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## A Postcolonial Reading

of Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is especially dedicated to my dear parents: my father Mahfoud, my mother Hassina ,to my dear brothers and sisters : Radouan, Sabrina, Karima, Mohamed, Nadjib, Ibrahim, Hanane, Nawal, to my dear husband Ayoub who buys the memoire for me , and to my Karoumi. In addition I would like to dedicate this work also to Sarah Bentria and to Arrous Nedjla.

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## Abstract

People in South Africa are still suffering because of the apartheid system and the colonial era till today. This thesis discusses some of the consequences of colonialism related to non-white ethnicities in general and the mixed-race in particular. In order to conduct this study, postcolonial theory is applied on Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* (2016). In addition, this study attempts to shed light on the struggle of non-white people between internalizing oppression and resisting it. Furthermore, the thesis examines how these people internalize inferiority of their own culture and language. As a result, they imitate the colonizer creating a hybrid society. The focus of this thesis is also the study of the adaptation of Trevor along with his mother Patricia as outsiders in a racist patriarchal society. Finally, this study highlights the increase of violence, crimes and their relation to poverty.

## Introduction:

This thesis discusses some of the horrifying consequences of colonialism related to non-white ethnicities in general and mixed-race in particular of South Africa during the last days of the Apartheid and tumultuous times of freedom using Trevor Noah's memoir *Born a Crime: Stories from South African Childhood* (2016). It sheds light on racial inequity and the oppression against non-white people and how they are dominated by white settlers to become a marginalized group in their own country. In addition, the study examines how these native people internalize inferiority. Also, the focus of this thesis is to study the adaptation of biracial children who are considered as outsiders (others) in multicultural South Africa proving that the notion of alienation has positive sides. In addition, the thesis looks at the oppression of the Black woman and how she rebels against both the segregative system and the patriarchal society. Moreover, this study aims at highlighting the power of mother love, language, and humour in surpassing oppression. Furthermore, this study discusses the arbitrary classifications of apartheid, the increase in crimes and violence as a consequence of poverty.

Trevor Noah is a South African television and radio host and comedian. He is the host of *The Daily Show* on Comedy Central. He was born in South Africa in 1984 to a black South African mother and a white European father. Noah hosts numerous television shows including the talk show of *Tonight with Trevor Noah*. In 2016, Trevor published his initial literary work *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* (2016). This latter took the position of *New York Times* bestseller in 2017. Moreover, *Born a Crime* was published as an audio book when Noah recorded it with his own voice in 2016. It ranked the highest Audible audio book (Trevornoah). Noah won two awards: the NAACP (2017), Image in the categories Outstanding Literary Work – Debut Author and Outstanding Literary Work – Biography/



Autobiography for his book *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* (2016) (All 225 ).

Trevor Noah's memoir *Born a Crime: Stories From a South African Childhood* (2016) is a collection of essays which tells the story of the author growing up during the last days of apartheid and the beginning of freedom. Trevor Noah is "Born a crime" because his parents break the law to have him. His mother is a black woman whereas his father is a white man. During the apartheid regime, interracial relationships are not allowed. Patricia, Trevor's mother, challenges the system and has a mixed child. The story describes the marginalized groups' situation in South Africa who are living in poverty and in a world that is plenty of violence, crime and racism. In addition the story tells about how in particular Noah and his mother challenge the difficult situation using language and humour as a tool.

The aim of this study is to highlight the economical, cultural and social impacts of colonialism on South Africans of *the Born a Crime* (2016). In addition, its aim is to shed light on how the oppressed groups internalize and resist the oppression. Moreover, the study aims to enrich the literary researches because we have noticed that there is no research about this book yet. In addition, there is lack of South African literary researches in general in 8 Mai 1945 university library. Several post colonial theories will analyze the previous issues such as; Bhabha and Fanon theories.

This work deals with textual analysis based on the theoretical frame of the postcolonial theory. This dissertation is divided into three chapters the first chapter presents a general framework of the whole study. It covers most theories and concepts that are going to be brought up in the chapter two and chapter three. This chapter is divided in to two sections. The first section provides the historical background and a review of the era represented in the

narrative under study. The second section is devoted to presenting and discussing the theory that it has been chosen to analyse the case study which is postcolonialism.

