper. European renaissance explorers were amazed by the geo-cultural diversity of new societies they discovered. The heterogeneous societies in these colonies were immediately, though unscrupulously, branded as feminine in stark contrast to the dominant norm of male superiority of western civilization. J. F. Staszak demystifies the construction of othering:

"Otherness is the result of a discursive process by which a dominant in group ('Us', the Self) constructs one or many dominated out groups ('Them', Other) by stigmatizing a difference – real or imagined – presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination. To state it naively, difference belongs to the realm of fact and otherness belongs to the realm of discourse. Thus, biological sex is difference, whereas gender is otherness." (43).

The process of 'othering' robs someone or a whole group of people of its identity and foundational sense of being by using

power or violence. The other group is denied the access to their norms beliefs, practices, rituals and whole linguistic system with which they used to identify themselves. The philosophical notion of otherness and cultural sense of identity are inseparably attached to each other. They have a relative relation in which the presence of feeling of the presence exists on the existence of other.

What should bother the sensibility of every human being is that why one group of people represents themselves and get represented since thereafter as bearers and denominators of 'Civilization' or 'Empire' or a great nation. But on the other hand the other group and their land is always portrayed an 'island' or even a 'distant land'. This reductive approach towards the unknowable other is dangerous for any encounter, violent or amicable, because before knowing them or before exploring the 'moreness' in them they are frozen in certain stereotypes that disrupt and impedes the desire to know the Other.

### **Nature of Colony**

The nature of colony and the cruel process of 'otherization' are also inseparable. It is not that only two groups, either East or West, colonizer or colonized, are at clash. Within the communities also subgroups- Other's Other- exist and are created. If every society is able to construct these subgroups or they were part of a social structure, then what made western civilisation to claim exceptional superiority over the rest? J. F. Staszak finds two reasons:

“First, otherness and identity are based on binary logic. Western thought, whose logic has been attached to the principle of identity, the law of noncontradiction, and the law of the excluded middle since the time of Aristotle, has produced a number of binaries that oppose a positively connoted term and a negatively connoted term and thus lends itself well to the construction of the self and the other. Many such dichotomies exist: male/female, Man/animal,

believer/nonbeliever, healthy/ill, heterosexual/homosexual, White/Black, adult/child, etc. Second, colonization allowed the West to export its values and have them acknowledged almost everywhere through more or less efficient processes of cultural integration. Western categories of identity and otherness, transmitted through the universalist claims of religion and science and forcibly imposed through colonization, have thus become pertinent far beyond the boundaries of the West.” (44)

The Harvard historian Niall Ferguson, in a very fashionable way approves of the rise of the West based on the following six “killer apps”.

1. Competition
2. Science
3. The Rule of Law and Representative Government
4. Modern Medicine
5. Consumer Society
6. Work Ethic

What both of them have failed to observe is that non-Western epistemologies- system of knowledge and inquiries- are also replete with these questions and potential to explore them further. But their discourse is not acknowledged or sometimes deleted from the archive of human history as if it was not worthy to be known.

The most interesting and complex relation between the colonizer and colonized is that of being ‘ambivalent’ towards each other. It not only affects the mindset of the colonial subjects but also reveals the economy-driven capitalistic nature of colony. When a colonizer, as an outsider, arrives in a colony he or she is dislocated or uprooted from his geographical location but deeply indulged in his sense of superior culture. Whereas, the colonized is deeply rooted in his cultural milieu and geographical setting. Suffering from a sense of dislocation, a colonizer cannot get the sense of ‘homeness’. Consequently, he confronts what Heidegger calls “unhousedness” or “not- at-homeness”. The colonized should always be looked and studied embedded in his inhabitant. But then the colonizers use

violence and other coercive methods to dislocate the colonized in his 'home'. This is the vicious nature of colony. The clash and the counter-resistance is imminent. This sense of being dislocated and forced to feel alienated from your home belonging, location causes immense agony and unsayable pain. For me this is the most negative outcome of an encounter in a colony which sometimes remains unregistered in the tome of western historiography.

