

Introduction to Cultural Studies
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Lecture - 16
Fanon – Black Skin, White Masks (Part - IV)

Hello and welcome to this NPTEL lecture this Introduction to Cultural Studies which is the course we are studying and we will continue in this particular lecture with Frantz Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks which is the text that we are currently examining, going to study.

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My theme being the disalienation of the black man, I want to make him feel that whenever there is a lack of understanding between him and his fellows in the presence of the white man there is a lack of judgment.

A Senegalese learns Creole in order to pass as an Antilles native: I call this alienation.

The Antilles Negroes who know him never weary of making jokes about him: I call this a lack of judgment.

So we are looking at this chapter called The Negro and Language. This is page 25, it should be on your screen and then Fanon in this particular chapter talks about the idea of language and we just spent some time in the earlier lecture talking about how language is associated with agency and that in turn is associated with identity especially in colonial politics where appropriating a certain kind of language will give you automatic agency, will guarantee you agency etc.

However, you know there can also be an idea of over appropriation. So if the black person speaks French in a very polished, sophisticated way then that becomes a problem and so the black person is always expected to speak French in a particular way in a very you know fragmented, grammatically incorrect, erroneous kind of a way because that would fit the bill, that would fit the stereotype more conveniently.

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To speak a language is to take on a world, a culture. The Antilles Negro who wants to be white will be the whiter as he gains greater mastery of the cultural tool that language is. Rather more than a year ago in Lyon, I remember, in a lecture I had drawn a parallel between Negro and European poetry, and a French acquaintance told me enthusiastically, "At bottom you are a white man." The fact that I had been able to investigate so interesting a problem through the white man's language gave me honorary citizenship.

Now, in this particular page, on page 25 Fanon goes on to say, to speak a language is to take on a world, a culture. The Antilles Negro who wants to be white will be the whiter as he gains greater mastery of the cultural tool that language is. So language is quite clearly defined as a cultural tool. Is that kind of an instrument through which he can move up or move down the cultural ladder. And that obviously is a very material process.

So again we are back to this whole argument that we have about culture being an entanglement between materiality and abstraction and language being you know a very good case in point. So rather more than a year ago in Lyon, I remember in a lecture I had drawn a parallel between the Negro and European poetry. And a French acquaintance told me enthusiastically, at bottom you are a white man.

The fact that I had been able to investigate so interesting a problem through the white man's language gave me honorary citizenship. So you know this is a dark funny, a dark humorous kind of an example where Fanon obviously is being very antidotal. He speaks of his personal experiences but that is the whole point of this particular book. He will rely on his subjective experiences and he says quite clearly that I do not even aspire to be objective.


I do not even aspire to be neutral. So I will speak for my subject position. I will foreground my subject position and you know therein lies the honesty and clarity of expression of this particular book. So he recalls a particular experience, a memory where he had delivered a lecture comparing and contrasting poetry written by the African poet and European poetry at the end of which a French acquaintance came up to him and said you know supposedly in a very flattering way that you know at bottom at the heart you are a French man you are a white man.

So the whole point is this is very easy question over here between sophistication and whiteness, between civilization and whiteness. So if you are civilized, if you speak a language which belongs to the white person in a way which is very sophisticated then you are automatically guaranteed a metaphorical honorary citizenship. So you become a French person, a white French person. So again the question of agency comes in very clearly over here, okay.

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leave any European breathless. I am reminded of a relevant story: In the election campaign of 1945, Aimé Césaire, who was seeking a deputy's seat, addressed a large audience in the boys' school in Fort-de-France. In the middle of his speech a woman fainted. The next day, an acquaintance told me about this, and commented: "*Français a té tellement chaud que la femme là tombé malcadi.*"¹⁴ The power of language!

Some other facts are worth a certain amount of attention: for example, Charles-André Julien introducing Aimé Césaire as "a Negro poet with a university degree," or again, quite simply, the expression, "a great black poet."