The second chapter analyses the colonial sense of superiority and the colonizer's desire to spread this consciousness among oppressed people in South Africa. Also, it tackles the mechanisms that the oppressed people use to internalize and confront the colonizer's oppression in addition to the notion of alienation using Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* (2016).

The third chapter sheds light on different forms of violence which are practiced whether between the people from the same race or between people from different races. It analyses the different types of violence in the memoir using Frantz Fanon and Johan Galtung classifications of violence.

## **Chapter One: Theoretical Background and Key Concepts**

This chapter presents a general framework of the whole study. It covers the theoretical concepts that are going to be brought up in the upcoming chapters. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides a historical background and a review of the era presented in the narrative under study. The second section is devoted to presenting and discussing the theory that is used to analyse the case study, which is postcolonialism.

### **I. Historical and Social Contexts of South Africa**

#### **I.1 The Establishment of Republic of South Africa and Different Settlements**

South Africa appeared as a country with its current borders only a century ago. It has one of the largest series of human development in the world. That due to a many settler's waves among the history, this explains the variety of ethnicities and races in South Africa. To validate their occupation of the land, Europeans claim that they settled at an "empty land" or their settlement in the land was synchronous when the herdsmen and agriculturalists came from the north. However, Khoekhoe herders moved into South Africa (c.1000 BC–AD 200) and Bantu speaking farmers came from the north between (AD 300–1000) who are both considered as the ancestors of the current black population. And in 1652, they were joined by Dutch settlers (known as the Boers or Afrikaans) who were brought down by the Dutch East India Company and established an independent republic in the Cape Town. "The conquest of South Africa by people of European origin was by no means a steady or an inevitable one but was marked by setbacks, uneven population movements and uncertain goals" (Worden 9). In 1806, Britain seized the Cape colony and then ruled the country after the Dutch were evacuated. In 1836 the Boer moved from Cape Colony to Natal and Orange Free State. In 1843, Britain established the colony of Natal until the Transvaal became Republic of the Boer

in 1852. In 1854 the Orange Free State became Republic of the Boer. In 1872 the Cape colony became self-governing within the British Empire until Transvaal Britain annexed its colonies in 1877. In 1879, Britain defeated the Zulu kingdom in Anglo–Zulu War. During 1880 to 1881 the first Boer War took place and the Boers defeated the Transvaal Britain. However between 1899 and 1902, the Second Boer War took place and the Boers were defeated and Britain annexed the Transvaal and Free Orange republics. In 1907, the Republic of the Boer was granted autonomy, with the right to vote only for whites. In 1919, the so-called South African Union of the Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange River colony was established. It was governed under a form of constitutional monarchy, while the British monarch was represented as governor-general. The Union ended and on South Africa became Republic (Worden xi-xv-9-10).

## **I.2 Apartheid Era**

### **I.2.1 The Rise of Apartheid Regime**

The most famous political colonial result of South Africa was Apartheid era between 1948 and 1991 (Vogels 2). According to Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson South Africa's apartheid regime emerged as the “national institutions of racism” (8) after the National Party initial parliamentary electoral victory in 1948 against The United Party. The National Party got the support of Afrikaner people while The United Party had the support of English-speaking whites (Thompson 187-188). The National Party main aim was the protraction of the prevalence of the Afrikaners over the English-speaking Whites. In addition to other objectives such as: the assurance of the superiority of the whites minority in South Africa over Black and economic equivalence of the Afrikaners with the English speaking Whites (Vogt 17).

Apartheid, translated from Afrikaans *apart heid* means ‘separation’ (Isabelle Vogt 16). It stands for “the policy that governed relation between South Africa's white minority and

non-white majority and sanctioned racial segregation and political and economic discrimination against nonwhites.” It was also called “separate development” (*Encyclopedia Britannica* ). The system of apartheid which was officially named and put in place in 1950 was not something that arose fast or out of the blue. However, it followed the Land Acts which limited the amount of land obtainable to black farmers to 13% during 1913 and 1936 (Bill Aschcraft et al. 14). Therefore, it was the logical development of segregationist policies that went back several years through successive South African governments (Athol 36).