I would argue that in a colony, to think of the sovereignty of identities either of a colonizer or of the colonized is impossible. The colonial identity gets interacted, counter-interacted, clashed, explored and hence evolves on various elements, peculiar to a nature of a colony. Their relation is never unilateral, uniformed or even based on any dominant monolithic framework.

The self image of the colonizer is replete with anxiety because they are not only aware of any rebellion but are also aware of the fact that they are located in a distant land.

The alternative methodologies- Alternative History, Subaltern Historiography, Alternative Modernity, Trans-Modern Modernity, Multiple Modernities- reveal this anxiety factor to look and delineate the colonial discourse "otherwise". As Bhabha argues:

"Our major task now is to probe further the cunning of Western modernity, its historical ironies, its disjunctive temporalities, its much-vaunted crisis of representation. It is important to say that it would change the values of all critical work if the emergence of modernity were given a colonial and post-colonial genealogy. We must never forget that the establishment of colonized space profoundly informs and historically contests the emergence of those so-called post-Enlightenment values associated with the notion of modern stability.

("Caliban Speaks to Prospero" 64)

The word colonialism can be interchanged with imperialism. According to the Oxford English Dictionary colonialism is

defined as:

A settlement in a new country . . . a body of people who settle in a new locality, forming a community subject to or connected with their parent state; the community so formed, consisting of the original settlers and their descendants and successors, as long as the connection with the parent state is kept up.

This definition does not make any reference to the people who might already be present there, aborigines, hence seems to deny the possibility of any human encounter. There is an encounter and a contact which is sometimes violent and at other times a very smooth process as it happened in India. This multiplicity is a unique characteristic of postcolonial criticism and can never be overlooked, Homi Bhabha contends:

“Colonial subjectivity in its various forms should be seen as “modes of differentiation, realized as multiple, cross-cutting determinations, polymorphous and perverse, always demanding a specific calculation of their effects”. (*Location of Culture* 67)

In Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* Prospero and his people begin to ‘inhabit’ the Island and in this process completely denying the rights or even presence of natives already present there. There is a denial of the indigenous people in the colony in the process of colonization. What Prospero did was colonizing the island and not inhabiting it.

Colonialism is a historical phenomenon which has been going on since centuries all over the globe. The most talked of colonizers today are the British and the French which took over most of Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas. The European colonialism and imperialism began in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the era of decolonization.

Colonialism can then be defined as a conquest and taking over of another person’s land, goods and freedom. It is an act of forcefully invading one’s rights and freedom and taking control of the ‘Other’ by violence. Colonialism being a



political act involves the presence of a self-projected superior knowledge(s) and 'civilization'. Marxists call colonialism a state of sub-humanity where the basic human rights are denied to the colonized.

The Modern or the European colonialism was different from the previous forms of colonization because there was exchange of goods, natural resources and humans also, as we see in the inhuman acts of slavery, where the people were transported to the metropolitan cities from Africa. Colonialism also involves a form of imperialism and a capitalist system of dominating the rest of the world. The settlers accomplished to spread their ideologies, but even after decolonization the ideologies continue to pressurize the decolonized countries and the Third World to cope with the 'legacies of empire'.

Any form of colonization involves two unequal sides where ultimately the weaker is put at the backdrop. By taking up the so-called civilizing mission, the colonizers have taken up a duty and responsibility towards their "inferiors"- the role of improving and pulling out the colonized from their state of misery, poverty, and their subhuman conditions. Behind the mask of this philanthropic act, the colonized are denied human rights, subdued by violence into a state of utmost misery. This subhuman condition as Marx calls it denied the native the Declaration of Human Rights (Sartre xx). Through these practices racism is born and gives rise to the colonialist method of production and exchange, where the colonized are exploited and try to find their "moral comfort in malaise" (Memmi, *Colonizer and Colonized* 22).

When the colonizer comes in contact with the colonized, he feels that he is inferior and demands sympathy from them. This gesture of feeling sorry for the Other places the colonizers in an unstable place because somewhere he feels guilty for the terrible degraded situation he has caused them to live in. "He was excited partly by his wrong, but much more by the knowledge that someone [the British] sympathized with them" (Forster 21). This feeling is followed by a stronger one- that of

empathy where the colonialist feels a sense of care and understanding for the colonized.

