



### Short Review Paper

## Supporting of decolonisation struggles after World War II by Frantz Fanon

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### Abstract

*The study provided an in-depth analysis of Frantz Fanon's commentary and perspectives in terms of his support for decolonisation struggles after World War II. This paper had put an emphasis on Algerians' anti-colonial struggle against French rule considering Fanonian discourses toward decolonisation of this territory. In this paper, various observations are acquired to comprehend Fanon's understanding of natives' decolonisation struggles resulting in physical and psychological violence, and his justification for making violence a key player in anti-colonial struggle. Fanonian perspectives from his writings were also discerned to gain an explicit grasp of his support of decolonisation struggles after World War II.*

**Keywords:** Frantz Fanon, decolonisation, anti-colonial struggle, indigenous, Algeria, oppression and exploitation.

### Introduction

World War II dived into a severe blow to colonial powers, depriving them of their former eminence. Between 1945 and 1960, various new states in Asia and Africa achieved outright independence from their European colonial rulers, though were subject to being affected politically, economically, and psychologically. Here, Frantz Fanon's contribution to supporting decolonisation struggles after World War II seems worth considering. His voice has been remaining influential while comprehending decolonisation struggles occurring after Second World War. His whole-hearted engagement in independence struggles played a pivotal role in his depiction of forming a humanist and anti-colonial culture.

**Background:** Frantz Fanon was a psychologist, who acted a pivotal part in Algerian revolts against French colonisation, and thus, stays a key analyser of natives' decolonisation and independence struggles. His theses on decolonisation provide insights into political and psychological impacts of oppression and dehumanisation<sup>1</sup>. Fanon's '*The Wretched of the Earth*' illustrated "decolonisation is always a violent phenomenon", and thus, violent colonisation can be responded to by violence acting as a cleansing force for colonised people<sup>1</sup>. Thus, decolonisation struggles are intertwined with violent behaviour in a post-colonial era.

Fanon appears to be an inspirational figure igniting the need for working for social justice against oppressed and marginalised natives in context of decolonisation struggles of Algerian people at hands of France. An interpretation of radical anti-racist humanism is articulated in his '*Black Skin, White Masks*' portraying white supremacy with a subject position of privileged

Martinican people of France<sup>2</sup>. Considering colonialism as domination with violence and brutality, Fanon argued the need for violent revolts against colonial powers. It ended with socialism, as (re) building a national culture relied on these struggles of decolonisation prioritising Fanon's support of socialist nationalism<sup>3</sup>. This is where his reason and justification behind avocation for therapeutic violence comes forth.

Supporting decolonisation struggles faced by natives is explicitly evoked in Frantz Fanon's later works, such as '*A Dying Colonialism*', and '*The Wretched of the Earth*'. Interpretations in these literary pieces unveiled pretensions of Western culture as being universal standards and becoming conscious of struggles of colonised people, as they began to reclaim lands and human dignity<sup>4</sup>. This is where Fanon's decision to formulate the central theme of decolonisation theory comes forth, which is a pledge to individual human dignity. Growing resistance in Caribbean and African colonies emerged during late fifties against school curricula, administrative mechanisms, and more. Fanon's use of phrase "nauseating mimicry" exhibited the time when colonised cultures intended to aggressively infuse from within indicating relative decolonisation struggle. Hence, it is evident that violent revolt against colonial control was subject to violent oppression and subjugation of natives, and thus, Fanon's support of decolonisation struggle retains to be pertinent even today.

**Rationale:** Decolonisation struggles become predominant considering colonisers pledged to diminish people's and natives' originality. This is "in fact the assertion of a distinct identity, concern with keeping intact a few shreds of national existence", as "religious, magical, fanatical behaviour". In this regard, Frantz Fanon's contribution to decolonisation after the

Second World War can be further noticed in his interpretation of black people's racial experiences in a racialised society in his renowned piece, *'Black Skin, White Masks'* (1952). In response to brutal French colonisation in 1954, Algerian revolt involving killing, torture, and barbaric oppression exhibited juxtaposition of black and white races, reflecting so-called dependency complex of colonised people. Thus, decolonisation struggles after WWII indeed arouse one's concerns in the face of ensuring natives' independent sovereignty.