The goal of the apartheid was to maintain white domination while extending racial separation. The government practiced the apartheid by legislating variety of acts aimed at the economical, political, territorial and social segregation. The total apartheid acts were very various to list here, nonetheless, the following were the most historically significant acts: The *Mixed Marriages Act* (1949) and the *Immorality Act* (1950) which outlawed interracial marriages and forbidden sexual and different social relations among white and Black including Indians and coloureds (Voget 18). *The Population Registration Act* in 1950 states that South Africans divided into four categories – Whites, Coloureds, Indian, and Blacks. Whites were considered to be the civilized race, thus being entitled to absolute power. Another act was passed in the same year intituled *The Group Areas Act* which “makes people reside in racially zoned areas”. A large number of non-whites were relocated by the government, from their own lands to new isolated satellite townships (Thompson xxi-194). *The Bantu Education Act* (1953) put the whole African education under the control of the central government. *The Extension of University Education Act* (1959) banned the non-white to enrol at the English-speaking universities, as well, it stated that each one of the different racial group has its particular university, Furthermore, this act procured to racial segregation at different levels of education (Clark 52).

## I.2.2 The Social Impacts of the Apartheid

Those excessive laws of Apartheid led to many effects on the social side of South Africa. Between 1960 and 1994, 2,500 people had been hanged for political crimes (Abrahams 498), while about 80,000 people had been detained without trial; in 1983 about 3.5 million people had been affected because of obliged transfer (Duncan 10); the prevalence of malnutrition among Africans, poor health and education systems, overcrowded schools, whereas the whites often get the best education because of the wrongful rules that prefer them and prohibit the combination in school of different racial groups, poor social security, and high levels of unemployment, consequently violence arose as an obvious response to the of suffering, unfairness, and racial segregation. Both types of violence social and political during apartheid affected the locals (Abrahams 497- 498). The poverty and other social issues that invaded the areas where the Blacks lived led them to struggle and protest against oppressive rules and tyrannous prerogative of the regime. Therefore, the internal and international pressure pushed the government to *initiate* negotiation for realizing equality and to end the apartheid regime.

### I.2.3 The Fall of Apartheid and the Birth of Democracy

South Africans did not give in to the unfair apartheid acts and racist treatment. However, they resisted to repeal unjust laws. And to suppress the waves of non-white protests, several acts were passed by the white government such as “*the Public Safety Act* (1953), *the Suppression of Communism Act* (1950), *the Criminal Law Amendment Act* (1952), *the Riotous Assemblies Act* (1956), *the Unlawful Organizations Act* (1960), *the Sabotage Act* of (1962), and *the No Trial Act* of (1963)”. The aim behind those acts is to outlaw any form of rebellion or opposition (Den Berghe 85).

The Pan-Africanist Congress (PNC) and African National Congress (ANC) were the most prominent anti-apartheid movements the former split from the later in 1959 (Berger 135). PNC and ANC adopted a programme embodies the rejection of white domination; in addition they called for actions in a form of demonstrations, protests, and strikes. The 1960s saw the first turning points in the anti-apartheid movement. A huge protest at Sharpeville massacre resulted in 69 murders and more than 200 injuries (Harrison 69), this was followed by the declaration of a state of emergency, the detention of over 11,000 people, and the banning of the ANC and the PanAfricanist Congress (PAC) and their memberships were arrested or exiled (Badat 290). Therefore, the global community doubled its support to the anti-apartheid cause ([globalsecurity.org](http://globalsecurity.org)).

In 1989, Pieter Willem Botha resigned as leader of the National Party down on the demand of members of his Cabinet. The National Party unanimously called for Frederik Willem de

Klerk to replace P. W. Botha as President of South Africa. After his election F. W. de Klerk called for a new South African constitution which would provide the non-white more rights and privilege. Also “police attacks on defence campaigners were markedly toned down” (Worden146). He met Thatcher at Downing Street where she pushed him to release the imprisoned anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela (Chrismoffat ). Several political prisoners, among them, Nelson Mandela were released (Worden 147). International support for the liberation movement came from various countries around the globe and after a long negotiation process South Africa’s first democratic election was held in April 1994. The ANC emerged from the election with the majority of voices. The African National Congress led Government go ahead on a programme to promote the reconstruction and the development of the country and its institutions. (South African History Online )

### **I.3. Post Apartheid Era and the Crisis of Expectations**

Anshu Padayachee and Ashwin Desai claim that the fall of the apartheid regime and the announce of a democratic government were new start for South African as whole. It created great expectations for the majority of South Africans not just in terms of political, but also social and economic change. However, the expectations of South Africans have not been met.