And then Fanon compares this particular episode with the experience which involved the poet and the Césaire. So he says in the end of the, the bottom of this page over here which is on your screen. I am reminded of a relevant story. In the election campaign in 1945, Aime Césaire who is seeking a deputy's seat addressed a large audience in the boys' school in Fort-de-France. In the middle of his speech a woman fainted.

The next day, an acquaintance told me about this and commented you know his language is so powerful and so evocative that you know the woman swooned and fainted in his presence. So the whole point is you know it is inexplicable it becomes exotic when a black man speaks a French language in a way which is sophisticated and metaphorical and figuratively rich and so that comes with a sense of a quotient of exoticisation, a quotient of glamour, a quotient of otherness which is now you know becoming glamorous.

So you know it becomes doubly exoticised, it becomes doubly, it almost becomes like a magical performance, right. Something out of the ordinary, something extraordinary. Something out of the radar of logic because logically the black person is not expected to speak in sophisticated French because sophisticated French belongs in the purview to the purview of the white French men who is civilized by default.

So speaking, a black person speaking very polite French, very nice French is almost like a magical performance. In this particular episode a woman faints when she hears Aime Cesaire speak in a very fluent French is a very good case in point you know so the language of the black person the way the black person appropriates French language becomes almost like a magical performance, something which is so unexpected and extraordinary kind of a way, okay.

Some other facts are worth a certain amount of attention. For example, Charles-Andre Julien introducing Aime Cesaire as a Negro poet with a university degree or again quite simply the expression, a great black poet. So this double qualification is what Fanon is pointing us at you know directing our attention to. A negro poet with a university degree. So it is almost like a oxymoron of some kind. A Negro poet with a university degree does not exist.

So if one exist, if you find someone, that person becomes an extraordinary example. Someone is black at the same time is educated with a university degree or a great black poet.

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These ready-made phrases, which seem in a common-sense way to fill a need—for Aimé Césaire is really black and a poet—have a hidden subtlety, a permanent rub. I know nothing of Jean Paulhan except that he writes very interesting books; I have no idea how old Roger Caillois is, since the only evidence I have of his existence are the books of his that streak across my horizon. And let no one accuse me of affective allergies; what I am trying to say is that there is no reason why André Breton should say of Césaire, “Here is a black man who handles the French language as no white man today can.”¹⁵



So now I would say, Fanon would argue nobody described anyone as a great white poet because poetry, whiteness, civilization, culture, these are easy (()) (06:05) these are easy you know linearities with each other but you know for a person's black to be a poet and a great poet that would be an extraordinary example something which should be pointed out and set aside as a offbeat example.

So these readymade phrases, Fanon goes on to say which seem in a common sense way to fill a need for Aime Cesaire is really black and a poet have a hidden subtlety. So this is a very, this is what I meant when I mentioned in the last lecture a good example of covert racism right which is something which happens quite rampantly in culture where racism is directed not as an explicit category, as an explicit sentence or something which is explicitly aggressive, but which might appear in the guise, through the guise of you know a very flattering kind of a complement.

But even the complement could be a covert racist complement and that would carry commentations of racism. So someone who is being as a great black poet or a Negro poet who has been to university which is a supposedly flattering you know complement, complementary expression. It actually is racism in disguise because what it actually suggests in a very sort of commentative kind of a way is that black poets cannot be great, black people do not usually have university degrees. So that is the racism over here.

And Fanon is deconstructing that kind of a covert racism at play. So and then you know he goes on to say there is hidden subtlety, a permanent rub in this kind of expressions. I know nothing Fanon would go on to say, I know nothing of Jean Paulhan except that he writes very interesting books. I have no idea of how Roger Caillois is. So this is the only evidence I have of his existence are the books of his that streak across my horizon.