Prevalence of colonial imperialism in contemporary world politics ensures pertinence of Fanon in context of racial dilemmas addressing decolonisation struggles after World War II. Apparent crisis of race, as questioned by Fanon regarding imposed racial identity centralised his idea that violence must play in decolonisation struggles of indigenous people<sup>5</sup>. Similarly, political oppression in terms of psychological struggles after World War II is facilitated in words of both Fanon and his contemporary, Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre's *'Critique of Dialectical Reason'* showed how invent novel conditions for colonised control accelerated society to unforeseen directions, and accounted for insurgent political actions<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, contrary criticism of Fanon's theory of violence can also be noticed. Argument prevails that Fanon's concept of violence in decolonisation involves "...entire range of political pressure" having psychological and physical injuries, coercion, aggression, and more<sup>7</sup>. Thus, even though Fanon's support to decolonisation struggles is inevitably pertinent, existence of a 'human' 'being' through violent decolonisation seems ambiguous.

**Research gap:** This study has consolidated key areas of struggles raised in context of decolonisation after World War II; however, certain areas failed to be highlighted. For instance, a comparison of European colonial powers is not evaluated. World War II accentuated movement toward decolonisation, as seen in Japanese victory over Western nations. Asian colonies further campaigned for their rights resulting in independent movements, though are not interpreted explicitly. Moreover, struggles in a post-colonial era in Asia and Africa are also illustrated in a limited way. A wider emphasis on these areas would have been better to gain a comprehensive view of decolonisation campaigns and national movements against colonial controls.

## Previous literature analysis

**Concept of decolonisation struggles after Second World War:** World War II was intended to liberate colonised peoples, as major colonial controls exercised by France and Britain resulted in numerous colonial possessions. Decolonisation mirrors "cultural, psychological, and economic freedom", for native people with the purpose of achieving indigenous sovereignty. Emergence of colonialism accelerated the need for epistemic freedom, which reinstated African people as central in history of independent entities. National revolts and campaigns

broke out across Morocco, Egypt, and Algeria, as they strived to snatch colonies from French and British rule. For example, how Algeria's struggles become concerning during decolonisation, such as challenging conventional labour internationalism as an identity or practice<sup>8</sup>. Thus, this territory's brutal as well as long independence struggle related to getting back its identity and practices provide insight into decolonisation struggle.

Decolonisation is perceived as a continuous search for a pristine world order, which resulted in a gradual struggle for survival, power, and wealth. However, colonial wound still seems to prevail, as global power structure in contemporary times includes imperialism, slave trade, colonial control, and more reflecting resistance struggles<sup>9</sup>. It further emphasised how brutal colonial would have physical and psychological consequences from racism and hegemonic discourses questioning humanity. Furthermore, native conditions, such as poverty, unemployment, alienation, and others reflect indigenous people's ongoing independence struggle having mental and physical consequences<sup>10</sup>. Thus, alongside violence in response to resisting colonial control of powers, decolonisation struggles of natives raise a concern about aspects of humanism and human rights.

A supportive argument is derived by Frantz Fanon, who investigated dynamics of independence struggles by recognising dangers, psychological, and physical constraints brought forth by dehumanisation and oppression<sup>11</sup>. For instance, a central area of dehumanisation can be seen in colonial powers' endeavour to obliterate national culture, resources, and other national structures incorporating education and administrative systems. Violent oppression ignites inferiority of natives, as whiteness and racial practices within society drive emotional, physical, and psychological struggle<sup>12</sup>. Thus, reclaiming land, property, and other essentials to retain native people's survival contributed to ongoing struggle against physical and psychological violence of colonial powers.

**Fanon's view and support of decolonisation struggles:** Fanon's endeavour to delve deep into grasping the context of race with emphasis on black people has highlighted decolonisation struggles after World War II. These struggles are best explained, such as main aspect of exploitation of indigenous people is humanism, and they strive in perishing their identical culture<sup>13</sup>. Unlike developed capitalist societies, oppression in colonies is naked, upheld by violent means of exploitation and making a key distinction between colonised and coloniser. Fanon's words reflected in *'Concerning Violence'* revealed decolonisation is the replacement of certain "species" of men by another "species" of men and calls for a change of a whole social structure. Therefore, in a haywire-like situation created in a post-colonial era, Fanon tends to emphasise dehumanisation in context of vicious colonial relations demolishing indigenous people's "sense of selfhood"<sup>14</sup>.

Fanon expected that decolonisation struggles for social solidarity raise political consciousness at a national level, which can transform racialised social solidarity. He unveiled how anti-colonial movements incorporating revolts, popular protests, and insurgencies intended transformation of hierarchies in political and economic orders in post-colonial era<sup>15</sup>. Thus, his writings invoked nation-state frameworks that sought to resist imperial exploitation, which was driven by a will of mass. Similarly, Fanon has largely contributed to shedding light on decolonisation struggles, as noticed in his writings and theories exhibiting anti-colonial issues of 1950s and 1960s. Therefore, it is indeed Fanon understands of decolonisation that can be attained through struggle and violence unveiling relative strivings of natives in order to gain independence after World War II.