#### **I.3.1 Poverty , Inequality and Unemployment**

The main concern of African National Congress (ANC) was at social and economic domains. It developed several programs to improve them. It launched Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) in 1994 to deal with South African needs. Warden claims

Funding was provided for local development projects concerned with health care, welfare, education and housing, and resulted in a redistribution of state resources.

Some projects achieved notable success, such as the building of thousands of new



houses in rural and urban areas, electrification schemes in townships, the provision of free medication to young children and the provision of clinics and water supplies in remote rural areas (157)

However, all these efforts could not meet all the needs “The backlog was enormous and state financial resources inadequate. Taxation levels were already high and although special efforts were put into place to increase effective collection, the tax base was limited”. Government developed several programs to cover all the people however; it” was reluctant to borrow heavily from the World Bank.” That is resulted the government “attempts to reduce unemployment or remove inequalities in sectors such as health and education were limited. Despite the emergence of a black middle class, levels of poverty and income inequality actually rose in the late 1990s” Warden adds that during 1994 and 2001 South Africa inequality economic index increased and still remains “highest in the world Absolute poverty levels, defined by those who live on less than \$1 a day, more than doubled between 1996 and 2002” (Warden 158). Pons-Vignon argues that

Official unemployment levels remained around 25%, again much higher in the more impoverished provinces, but this excluded the very many South Africans who continued to be dependent on casual employment or who worked in the highly erratic informal sector. The liberalization of the economy, as elsewhere at the turn of the twenty-first century, led to the loss of regular wage jobs and as a result some 40% of the adult population were without regular income. ( qtd. in Worden 195)

This statistics show that majority of South Africans are occupied informal jobs or they do not have a regular income because of neoliberalism’s market system which supports free-market capitalism. The poor did not have raw material or enough money to start their own projects and also they are not educated to occupy official Jobs.

### **I.3.2 Racism**

Gillborn, D. argues that despite the fact of declaration of Rainbow State yet racism and racial categories, and other features of apartheid era are still existed in South Africa society and that effect without doubt on South Africans lives and identities , example “despite the macro level institutional changes and black political empowerment, patterns of apartheid's racialised privilege and deprivation still seem to persist. Furthermore, the racialised parameters imposed during apartheid are still visible to some degree” (qtd. in Puttick 3).

### **I.3.3 Crimes and Violence**

Almost everything that happened in post apartheid South Africa is apartheid's fault. Despite the fall of apartheid regime its consequences remain till today. The rate of crimes and violence are the highest in the world. Gabriel Demombynes and Berk Ozler claim that “Beyond the pain and loss suffered by crime victims, crime also has less direct costs. The threat of crime diverts resources to protection efforts, exacts health costs through increased stress, and generally creates an environment uncondusive to productive activity.” (qtd. in Bhorat and Kanbur 288). In this quotation, Demombynes and Ozler highlight the physical and physiological impacts of crimes on South African.

In addition to crimes, violence do not stop after apartheid, however it might be increased. South Africa is listed among the most violent countries in the world. Coetzee argues that in 1995 Interpol published that “South Africa was third out of 96 countries as far as murders are concerned, second in the case of sexual violence and first as far as rape is concerned” (335). This shocking statistics indicates the amount of violence and crime in South Africa.

## II. Postcolonial Theory:

The term post-colonialism or postcolonialism because there is no agreement among critics about how to spell it (with or without the hyphen) (McLeod 16) was primarily used by historians in the mid- twentieth century, in that period many nations were struggling for /or gain their independency, it is literally refers to after independence, but “It has been suggested that the ‘post’ refers to everything that happens after the colonial intervention so that historically postcolonialism encompasses the colonial period as well as its aftermath”(Childs and Fowler 184). In 1970s the term was used in literature criticism in order to examine the colonisations cultural impacts (Ashcroft, et al. *Studies* 168). The tyranny and the superiority are the spotlight of postcolonial criticism which is practiced in the contemporary world (Young 11). Young Robert argues that postcolonial criticism has many objectives:

most fundamentally, to re-examine the history of colonialism from the perspective of the colonized; to determine the economic, political, and cultural impact of colonialism on both the colonized peoples and the colonizing powers; to analyze the process of decolonization; and above all, to participate in the goals of political liberation, which includes equal access to material resources, the contestation of forms of domination, and the articulation of political and cultural identities. (qtd. in Habib 739)

In this quotation, Young argues that the crucial aim of Postcolonial theory is the analysis of the colonizer consequences in the entire field in the oppression people and the colonizer.