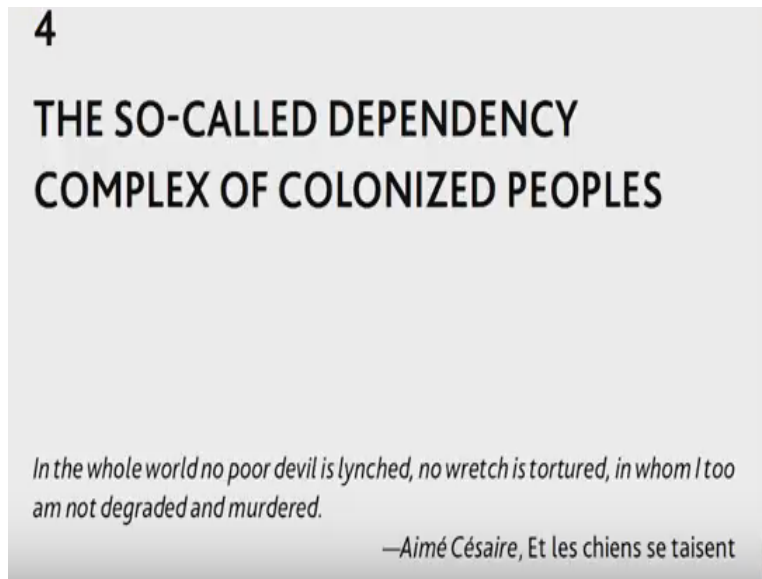
And let no one accuse me of affective allergies. What I am trying to say is that there is no reason why Andre Breton should say of Césaire, here is a black man who handles the French language as no white man today can. So you know even something so supposedly flattering Andre Breton obviously is a survivalist you know he is one of the biggest figures of survivalism you know European survivalism during his day when he describes Aime Césaire as someone who handles the French language in a way that no white man can.

That obviously carries a very covert racism in it which is suggest you the fact that this is extraordinary because the black man is not expected to be a master of the French language. So again we are back to the question of the relationship between language and agency over here and to what extent is language related to agency and to what extent does language make you agentic and also and equally interestingly you know to what extent is language a commodification.

So when a black man uses language there is an automatic commodification at play over here which you know is just an automatic expectation, a automatic assumption that will only be spoken or written in jittery kind of a language. So when that does not happen, when the black man speaks in very sophisticated French, then obviously we have this covert racism, the very covert racist rhetoric which comes in, in the guise of complements, okay.

So that is the very interesting relationship that Fanon draws between language and agency, language, and embodiment and language and cultural identity. So you know identity of course is part of this entire process, is the process of becoming, rebecoming, unbecoming etc. And Fanon says you know Fanon examines in this particular passages what extent does language play a role in this process of becoming and unbecoming that constitutes culture and cultural identities.

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Okay, so now Fanon comes to this very interesting chapter, this chapter for this book is called, The So-Called Dependency Complex Of Colonized People and this is a very good example of what we mentioned at the very outset when we were reading this particular book of how Fanon was a very good figure who combines psychiatry, combines psychology, combines medicine with racism and looks at the way in which medicine is racialised and how race is medicalised vice versa.

This is bit of an interlocked loop over here which is at play and he mentions some people you know chiefly Octave Mannoni and he examines and deconstructs the supposed dependency complex which is something which is ascribed to the black people and so the argument is the (()) (10:14) Eurocentric argument is black people have a natural innate dependency complex or inferiority complex you know which makes them subservient to the white man.

So this is psychologized in a way. So and that obviously is a form of legitimizing colonialism. That is obviously is the way of legitimizing imperialism and to certain extent legitimizing racism because what is happening over here is we are mapping out differences in race. We are mapping out the race in terms of psychological differences which is obviously part of the whole package of discursive formation.

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When I embarked on this study, only a few essays by Mannoni, published in a magazine called *Psyché*, were available to me. I was thinking of writing to M. Mannoni to ask about the conclusions to which his investigations had led him. Later I learned that he had gathered his reflections in a forthcoming book. It has now been published: *Prospero and Caliban: Psychology of Colonization*. Let us examine it.