The colonizers consider the colonized as bad Niggers because they consider themselves as superior. This brands the colonizers as 'racist'. The colonized accept the 'stereotypes' created by the White- sin, black, barbarian is the Negro; virtue, civilization, master is the white. The Negro is considered a danger, a biological one, towards the white. During colonization by the British in India, the colonized were greatly racialized and even compared to the Negro. "... and she dared not return to her bungalow in case the 'nigger attacked'" (Forster 200). The White have a phobia towards the Black.

The European civilization is characterized by the presence, at the heart of what Jung calls the collective consciousness, of an archetype: an expression of the bad instincts, of the dark inherent in every ego, of the uncivilized savage, the Negro who slumbers in every white man.

(Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* 187)

Fanon is criticizing the colonial system and their ideology when he says that it is due to the settlers that the native knows his existence (38). Nevertheless, it is true to some extent that the natives have come into history due to colonization but by this process the natives lost whatever little they had- their land, wealth, their pride and their freedom. The colonizers have exploited all possible resources from their conquest as seen by the effect of British rule in India or the French in most parts of Africa. I will not deny that the British has not contributed in the development of India. It has given India a railway system, a political structure, abolished Sati and more. But at the same time they have left behind their Englishness and left the country in an ambiguous state.

The colonized were held back by and in the politics of the coercive hegemony of the West where they are dominated and ruled over by force and not by consent. The power relations that exist between the colonizer and the colonized are not legitimate. Michel Foucault explains and develops the idea of power

relation in great detail where he says that power can be exercised positively or negatively and only among free subjects. The positive point of view involves governing with a set of goals of human beings. Power relations do not exist when man is in chains as in slavery. The slave does not have (physical) freedom. This relation is that of psychological constraint. But slaves were not always bound in chains or confined to cells. They were made to work rigorously and pitilessly. This gives the possibility of a power relation between the master and the slave because the slave can resist this act of violence. Slavery narratives, such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, show that the slaves had various forms of resistance such as escaping, or stealing from their master's house or even have love affairs with the white mistress. Although these were very risky forms of freedom they nevertheless had the possibility to choose.

Power relation can also be viewed differently as we see in Lawrence Hill's novel *The Book of Negroes*, where one of the slave women see the men and women around her and says to herself: "...why only men sat to drink tea and converse, and why women were always busy. I reasoned that men were too weak and needed rest" (15). This was the condition in a society where slaves did everything even when their masters were capable of doing the same.

## **Colonial Discourse**

What are the different ways of discussing the issues of colonialism and their aftermath? What kind of discourse did colonialism produce? To answer these questions postcolonial studies has taken two different strands. The first is the epistemological inquiry of decolonization as discussed by Frantz Fanon and other activists who want to make their voice heard so as to challenge the dominating forces of culture, race and language. The second is set within the intellectual tradition of the West- the formation of its history, culture and a search for

its own sense of being, most of the times, on the cost of marginalizing the other civilizations. These two strands of thought are interconnected and one cannot be spoken about without referring to the other.

It was during the time of colonization itself that writers from different parts of the colonized world started voicing their opinion on the political, economic and social movements and the destruction brought about by colonialism and its effects on the social life. Activists and literary writers aimed at fighting for their rights and liberation rather than as a movement for the possibility of modernization and development. One important question which concerned most of them was to understand the nature of colonization so that certain methods could be invented to counter it.

Discourse on (post)colonialism is widely rooted in the discourse of the West, where colonization and its aftermaths are theorized and discusses in great detail. By writing on colonial situation critics of colonization ensure that the past is not forgotten, the present moment continues to get affected by past and a hope that the future can be improved. They examine how Europe has made its colonies and try to understand the process of colonization. With a close reading of the works of Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi, the history of colonialism can be given its rightful place in the literary and critical canon and will in some way try to answer the political and ethical questions raised today especially from the theorists from the West such as Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, Judith Butler and Jean-Luc Nancy.