Frantz Fanon and Homi Bhabha are two of pioneers of postcolonial criticism who introduce the basic and the principal of the theory.

Frantz Omar Fanon (1925-1961) was a psychologist and a black social philosopher, born in Martinique, known for his struggle for freedom, against discrimination and racism. He fought against the Nazis in World War II. He served as a military doctor in Algeria during the

period of rebellion against French colonialism and treated the victims of both sides of the conflict. Although he was a French citizen, Franz Fanon joined the Algerian Liberation Front (F.L.N) as a doctor. He became editor-in-chief of the *Mujahid* which was published in Tunisia, and in 1960 he became the Algerian Provisional government ambassador to Ghana. He later worked in a hospital in Blida, Algeria in 1956, and then joined the Algerian independence movement. He represented the movement as a diplomat in Ghana for some time. Fanon died at the age of 36 from leukaemia, he buried in the graveyard of Algerian freedom fighters (McLeod 66-67). Young claims that: “postcolonial theory is predominantly based on the work of psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, and it was Fanon who developed the analysis of colonialism as a single formation” (18). Fanon is associated with his debut work *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs (1952)* which translated to English under the title “Black Skin, White Masks” and was published in 1952. He wrote it by the age of 27. It was supposed to be Fanon’s medical dissertation and its original title was *Essai sur la désaliénation du Noir (Essay on the Disalienation of the Black)*. However, his doctoral supervisor refused it. The importance of the book realized after 15 years when the English version was published. It was the initial work that examines the colonialism’s psychology. Fanon adopted the colonized point of view in his writing because he suffered from the racism as well (Fanon, *Black Skin X*). Anjali Prabhu states, “Black Skin, White Masks is all about the unremitting opposition of black and white as ontologically incompatible spaces” (Fanon, *Black Skin* 123). Fanon argues that black man internalizes a racial inferiority complex to whiteness. This means that the man of colour accepts the picture that the white man has imposed on him. Therefore, he imitates the white man in order to be civilized, because from the black man perspective whiteness is “a symbol of purity, of Justice, Truth, and Virginity. It defines what it meant to be civilized, modern and human”. However, black man “It stands for ugliness, sin, darkness, immorality” he adds that dirtiness is the equivalence of black person he says, “when one is dirty one is

black” (Fanon, *Black Skin* 146). Therefore, black man has no clue of real freedom and he limits it in being a white man (Fanon, *Black Skin* xiii). Here Fanon points out a dangerous type of colonisation which is the colonized mind. Ashcroft, et al. claim that the term Other “is rooted in Freudian of the formation of subjectivity”. Other is defined as “anyone who is separate from one’s self. The existence of others is crucial in defining what is ‘normal’ and in locating one’s own place in the world. The colonized subject is Other characterized as ‘other’ through discourses such as primitivism and cannibalism” (154). This definition shows the deepest meaning of racism.

In the first chapter Fanon indicated language as an important key to open the closed spaces. He states, “man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language” (Fanon, *Black Skin* 18). Annalisa Oboe and Shaul Bassi state That the initial type of need of there is no communication between European and natives, even though the colonized had tried to address the colonizer, the later would have refused to replay to him. Because giving a replay means that colonizer recognizes the colonized as Human being. Consequently, the language and speech are the initial liberty struggle’s zone. They add that according to Fanon the premier ground that colonized is eliminated from is language and being eliminated from language means to be eliminated from humanity universe (20). In the second chapter which is under the title *The Woman of Colour and the White Man* was devoted to discuss the interracial marriage between black woman and white man, fanon consider black and white races contact in post-colonial context is a massive “psycho-existential complex (5). According to Fanon healthy relationships between the colonizer and the colonized from different races is nearly impossible. Fanon argues that there is no true love between white man and black woman. However, the main reason that led black woman to prefer white than black man she internalized racism, Fanon claims, “It is because the Negress feels inferior that she aspires to win admittance into the white world” (Fanon, *Black Skin* 42).