So if you make these discursive formations it is mapped discursive formations what you do essentially is you map out divisions, you map out you know make a deep binary in terms of racialized you know divide. So Fanon in this particular chapter is particularly hostile to these kinds of medicalized assumptions.

And he deconstructs this medical myths that were rampant during his day which is sort of empirically proved that the white man is superior, that the black man has an innate dependency complex and innate inferiority complex which makes him a natural candidate for you know racism, a natural candidate for being a subject of colonialism because you know he is weak by default, he is inferior by default.

And he expects to be rescued from his inferiority by the presence of the white man which is a very twisted version really or an extension to a certain extent of the white man's burden which was used as a very clever strategy, a very convenient strategy during Indian imperialism or English imperialism of India where the entire enterprise of imperialism was read or interpreted to analyze as a white man's burden as something which was sort of noble due to the white person they go and rescue the Indians who had no civilization prior to the arrival of the British, okay.

So Fanon goes on to say in this particular chapter, chapter 4 which shall be on your screen highlighted in yellow is, when I embarked on the study only a few essays by Mannoni, published in a magazine called Psyche were available to me. So Octave Mannoni is someone that Fanon draws on quite a bit and obviously critiques extensively because Mannoni was someone who systematized this idea of dependency complex.

So he sort of systematized the idea that the African had an innate dependency complex which made him vulnerable which made him a natural candidate for racism and imperialism. So imperialism is actually part of the rescuing mission for the Africans, because they were dependent on the Europeans to come and rescue them. So I was thinking of writing to M. Mannoni to ask about the conclusions to which his investigations had led him.

Later I learned that he had gathered his reflections in a forthcoming book. It has now been published, Prospero and Caliban, psychology of colonization and then he goes on to examine it. So this particular book, Prospero and Caliban is a very important book because it shows us very interestingly how the European idea of superiority was fostered and legitimized by this metaphorical psychological examples where it was sort of proved “or corroborated” how the non-European or the African had an innate dependency, a slave mentality really which needed a master to control them okay.

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Nevertheless, I have tried zealously to retrace his line of orientation, the fundamental theme of his book: “The central idea is that the confrontation of ‘civilized’ and ‘primitive’ men creates a special situation—the colonial situation—and brings about the *emergence* of a mass of illusions and misunderstandings that only a psychological analysis can place and define.”²

Now, since this is M. Mannoni’s point of departure, why does he try to make the inferiority complex something that antedates colonization? Here one perceives the mechanism of explanation that, in psychiatry, would give us this: There are latent forms of psychosis that become overt as the result of a traumatic experience.

So Fanon go over here would deconstruct obviously what Mannoni is trying to say and then he moves on very interestingly and this is the claim that he is making, a very radical claim think on page 63 which should be on your screen, the yellow bit is highlighted over here where he makes very clear statement.

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I sincerely believe that a subjective experience can be understood by others; and it would give me no pleasure to announce that the black problem is my problem and mine alone and that it is up to me to study it. But it does seem to me that M. Mannoni has not tried to feel himself into the despair of the man of color confronting the white man. In this work I have made it a point to convey the misery of the black man. Physically and affectively. I have not wished to be objective. Besides, that would be dishonest: It is not possible for me to be objective.

That I sincerely believe that a subjective experience can be understood by others and it would give me no pleasure to announce that the black problem is my problem and mine alone and that it is up to me to study it. But it does seem to me that M. Mannoni has not tried to feel himself into the despair of the man of color confronting the white man. In this work I have made it a point to convey the misery of the black man, physically and affectively.

I have not wished to be objective. Besides, that would be dishonest. It is not possible for me to be objective. So this rejection of objectivity is one of the really radical things about this particular book. And he rejects subjectivity and he sort of embraces and celebrates and foregrounds the subjectivity. So he is telling you quite clearly that he is giving his entire account, his deliverance of that account from very subjective position and that I think is a very interesting thing to do.