Aimé Césaire was a Francophone writer, poet and author born in 1913 in Martinique. He was one of the founders of the Négritude movement along with Léopold Sédar Senghor. His most influential literary outputs are his poem *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, and *Discourse on Colonialism*. In his poem he depicts the ambiguous Caribbean life in the New World. *Discourse on Colonialism* is a denunciation of European colonial racism and hypocrisy which was not perceived by the

West. In 1968, he published *Une tempête*, a radical adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for the black audience. His characters in the play are the same as in Shakespeare except that Prospero is a white master; Ariel is a mulatto and Caliban a black slave. His play brings forth the issues of racism, decolonization and power relation. What differentiates Césaire's play from Shakespeare's is that Césaire describes the island before the arrival of Prospero, which was where Caliban and his people used to live and took care of their island. Césaire writes this play both for the colonized and the colonizer. He insists on the two-way master-slave narrative where Caliban resists his slavery and Prospero is defined by his slave Caliban. Prospero makes peace with the Europeans only after Caliban revolts.

Yes, however great their crimes, if they repent you can assure them of my forgiveness. They are men of my race, and of high mark.... As for Caliban, does it matter what that villain plots against me? All the nobility of Italy, Naples and Milan henceforth combined, will protect me bodily. Go! (16)

Resistance plays a major role in his play. Moreover, Césaire introduces a new character Eshu, a black devil-god. By using the same title as the original, he forces the audience to read both the plays and compare. Césaire affirms his anti-colonial perspective which is co-opted by the colonizers which justifies the exploitation of the Other. Césaire tries to erase the ideology that was imposed in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Shakespeare, by excluding the contact between the natives the Prospero's people, shows the denial of the indigenous people. There was a lack of proper contact and recognition of the Other.

In his book *Discourse on Colonialism*, Césaire expresses the impact colonization had on the colonized, on culture, on society and directs this to the colonizers. He centralizes his argument on the claim that:

... no one colonizes innocently, that no one colonizes with impunity either; that a nation which colonizes, that a civilization which justifies colonization- and therefore force- is

already a sick civilization, a civilization which is morally diseased, which irresistibly, progressing from one consequence to another, one denial to another, calls for its Hitler, I mean its punishment. (39)

His primary focus is on the negative effect colonization had on the colonies, an effect which contradicts the colonizers claim of their 'civilizing mission' or 'the white man's burden'. One of the white men in *Heart of Darkness* says:

I had then, as you remember, just returned to London after a lot of Indian Ocean, Pacific, China Seas- a regular dose of the East- six years or so, and I was loafing about, hindering you fellows in your work and invading your homes, just as though I had got a heavenly mission to civilize you. It was very fine for a time, but after a bit I did get tired of resting. (Conrad 11)

Here we see that the colonizers never had this mission of civilizing the Other. They were justifying the negative acts as being positive. Césaire makes us aware of its political aspects "Our [Negros] affinities were above all a matter of feeling. We either felt black or did not feel black. But there was also the political aspect" (94). At the time when the colonial ideology failed, forms of nationalism emerged which united the natives to fight against colonization.

Léopold Sédar Senghor refused to see the black question as a social one. Economic questions were not the only things to be taken into consideration during the French rule in Africa- but there were other things as much or even more important. The Negros were doubly alienated- as workers and as blacks. They were the only race which was denied the idea of humanity. This feeling of being left out from the others and being treated as barbarians made Césaire along with Senghor develop the notion of 'black consciousness' or Négritude, where those who suffered from "dependency complex" (Sartre 82) due to colonization now had a reason to be proud of who they were. Césaire says that colonization is a form of dehumanization by calling them barbarians, backward, uncivilized, the Other. The

colonial encounter requires a reinvention of the colonized and a forceful destruction of the past which he calls “thingification”.

The concrete encounter with the ‘face of the other’ underlies the sense of self and identity which also demands a sensibility towards ethics or humanism. “To gaze into another person’s face is to do two things: to recognize their humanity, and to assert your own” (Hill 25). In *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance*, Simon Critchley argues that “ethics without politics is empty... politics without ethics is blind... we need ethics in order to see what to do in a political situation” (120). This is what Césaire meant when he said that there is something more apart from the social and the economic question. There has to be some sense of responsibility when the White consider themselves as the superior race and by virtue of this try to reduce ‘the rest’ to an excremental identity. During colonization, the colonizers commit themselves to the cause of civilization and due to this prior commitment their responsibility cannot be declined.