*The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) is another revolutionary book. It is written by Fanon which was published in 1961. In this book Fanon Supports the use of violence as a mean of decolonization and way for colonised to live a decent life. Fanon argues that the use of violence is important for decolonization because colonial power includes the violence to impress colonizer. In addition Fanon believes that colonial attacks cultures of indigenous people (qtd. in Thame 75). Fanon claims, "The arrival of the colonist signified syncretically the death of indigenous society, cultural lethargy, and petrification of the individual. For the colonized, life can only materialize from the rotting cadaver of the colonist" (Fanon, *Wretched* 50). Fanon presents another type of violence which is not directed to the enemy but it is directed to the peers from the same country which is horizontal violence. Jean-Pau Sartre states that is result of the famous policy that several states use to conquer "divide and rule" (Fanon, *Wretched* xiv). Fanon also writes about the other enemy for the state .This time they wear "a black masks" which are the elite of native. They do not think about the nation however, they think about their pocket and Authority. "The people discover that the iniquitous phenomenon of exploitation can assume a black or Arab face. They cry treason, but in fact the treason is not national but social, and they need to be taught to cry thief." (Fanon, *Wretched* 94). Fanon calls for a national culture and addressed all the generation "Each generation must discover its mission, fulfil it or betray it, in relative opacity"(Fanon, *Wretched* 154).

Homi Bhabha another prominent figure in postcolonial criticism. He is an Indian English scholar and critical theorist currently teaching in the United States. He was influenced by Frantz Fanon. The concept of cultural pureness was rejected in Bhabha's works especially *The Location of Culture* (1994):

The very concepts of homogenous national cultures, the consensual or contiguous transmission of historical traditions, or 'organic' ethnic communities – as the grounds of cultural comparativism – are in a profound process of redefinition. The hideous

extremity of Serbian nationalism proves that the very idea of a pure, 'ethnically cleansed' national identity can only be achieved through the death, literal and figurative, of the complex interweavings of history, and the culturally contingent borderlines of modern nationhood. (7)

Bhabha rejects any possibility of cultural pureness. He proposes a third space where a new identity will be discovered "in-between space" or "interstitial space". It is the area of Hybridity. Bhabha defines hybridity as:

The name of this displacement of value from symbol to sign that causes the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative authoritative.

Hybridity represents that ambivalent 'turn' of the discriminated subject into the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification – a disturbing questioning of the images and presences of authority. (162)

In the previous passage Bhabha examines the culture of individuals living between two worlds, using the semiotic function of hybridity. He also asserts that during the process of hybridity the image and meaning of authority is negotiated.

Mimicry is another fundamental concept in Bhabha's works. David Huddart argues that the colonizer's culture adaptation and adaptation by the colonized is not lowly imitation. He adds that from Bhabha's point of view "it is an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas. This exaggeration means that mimicry is repetition with difference, and so it is not evidence of the coloniser's servitude". Mimicry is a type of mockery (39). Bhabha considers mimicry as a colonizer's anxiety because it is a double vision threat; he states "the menace of mimicry is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority" (126) whereas the colonized uses it as a technique of resistance. He

claims that colonial mimicry "is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (122).

Childs and Fowler argue that post colonial theory is castigated for privileging the colonial confrontation as a fundamental verity in the colonized nation's histories. They add that the colonized experiences are displaced as appendage whereas; the European experiences are placed as essential. By that, that sort of dependency which is considered as a characteristic of contemporary neo-colonialism is repeated especially at the analysis level. And this is what led certain scholars to propose that: "postcolonialism is the 'cultural logic' of neo-colonialism writ small in the language of the metropolitan academy" (184-185).

The first section is a short history about South Africa. It shows that South Africa has been colonised from two European colonizers, the Dutch and the British. To enforce their dominance and exploitation, the white colonizers enacted several laws and regulations, among them Apartheid system which was the cruellest one. South Africans resisted this regime to have freedom and a better life. However after the fall of apartheid and the dawn of democracy, South Africans' hopes and dreams were not achieved. The second part examines some aspects of postcolonial theory. It focuses on Frantz Fanon ideas such as the concepts of inferiority and superiority, and the internalization of oppression in addition to Bhabha ideas of hybridity and mimicry.



## **Chapter Two: Superiority and Inferiority Complex, Hybridity, Alienation and Resistance Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime***

This chapter analyses the colonial sense of superiority and the colonizer's desire to spread this consciousness among oppressed people in South Africa. It also tackles the mechanisms of oppressed people to internalize and confront the colonizer's oppression as presented in Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* (2016).