To sort of point out the very outsell of this particular book that this is a book about the black experience written by a black person so it is entirely subjective in quality.

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M. Mannoni adds: "Colonial exploitation is not the same as other forms of exploitation, and colonial racialism is different from other kinds of racialism. . . ."8 He speaks of phenomenology, of psychoanalysis, of human brotherhood, but we should be happier if these terms had taken on a more concrete quality for him. All forms of exploitation resemble one another. They all seek the source of their necessity in some edict of a Biblical nature. All forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same "object": man. When one tries to examine the structure of this or that form of exploitation from an abstract point of view, one simply turns one's back on the major, basic problem, which is that of restoring man to his proper place.

Now when you come to page 65 on your screen and Fanon and this is obviously highlighted as well where Fanon talks about how you know whenever he misreads colonialism and how this misreading becomes so strategic it also in a way legitimizes that invests legitimacy or legitimization through the entire idea of colonialism.

And he goes on to say, this is quoting Mannoni, Fanon is quoting Mannoni over here where he is saying, colonial exploitation is not the same as other forms of exploitation and colonial racialism is different from other kinds of racialism. He speaks of phenomenology, of psychoanalysis, of human brotherhood but we should be happier if these terms have taken on a more concrete quality for him.

All forms of exploitation resemble one another. They all seek the source of their necessity in some edict of Biblical nature. All forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same object, man. When one tries to examine the structure of this or that form of exploitation from an abstract point of view one simply turns one's back on the major basic problem which is that of restoring man to his proper place.

So Fanon makes it very interestingly clear that all forms of exploitation are reliant on objectification. So they objectify man, they reify man, a certain kind of man. Obviously we are talking about racial difference over here, so black man over here is objectified and that is how

exploitation works and he says over here that one of the problems of looking at exploitation from an abstract point of view is that you do away with this entire basic fundamental idea of restoring man in his proper place.

So man over here becomes the subject of exploitation as well as the object of exploitation. And Fanon is someone who looks at this process of commodification quite closely, okay. So what we see over here is a clear example of how you know the other is created and we again we are back to something which Bhabha had already sort of taught us of course Bhabha after Fanon and he draws on Fanon quite a bit as we have seen.

But Fanon here makes a very interesting correlation between the black person and the Jew in terms of how both are creative as others, others which are to be feared, which are to be **you know** you know distanced from and that other is created as a strategic position and compared to which the white dominant position it centralizes itself or consolidates the centrality, right. So the black person or the Jew becomes the other conveniently.

However, there is a difference as Fanon points out quite clearly and quite immediately after this and he says the black person is more immediately and visually other because of his epidermalization that happens. The epidermalization of course is the term that we saw before especially when we read Ziauddin Sardar's introduction to this particular book and that epidermalization obviously is something to do with the skin color.

The epidermalization, the othering, the process of othering through the skin color and that becomes visual and immediate when it comes to the black person. For the Jew it is not immediately epidermalized. You cannot tell a person whether that person is Jew or not from the skin color alone. So in that sense it is less visual, it is less immediate. So there is a difference of fundamental, of functional, and ontological difference in terms of the way in which this kind of racism or ethnic hostilities or othering takes place.

Although you know Fanon does compare the Jew to the black person he also maps out the difference at some point later.

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complex problems. The feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative to the European's feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say it outright: *It is the racist who creates his inferior.*

This conclusion brings us back to Sartre: "The Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew; that is the simple truth from which we must start. . . . It is the anti-Semite who *makes the Jew.*"¹⁶

Now he goes on to say quite clearly in page 69, which should be on the screen highlighted in yellow where he says, the feeling of inferiority of the colonized is the correlative of the European's feeling of superiority. So you know this idea of inferiority is a very strategic kind of a construct which consolidates Fanon argues the European superiority. So superiority of the European is something which is reliant on this process and projected inferiority which is a discursive construct.