No one had ever seen the Collector’s wife cry. Capable of tears- yes, but always reserving them for some adequate occasion, and now it had come. Ah, why had they not all been kinder to the stranger, more patient, given her not only hospitality but their hearts? ... but they retained some responsibility in her grievous wrong that they couldn’t define. If she wasn’t one of them, they ought to have made her one, and they could never do that now, she had passed beyond their invitation. ‘Why don’t one think more of other people?’ sighed pleasure-lovingly Miss Derek. These regrets only lasted in their pure form for a few hours. Before sunset, other considerations adulterated them, and the sense of guilt (so strangely connected without first sight of any suffering) had begun to war away

(Forster 199- 200).

The colonized begin to trust the colonizers and therefore are vulnerable to the actions of the colonizers, whether ethical or not. This trust is an essential part of ethics and so the

colonizers should keep up to this. The colonized, having given themselves wholly to the colonial power, the colonizers must respect the others' freedom and equality. But history does not show any signs of this and it is not a colonial practice. Their actions were purely economic and a complete exploitation of the colony. The settlers come to the colony with a very negative idea about the natives. For them

The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He is, let us dare to admit, the enemy of values, and in this sense he is the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he is the deforming element, disfiguring all that has to do with beauty or morality...

(Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks* 41)

Like Fanon, Césaire's concept of Négritude is essentially humanist. Césaire's Négritude conceives a pan- African cultural movement which emphasizes on unity of black cultures. This concept is not unidirectional because it does not compel the black man to return to Africa. Rather it reconfigures the geographical space which makes contact with other territories possible. This diasporic solidarity leads towards postcolonial ethics which includes Edward Said's inclusive humanism and the oppositional humanism of Fanon. These kinds of interpretations of humanism are different due to the period during which they were written. Fanon wrote during colonization or during the wake of anti-colonial period; Césaire has a radical humanist perception like Fanon and Albert Memmi. Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized* provides provocative commentary on the pathologies of inhumanity in the colonial discourse. "To expect the colonized to open his mind to the world and be a humanist and internationalist would seem to be ludicrous and thoughtlessness" (79).

Memmi deals with the ethical and moral responsibilities, the colonizers owe to the colonized and he starts the book by denouncing the so-called moral or cultural mission of colonization to show that economic benefit is at the



base of the colonizing mission. The colonialist never had the concept of the “civilizing mission” or to transform the colony into the image of their homeland at the back of their minds. If they allowed such an equation to take place it would destroy the principles of these privileges and benefits. The nature of colonization makes this equality impossible and thus resort to racism. The contact with the Other is shown through racism. For them the colonized cannot be understood or helped and so have to be destroyed. Vasanji says that “unless racism and racialism are contained... otherness will not be (wholly) embraced” (qtd. in Genetsch 135). Racism then becomes part and parcel of his personality. The living standards of the colonizers are considered higher because those of the colonized are lower. This lower standard is the results of the colonial exploitation of privileges.

One of the ways in which the colonized can change his situation is by changing the color of his skin and trying to copy him. He wishes to become like the colonizers and in this way his admiration for the colonizers increases and there is a slight hint of approving colonization. “We [the Indians] all admire them [the British]” (Forster 9). Fanon develops the idea of wanting to become like the colonizer in his book *Black Skin, White Mask*. “...the darker race are physically attracted by the fairer, but not vice versa” (Forster 243).

Fanon was born in Martinique but towards the end of his life he considered himself an Algerian. His father was a slave descendent and his mother was half French. Being part of the military he faced French racism and this made him fight for the cause of the Algerian revolution. *Black Skin White Masks* examines the psychology of colonialism and the ‘inferiority complex’ as the result of racism, where the colonized try to imitate the colonizers which Fanon calls *epidermilization*. For Sartre this book is a liberationist text because the colonial subject is never constant and shifts between accepting the colonial ideology and attaining the subhuman level and on the other side taking responsibility and choosing freedom. For

Fanon and well as for Sartre, colonialism is self-destructive. Assimilation opposes colonization and eliminates the colonial relationship. "... but a party to bridge the gulf between East and West" (Forster 26).