### **I. The Complex of Superiority and Inferiority**

#### **I.1 The Complex of Race Superiority and Inferiority**

The prevalence of Eurocentric superstructures is crucial to the colonization process because it allows the colonizer to conquer huge numbers of nations. Asante defines Eurocentrism as an ideology which pursues to enforce European consciousness onto non-European consciousness (qtd. in Mulder 1). This strategy makes colonized peoples regard themselves as inferior. Therefore, colonized people would internalize oppression. As it is well described in the first chapter, Fanon portrays the stereotype of people of colours as associated with everything bad such as; uncivilized, dirty, evil, ignorant, dehumanized whereas whites symbolize everything which is good, pure, clean and beautiful (Fanon, *Black Skin* xiii). In *Born a crime* (2016) the complex of superiority and inferiority in addition to internalizing oppression is widely discussed.

South Africa is not different from other colonized countries because white oppressors imposed an organized exploitation of one group by another for its own interest. In *Born a Crime*, Noah explains the colonizer strategy which compels the white group domination over others blacks majority, and other minorities such as coloureds and Indians. The colonizer divides groups even before apartheid regime in order to turn each race and ethnicity one

against other Trevor claims “Then these groups were given differing levels of rights and privileges in order to keep them at odds” (3). Even during the Apartheid, white authority works on persuading each group that because of the other group they cannot enjoy more privileges. Noah argues: “That’s what apartheid did: It convinced every group that it was because of the other race that they didn’t get into the club” (141). Moreover there is a separation between races in every aspect of life and that separation is clearly seen throughout the narrative. Each race lives in a separate area. For example, Blacks are living in a very poor area such as Soweto ghetto which is too similar to a prison to them (34). The coloureds are living in Eden Park which is approximately less poor than the blacks’ area, and the whites who are living in wealthy cities and neighbourhoods such as Hillbrow Village.

*Born a Crime* introduces several racist events which show how white people consider black people as inferior and associated them with everything bad. In page (66), the protagonists Trevor and his mother Patricia are in the shop and the shopkeeper doubts them as thieves. The shopkeeper asks his security guard to follow the black lady and her son because he is afraid they would steal something from the shop. The irony is that the shopkeeper ignores that Patricia matrices Afrikaans language and she understands what he says.

In page (71), School counsellor separates white pupils from black pupils. The school counsellor puts black pupils in B class whereas she puts white pupils and coloured in A class. A symbolizes superiority because the letter A is the first and B is the second in Alphabetic order, also the school counsellor tries to convince Trevor to join with white pupils because the black learners are a stupid and he will regret choosing the B class.

## **I.2 The Complex of Language and Culture Superiority and Inferiority**

One of the cruellest crimes that the colonizer does it is his attempts to destroy the culture and the language of the indigenous perceived by the colonizing culture as more primitive. French

colonizer trays to destroy Algeria's culture and language aiming to spread Christianity and French language. In the case of South Africa, for example, the country and its black indigenous inhabitants experiences colonialism at the hands of the Dutch and English. White colonizers establish the superiority of their language and culture.

The chapter Go Hitler Shows how White oppressor education neglects the natives history and tradition. Trevor tells dark humorous story of the his friend dancer named Hitler brings to light an aspect of South African culture of which many North American readers do not know. It is somehow both surprising and not surprising that the name "Hitler" (or, for that matter, the names Mussolini or Napoleon) would not have the same interpretation in South Africa as they have in the West because in South Africa they choose name randomly from history book or they hear it from Europeans. The surprise comes from the fact that there is generally agreeable realization of just how evil Hitler, his policies and their action are. The lack of surprise comes when the reader consider that, as the author points out, those suffering in South Africa have their own genocides to worry about.

South Africans are forced to embrace the oppressor's religion and language through missionary education. Trevor states that his mom studies at missionary school. He adds that before Apartheid South Africans who are studying at formal schools which hires missionary teachers are taught several subjects among them English language and European literature. The author claims that in South Africa English is considered as a language of status he says:

My mom made sure English was the first language I spoke. If you're black in South Africa, speaking English is the one thing that can give you a leg up. English is the language of money. English comprehension is equated with intelligence. If you're looking for a job, English is the difference between getting the job or staying

unemployed. If you're standing in the dock, English is the difference between getting off with a fine or going to prison. (Noah 65)

The above passage highlights the superiority of English language than the other languages and how English language is considered as language of opportunities and measure of intelligence and civilization. In fact this ideology has its scientific supporter. In 1900's philosophical and linguistic theory arise suggesting that language affects deeply the behaviour of its speakers. This theory called linguistic relativity. This theory claims that there are languages considered classier than others and it accuses the less classy languages for idiocy and cultural delay (Craig 793).