So again, I mean this is something which Edward Said talks extensively in Orientalism where he says the entire idea of the Orient was a European imagination, was a European fantasy because they needed a Orient which is exotic and dangerous and hypersexualized and completely different from whatever the Western world stood for. So the point is the Orient was need for the occident to happen; for the Western civilization to assert and reassert its superiority.

They need an inferior exotic other which is manufactured through fantasy and through discursive strategies. So that combination of fantasy and discursive strategies is at work here as well where again we have the process of othering which is more of a manufactured product. So this is the production of the other which takes place and this production relies on discursive strategies and material markers as well as a collective fantasy which is fueled by the material and the discursivity.

So fantasy is quite clearly over here that you know the feeling of inferiority of the colonized is a correlative of the European's feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say it outright, it is the racist who creates his inferior. So racism requires an inferior other. Racism requires racism thrives on this division, on this hierarchization of racist you know then the whole point is to have a superior race against which an inferior race is pitted against.

So this idea of superiority and inferiority is part of this racist program. So it is absolutely essential for racism to map out superiority and inferiority through certain kinds of pseudoscientific methods, through certain kinds of discursive methods which are rampant during any kind of racist control, any kind of imperialist control. This conclusion brings us back to Sartre.

And Fanon would go on to say and I quote, this is Fanon quoting Sartre, the Jew is one whom other men consider a Jew. That is the simple truth from which we must start. It is the anti-Semite who makes the Jew. So the Jew over here becomes not just an ethnic quality, an ethnic category but actually a discursive construct. And this discursive formation happens to racism, this discursive formation happens, is part of the production of culture.

And again, this is one theme, one particular issue that I have been highlighting since the very beginning of this particular course how culture operates as a process of production, right. So cultural identities over here are also the part of the process of production. So Jew becomes a part of this produced identity which is produced again through an entanglement of material and abstract processes; ideological, discursive, and material processes which includes economy, which includes language, which includes religion, which includes the whole host of other attributes, right.

So this correlation between the Semite, between the Jew and the black person over here is interesting because both are victims, both are sufferers of the subjugation, both are sufferers of this objectification which takes place which is designed to instill or project inferiority on the Jew

or the black person compared to which the white Christian superiority would be reconsolidated or reaffirmed add infinitum, okay.

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What M. Mannoni has forgotten is that the Malagasy alone no longer exists; he has forgotten that the Malagasy exists *with the European*. The arrival of the white man in Madagascar shattered not only its horizons but its psychological mechanisms. As everyone has pointed out, alterity for the black man is not the black but the white man. An island like Madagascar, invaded overnight by “pioneers of civilization,” even if those pioneers conducted themselves as well as they knew how, suffered the loss of its basic structure. M. Mannoni himself, furthermore, says as much: “The petty kings were all very anxious to get possession of a white man.”²³ Explain that as one may in terms of magical-

And now he comes to a very real example on page 72, which should be on your screen, how this entire idea of imperialism in Madagascar. How did that create a dent, a psychological dent in the original inhabitants minds as a result of which you know it was an active epistemic violence as well as psychological violence.

Because the entire idea of torture and subjugation and control of a particular race, systematic control of a particular race by another race will obviously have a psychological replications, psychological fallouts which is what happens over here and he goes on to say in page 72, what M. Mannoni has forgotten is that the Malagasy alone no longer exists. He has forgotten that the Malagasy exists with the European.

So the original inhabitant of Madagascar does not exist anymore. He exist only as a competitive construct. As a relative construct in relation to the white person, right and again the white person over here becomes the central benchmark over here, a centralized benchmark if you will against which the non-white person is compared and obviously the comparison is strategic because it is designed to reveal, designed to sort of exhibit the non-white person as inferior signifier over here, okay.

So the arrival of the white man in Madagascar shattered not only its horizons but its psychological mechanisms. So you know again we are back to this really original bit of this particular book looking at the violence which happens in imperialism and colonialism and racism not just as a material phenomena you know breaking on buildings, taking a war of territories etc. but also as a deep ingrain psychological phenomena.