Fanon's argument in supporting decolonisation struggle can be further seen in his renowned published, '*Black Skin, White Masks*', which dived into emphasising racial discrimination of colonised people. Despite his focus on violence in context of decolonisation struggles, psychiatric disorders, and racial relations of colonised natives relate to a concern of humanism. Local conditions that embedded anti-colonial struggles, in his writings, accentuate movement of post-colonial activism. Besides, Black man's neurosis is tracked by his racialised economic, political, and social conditions under colonial control. Material struggles (violence, poverty, unemployment), psychological conditions (isolation, humiliation, and other issues) reveal the ultimate decolonisation struggles of indigenous.

This decolonisation thinker was also prophetic of role of national governments in a post-colonial era, which seemed not to put a halt to independence struggles and rather exaggerate it. They took the form of oppressors, which would "imprison national consciousness in sterile formalism", as phrased in '*The Wretched of the Earth*'<sup>2</sup>. Fanon's contribution seems to offer a subjective view regarding how decolonisation struggles raised a new consciousness to dismiss racialised humanism of Europe as well as xenophobia of anti-colonials. His perspective, thus, favours universal humanism, which derives experiences of decolonisation struggles that abandon exclusionary humanism of Europe and postcolonial xenophobia<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, a detailed evaluation of colonial powers' practices and natives' anti-colonial struggles for survival gains a one-pointed view of decolonisation after World War II in Fanon's words.

## Methodology

A broad search using literature databases and conference proceedings has led to a comprehensive landscape of literature reviews. Consideration of relevant journals acknowledging Frantz Fanon's contribution to decolonisation after World War II widens this research's essence to grasp relative struggles and other essentials explicitly. Regarding Fanon's publications alongside its criticisms against its limitations to be of prior 2000, a wide range of journals is taken from academic

databases. Therefore, selection of key journals having interpretations of decolonisation struggles and renowned publications of Frantz Fanon seems to be conducive for this journal<sup>16</sup>.

In this context, scanning abstracts of 15 journals requires scanning more than 200 articles and classifying them as reviews<sup>17</sup>. A secondary database has been considered to acquire pertinent journals, as decolonisation cannot be restricted to the realm of research regarding its vastness. The story of independence struggle has been exemplified adequately using pre-existing peer-reviewed articles involving the same research subject<sup>18</sup>. A set of 15 journals that appear in English language has been considered using literature databases to retain this journal's simplicity of understanding Dying colonialism, as well as concerns about evolution of postcolonial societies, is widely focused on in Fanon's works and collated from academic databases. Hence, covering 15 journals has been an effective research method to be considered in this study to gain a comprehensive understanding of decolonisation struggles from Fanon's point of view.

## Theoretical findings

**Dependency theory in decolonisation:** Dependence theory holds a notion that nature of social formations is relied on how they are incorporated with the world's capitalist system. From a more economic perspective, this theory states how unequal economic relations between wealthy and poor nations are facilitated by colonisation and decolonisation. For example, European sovereign control over underdeveloped African territories resulted in alarming deterioration of Africa's economies, which requires its dependency on its colonisers. It exhibits how decolonisation is also subject to struggles in terms of depending on oppressors even in modern times.

**Decolonisation theory:** Decolonisation mirrors an active resistance against colonial powers, where this decolonisation theory reinforces shifting of power towards economic, political, and cultural sovereignty of the indigenous. Even though decolonisation is subject to colonised natives' enormous struggles; it reveals people's anti-colonial efforts to gain freedom. However, this theory highlights the struggles, such as dangers of decolonisation metaphor (as in decolonising mind), which prevents one from decolonising, such as decentring 'whiteness'. Hence, in context of Fanon's exhibition of decolonisation struggles reflect self-determination practice over survival and other essentials.

**Post-colonial Theory of Frantz Fanon:** A postcolonial mechanism is a literal theory that deals with the concept that nations, which were once, or are now, colonies of some superior countries. In context of Fanon's militant humanism fostering a significant critique of colonialism, his post-colonial theory tends to alleviate post-colonial. Even though post-colonialism was supposed to refute control, oppression, and exploitation,

Fanon's criticism remains in terms of his development of a psychoanalytic theory of post-colonialism. The theory of Fanon dives into psychological inadequacy of indigenous people resulting in their adoption of Western religion, language, and values, and discarding their own culture. Fanon argued in *'The Wretched of the Earth'* that natives find a sense of 'self' as depicted by 'colonial master', whereas colonisers embrace a sense of superiority. Therefore, this theory emerges to be more of Fanon's criticism in response to post-colonial struggles of natives at the hand of national governments.