None of the sides want to totally deny the existence of others- all the colonizers are not bad. The colonized at the same time know that their life was happier before the arrival of the colonized and therefore want to get rid of them. "Let us shut them out and be jolly" (Forster 9). The native becomes aware that he is not an animal (as the settlers say) but has humanity in him only when the colonizers talk about the animals in the mother country. Only after this do the natives know that they have to prepare to fight back. Although he is treated as a savage, he is conscious that he is not one.

As far as the native is concerned, morality is very concrete; it is to silence the settler's defiance, to break his flaunting violence... to put him out of the picture. The well-known principle that all men are equal will be illustrated in the colonies from the moment that the native claims that he is equal to the settler. (Memmi 44)

As for the settlers, if they go back to their country, the natives will "go back to the Middle Ages" (Memmi 51). The natives were treated like animals in their own country as well as in the country of the 'superior race' as for the case of slaves. "I was walking one day behind a yoked man..." (Hill 32). The word "yoked" says it all.

The colonizers are generally portrayed as negative. But it is not always the case. There are colonizers who come to the colony and after seen the natives under oppression they feel sympathy for them and want to lend them a hand.

While talking about colonialism one must take into account the 'good colonizers'. All the colonizers are not bad; they sympathize with the natives and want to help them. By temperament or ethical conviction, a colonial is a benevolent European who does not have the colonizer's attitude towards the colonized. All right! Let us say right away, despite the

apparent drastic nature of the statement: a colonial so defined does not exist, for all Europeans in the colonies are privileged (Memmi 10).

All Europeans who land or are born in the colony become colonizers. For Memmi this is where the actual ethical problem starts for the colonizer. He is now free to accept this condition or refuse it by taking up their father's responsibility. This second generation of colonizers is not aware of the meaning of colonization and therefore can choose to stay and fight for freedom or leave the colony or follow the colonizers' footsteps. The colonizer who does not accept colonization becomes a threat for his fellow citizens and is not accepted by his fellow colonizers. Now he can either leave the colony or assimilate with the colonized who will welcome him with open arms. He soon realizes that one group is formed of injustice while the other of innocence and virtue. For Memmi, refusing colonization and adopting the colonized are two very different things. "To succeed in this second conversation, our man would have to be a moral hero" (23). We can now ask ourselves which choice is an ethical one- to leave the colony if he finds himself unfit to fight against colonization or to stay and assimilate for the cause of justice and freedom. There can be no one definite answer to this- if he finds himself incapable of fighting for the colonized, the better choice would be to leave the colony and give more free space for the natives. But if he thinks that he will make a difference by staying in the colony for the colonized, it would also be the right choice. In either way it is the colonized who benefits.

Lawrence Hill in his novel *The Book of Negroes* talks about the live of one slave woman who was kidnapped from her village Bayo in Africa and taken first to London and then to the USA where due to the abolitionist she gets freedom. The abolitionists had made many requests to the government to end slavery in Britain and every time they tried to do so they were shut down. When the abolitionists meet Meena, the slave protagonist of the novel, they tell her that she can help them

give freedom to the slaves.

I am referring to your dignity and courage, he says. We need a human face for our fight, and here you are. A woman. An African. A liberated slave who has risen up, self-taught. For twenty years, he goes on, British parliamentarians have extinguished every abolitionist fire. But this time, he says, a woman like you could make all the difference. ... I [Meena] can't speak to your Parliament or meet your King without addressing the bondage of my people. ... But I am too old for cleverness. I cannot speak against the slave trade without condemning slavery, I say. Make the arguments that you must, I tell them, and let me make mine. (67- 68)

Meena does not only want to liberate the people who are presently under bondage. She would rather free all the slaves and even those of the future generations. "Even if you destroy every slave ship, I say, what remains of the men and women already in bondage? What remains of the children who were born to them but belong to others?" (68).