So this happens at a very deep embodied level. So violence over here becomes an embodied activity, an embodied experience. So the experientiality of violence takes place through an epistemic as well as an embodied level. So the psychological mechanism which are associated with racism, associated with imperialism you know is something that are something that Fanon examines quite closely over here.

So as everyone has pointed out, alterity for the black man is not the black but the white man, right. So alterity is otherness. So the otherness for the black man is the white man. An island like Madagascar invaded overnight by pioneers of civilization even if those pioneers conducted themselves as well as they knew how suffered the loss of its basic structure. So this whole idea of the white man being the pioneers of civilization is of course part of the process through which othering happens.

So we have this civilized white man coming in and taking over the territory. So territorializing this whole idea of Madagascar and in the process producing the other, the uncivilized original inhabitants of Madagascar. M. Mannoni himself furthermore says as much and you know Fanon quotes Mannoni over here, the petty kings were all very anxious to get possession of a white man. So again this is the idea of the dependency complex that Mannoni theorizes.

Where he says quite clearly that the petty people of Madagascar were delighted to have a white man, to have a white man come and rule them because that was part of the psychological makeup. The psychological makeup is such, they are hardwired to be dependent. They are hardwired cognitively, psychologically to rely on a superior civilization to control them, to rescue them, to redeem them from the ignorance and depravity and lack of civilization.

So this is obviously a very convenient strategy of looking at racism and imperialism where you can make the argument compellingly enough by saying that you know the black people did not know how to control themselves. The black people did not know how to govern themselves. So they are very delighted when the white man came in and took over the kingdom, took over the territory because that is exactly what they wanted psychologically, right.

So the petty kings were all very anxious to get possession of a white man. So the white man over here was a prized possession who came in and rescued them of you know depravity.

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totemic patterns, of a need for contact with an awesome God, of its proof of a system of dependency, the fact still remains that something new had come into being on that island and that it had to be reckoned with—otherwise the analysis is condemned to falsehood, to absurdity, to nullity. A new element having been introduced, it became mandatory to seek to understand the new relationships.

The landing of the white man on Madagascar inflicted injury without measure. The consequences of that irruption of Europeans onto Madagascar were not psychological alone, since, as every authority has observed, there are inner relationships between consciousness and the social context.

Explain that as one may in terms of magical totemic patterns of a need for contact with an awesome God, of its proof of a system of dependency, the fact still remains that something new had come into being on that island and that is had to be reckoned with. Otherwise the analysis is condemned to falsehood, to absurdity, to nullity. A new element is having been introduced, having been introduced, it became mandatory to seek to understand the new relationships.

So obviously with the arrival of the white people, there were new kinds for interaction relationships which are produced in that particular island. So the idea of dependency is obviously nonsense, is obviously part of this mechanism of psychological control where Fanon looks beyond it and says that you know the arrival of the white man reconfigured the human

relationships on that particular island, re-hierarchised the human relationships on that particular island.

So and he goes on to say, the landing of the white man on Madagascar inflicted injury without measure. The consequences of that irruption of Europeans onto Madagascar were not psychological alone, since as every authority has observed there are inner relationships between consciousness and the social context. So the whole idea this is basically summing up what we have been talking about in terms of culture.

This interactions, the inner relationships between consciousness which is inward, anxiety, and social context. The consciousness of embodiment is basically an interactional activity. It is an, so embodiment over here becomes an interactional activity through which you navigate with the material surroundings, through which you navigate with your environment and environment obviously can be ideological environment, can be cultural environment, can be material environment.

But it is the process of interaction, it is the process of navigation which creates consciousness and obviously with the arrival of the white man the entire environment changes economically, culturally, linguistically, discursively, religiously as well in Madagascar and that obviously has its replications on its psychological makeup of the people who had to retune themselves very quickly with the new environment which has arrived with imperialism.