**Discussion:** Frantz Fanon exhibited the form of Black Everyman, an ostracised man, who could transcend his ostracisation while emphasising decolonisation struggles after World War II being conscious of race within orbit of French society. With a key focus on French colonisation, Fanon's first published book, *'Black Skin, White Masks'* provided penetrating insights into colonial domination and psychology of racism. Moreover, relative class positions, racial discrimination, and other concerns reveal decolonisation struggles and political dilemmas against colonial powers. Fanon's conceptions of colonial society highlight role of rural peasants, urban working class, and even political leadership in context of anti-colonial struggles<sup>19</sup>. These further support violence as a necessity for decolonisation and establishment of post-colonial national identity and culture, though subject to limitations and criticisms. Therefore, this study has unveiled key essence and struggles in making a decolonised society that deprives of exploitation and oppression of colonial powers.

Further research unveils how anti-colonial struggles of natives cannot be limited to class distinctions, racial conflicts, and more, and rather extended to deprived conditions of indigenous people after the Second World War. Physical and material situations, such as unemployment of natives, poverty, and violence alongside psychological struggles including alienation and humiliation of indigenous ignite concerns. Moreover, in terms of decolonisation struggles, Fanon's viewpoint accentuates Algerian struggles particularly after the global war, WW2. Influence of European colonialists and their repressions in politics blocked an endeavour to infuse democracy in Algeria, which indicates Fanonian observation of decolonisation struggles of Algerians. This colonial discourse and exploitation weigh post-colonial present, and thus, there seems to be a little halt in anti-colonial struggles of native people.

Fanon considered violence to be a prime factor in context of anti-colonial struggle and a way of obtaining freedom with a sense of sovereignty. However, critical scrutiny comes in relation to Fanon's theory of violence, as tragedy seemed to infiltrate decolonisation revolutionary violence while resisting colonial control. Violence relating tragedy to natives further seemed to question colonised people's psychological and political-economic freedom within a social structure. Nevertheless, Fanon's rebellion to support independence through decolonisation struggles emerges to be relevant still

today with Jamaica achieving freedom and becoming a republic. Complex political and historic situations require strategic measures while remembering anti-colonial struggles, and thus, Fanonian discourse seems to be pertinent enough in this context.

## Conclusion

From the above study, it can be concluded that Frantz Fanon's handfuls of publications ignite decolonisation even in the face of immense brutality, killing, exploitation, and more. His interpretations of complexities of colonised people and their struggles to obtain independent sovereignty mirror his contributions to decolonisation struggles after World War II. In this context, overall struggle of indigenous people, such as their material conditions, physical and psychological conditions, and others are also discerned distinctively. An emphasis on post-colonial conditions shows little difference from during decolonisation in modern times. Thus, this study offers an in-depth analysis of concept of decolonisation struggles with an emphasis on Algerian revolt against French colonisation. The post-colonial Nigerian revolution has been depicted in the writings of fanon which is most important and most-violence at the same time. The consequences of death were evident in the colonial power. The colonised struggle and the human dignity has been the subject matter of the writings of fanon. The intellectual and democratic elements in the colonialist countries can be able to support the national aspirations. Decolonisation and justification of violence have been depicted in the viewpoint of Fanon from time to time as he considered decolonisation is the replacement of a certain species of men by another one. Fanon was inclined more to humanity and not black, African, or Algerian colonial humanity.

**Future scope:** This study can further provide an explicit focus on criticism of colonialism to understand decolonisation struggles of natives by grasping varied perspectives of Jean-Paul Sartre, Aimé Césaire, Octave Mannoni, and more alongside Frantz Fanon. These widening views of the same can offer intellectual insights into today's highly unstable political and historical situations. In addition, a national consciousness of anti-colonial struggles raised by this journal can provide solutions in global power relations with regard to national governments' arguable exercise of control<sup>20</sup>. Hence, this article emerges to involve some key mechanisms that can profoundly widen future scopes in historical as well as political domains.

**Research limitation:** The research has one-pointedly considered views and commentary of political thinker and critic of colonialism, Frantz Fanon without bringing comparisons of his contemporaries' perceptions concerning independence struggles of colonised. It could derive an in-depth comprehension of relative struggles and contrary arguments during decolonisation and post-colonial era. Moreover, this study has applied a secondary research method by extracting pre-existing journals having the same subject matter, which seems to be inadequate to some extent. Implementation of a primary method could have assisted to bring information on

decolonisation struggles after World War II from the ground in terms of acquiring contemporary scholars' observations.

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