If the colonizer accepts to fight for freedom, for his principles and moral values, there are three elements which he has to go through- first for the past, he must recognize and differentiate between his wrong and right deeds; second for the future he must rectify his mistakes and make sure that they are not repeated; and thirdly in the present he must recognize his wrong doings.

In vain: in order to give them orders, even the harshest, the most insulting, you have to begin by *acknowledging* them; and as they cannot be watched over constantly you have to resolve to trust them. Nobody can treat a man 'like a dog' if he does not first consider him as a man. The impossible dehumanization of the oppressed turns against the oppressors and becomes their alienation. It is the oppressors themselves who, by their slightest gesture, resuscitate the humanity they wish to destroy; and, as they deny it to others, they find it everywhere like an enemy force. To escape from this, they must harden, give themselves the opaque consistency and impermeability of stone; in short they in turn must

dehumanize themselves. (Sartre 53)

Memmi understands this dialectics of colonial encounter, which is characterized by confusion, 'anxiety' and 'ambivalence'. He criticizes the colonial system. "Having founded this new moral order where he is by definition master and innocent, the colonialist would at last have given himself absolution. It is still essential that this order not be questioned by other, and especially not by the colonized" (76). This is why the colonized has no literature or history except that of being colonized.

The colonized writer is condemned to live his renunciations to the bitter end. The problem can be concluded in only two ways: by the natural death of colonized literature; the following generations, born in liberty, will write spontaneously in their newly found language. ... the second possibility can tempt the writer; to decide to join the literature of the mother country. Let us leave aside the ethical problems raised by such an attitude. (111)

The rejection of the indigenous literature is an ethical issue as it takes away the freedom of expressing themselves in their own language. It is also a political problem because the national language becomes that of the colonized. Fanon poses this important question: "...how to posit a 'black self' in a language and discourse in which blackness itself is at best a figure of absence, or worse a total reversion?" (qtd. in Memmi xv). The change of language- from the indigenous to the colonizers takes a long time and therefore the literature of the colonized dates from very recent time- that is the postcolonial era. Here we see how language was an issue for the colonized as well as for the colonizers. Until the time of liberation, it was the colonizer who were writing the history of the colonized and wrote only what they chose to write. The black man wants to say no to the exploitation of his freedom and to those who try to define him. This literature put forth the general Western attitude towards the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America. The East was essentialized as static, undeveloped and gave the idea that

Western society is rational and superior which gets its most suitable articulation in Fanon and later in Edward Said's *Orientalism*.

Every colonized people- in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality- finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation... He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (Fanon 18)

The black who speaks the colonizers' language is as much alienated as the one who does not, because the former tries to imitate the colonizers and are therefore alienated by the colonizers and well as the colonized who try to resist domination.

The humanist critics of postcolonial theory, Fanon, Césaire and Memmi during the 1980s and 1990s argued that colonial discourse canonized European humanism as a rhetorical device to transform the native uncivilized man into a real and civilized man. They argued that the colonized native had always been human but had been disfigured as being inhuman in relation to the European human.

With the term postcolonialism comes the idea of humanism. Postcolonialism has different approaches to humanism. The first is the alter-humanist thought- a humanism that positively enables the colonizer's ascribed otherness which can be seen in the works of Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi and Aimé Césaire. The second, an inclusive humanism that is neither averse nor fully complicit with the European humanism, (Sartre xii) as traced in the works of Edward Said, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha.

For Fanon the European philosophy of humanism portrays the African as alter-human. Fanon's humanism repudiates the degraded human condition and is oriented towards (re)creating a new man outside the Eurocentric perspective.

For Fanon, violence is necessary to attain their human

condition, their humanity and freedom. On the contrary Sartre denied this perspective on ethical grounds but later he also thinks violence to be necessary for the oppressed. Rather it would not be ethical to accept domination and be subjugated by the dominating force. In the wake of new resistance movement, like the one which is unfolding in the Middle-East, such dialectics will enhance our understanding of violence, suppression and resistance.

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