So and then Fanon would go on to say again looking at this, this is page 73 on your screen, looking at the sort of relativistic kind of an idea of identity where he says and this is highlighted in yellow.

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he “lives” his Malagasyhood. If he is a Malagasy, it is because the white man has come, and if at a certain stage he has been led to ask himself whether he is indeed a man, it is because his reality as a man has been challenged. In other words, I begin to suffer from not being a white man to the degree that the white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonized native, robs me of all worth, all individuality, tells me that I am a parasite on the world, that I must bring myself as quickly as possible into step with the white world, “that I am a brute beast, that my people and I are like a walking dung-heap that disgustingly fertilizes sweet sugar cane and silky cotton, that I have no use in the world.”²⁵ Then I will quite simply try to make myself white: that is, I will compel the white man to acknowledge that I am human. But, M. Mannoni will counter, you cannot do it, because in your depths there is a dependency complex.

If he is in Malagasy it is because the white man has come. And if at certain stage he has been led to ask himself whether he is indeed a man, it is because his reality as a man has been challenged. Actually, you know this entire idea of ontological oneness, you are one person, you are human being you know that is challenged with the arrival of the white man.

Because the white man comes and erases away not just the history and culture of the non-white population before the arrival of the white man but also the sense of self-esteem of the non-white population because the non-white people are made to feel inferior through discursive strategies and that is why the question was really that they are men in the first place compared to the grand appearance of the white man who is almost given a defied quality, a God-like quality over here, okay.

In other words I begin to suffer from not being a white man to the degree that a white man imposes discrimination on me, makes me a colonized native, robs me of all worth, all individuality, tells me I am a parasite on the world that I bring myself as quickly as possible into step with the white world, that I am brute beast, that my people and I are like a walking dung-heap that disgustingly fertilizes sweet sugarcane and silky cotton that I have no use in the world.

So this whole idea of inferiority is projected in a very graphic details over here by dehumanizing the black population. That is one of the earlier strategies of imperialism and racism, to

dehumanize the non-white people, to tell them, to convince them through material, linguistic, discursive processes and sometimes religious processes as well, convince them that they are not human beings in the first place.

They are beasts of the lowest order and it is only by interacting with the white man, it is only by aspiring to be the white man can they redeem themselves as human beings, can they become human beings in the first place, right. So if you look at the description over here I am a brute beast that my people and I are like walking dung-heap that disgustingly fertilizes sweet sugarcane and silky cotton that I have no use in the world.

So I am completely useless, I am completely a trash, a waste of a human being and in order to become useable, a soft-skinned human being it is absolutely imperative that I interact with the white man, aspire to be the white man, okay. Then I will quite simply try to make myself white. So again we are back into saying that white and black over here are not the skin colors. They become discursive locations. They become locations in privilege.

So white obviously carries more privilege than the black over here and that is epidermized privilege. There is a process of epidermalization which is happening over here but that epidermalization is part of the discursive process. So white and black are one's ethnic qualities or ethnic categories over here but they are discursive categories which are quite really mapped out in terms of privilege.

So I will try, simply try to make myself white. That is I will compel the white man to acknowledge that I am human but M. Mannoni will counter, you cannot do it, because in your depths there is a dependency complex. So this is a complex that Mannoni theorizes and that theorization is critiqued by Fanon, rejected by Fanon completely and he says this idea of this dependency complex is a pseudoscientific complex which is devised in order to legitimize the white man's control over the non-white man.

So what we are seeing over here is the critique of a certain kind of psychological study, certain kind of pseudoscientific psychology which corroborates or "proves" this inferiority of the black

man and a innate dependency complex of the black man which actually makes the imperialism of colonial as a great grand mission because then that completely satisfies the dependency complex of the black man you know as theorized by Mannoni and this obviously is critiqued and rejected and deconstructed by Fanon as he examines it very brilliantly and provocatively.

So we will stop here today and we will continue with this analysis in the next lecture. Thank you for your attention.