Roshnavand and Torghabeh state that Europeans think that it is their duty to spread Christianity among non-believers. In addition, there is a myth which identifies the Black people as generation of Canaan Ham's son, which *Bible* curses them to be slaves of the white. Genesis 9 (25-26-27) states: "Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers. He also said, 'Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem and may Canaan be his slave.'" This myth is a strong reason that makes black people inferior to whites and with the spread of Christianity among them makes it easier for the whites to exploit them (37). In *Born a Crime* Noah says that the indigenous religion is seen as ridiculous and inferior from the colonizer's point of view:

I learned about how Christianity works: If you're Native American and you pray to the wolves, you're a savage. If you're African and you pray to your ancestors, you're a primitive. But when white people pray to a guy who turns water into wine, well, that's just common sense. (6)

People believe because they need a superpower to help them. Each religion has its own God who has a super natural power which makes him able to create miracles. The nature of miracles themselves is illogical. Noah using satire style to show the colonizer's hypocrisy and double standards who belittles natives believes and he glory his own believe.

## **II. Mimicry and Internalization of Inferiority**

### **II. 1 Internalization of Race Inferiority**

Sued et al define race as a shared biological and physical appearance (Balcazar et al. 82). In South Africa, there are plenty of races and ethnicities. The most prominent ones are Blacks, whites, coloureds and Indians. The white government applies hierarchical order before and during the Apartheid. Although Blacks constituted the majority group but they are the most inferior class and of course the whites are the superior ones whereas the coloureds who are mixed race and the Indians are in between. Non-whites internalized the inferiority i.e. they believe in the superiority of Europeans over other races because of the latter's darker skin colour.

The Chapter of Chameleon shows that Trevor's light skin allows him to enjoy many privileges because his family internalizes inferiority. His grandparents, for instance, treat him as a white child although he is mixed. One day when he is growing up, Trevor injures one of his cousins while roughhousing, getting blood all over the house. Frances Noah beats her black grandchildren, but she did not beat the author, even though he is the one to blame, because the sight of bruises appearing on his paler skin makes her worried she is hurting him too badly. Trevor states that: "Growing up the way I did, I learned how easy it is for white people to get comfortable with a system that awards them all the perks". He adds that "I could champion racial justice in our home, or I could enjoy granny's cookies. I went with the cookies."(Noah 63). This statement shows that the first responsible for black misery are the

Blacks themselves because they internalize racism and therefore they give whites opportunity to exploit and oppress them.

Another example of internalizing oppression is between Temperance Noah and his grandchild Trevor. In page (62) Temperance is exaggerating in dealing with Trevor, he calls five years old Trevor “mastah” and makes him sit in the back seat whenever they get in a car together, as though Trevor is being chauffeured .

According To Shaka Saye Bambata Dolo, The black men internalize inferiority toward whites because Whites are similar to Jesus (296) and as already discussed in chapter one Fanon states that among the Blacks stereotype that they are evil. In the page (56), Trevor Noah states that his grandmother Frances Noah puts young Trevor in centre of circle in order to pray to God to remove the demon this means that they believe that white person prayer is stronger and reach to God fast.

## **II.2 Lactification Complex**

The internalization of inferiority would derive black to belittle his own race and seek for lactification of his race. Lactification complex is the “desire to whiten the race” ( J. Reilly 519). According to Fanon niggerhood is the woman of colour greatest fear, that makes her chooses the lighter man (qtd. in 176 Silverman). Fanon adds in his book *Black skin white masks* “For, in a word, the race must be whitened; every woman in Martinique knows this, says it, repeats it. Whiten the race, save the race” (33). An example of lactification of the race is Patricia Nombuyiselo Noah who is a black Xhosa woman enters into a relationship with Robert who is white Swiss/German during apartheid era. Although many people consider this relationship as an act of rebellion against the system which prohibits interracial relationship , but there is another assumption that her real desire is the lactification of race. Fanon claims that Mayotte who is in love with white man requests nothing “except a bit of whiteness in her

life” ( Fanon, *Black masks* 29). The same thing happens with Patricia when she suggests to him to have a baby together and she claims that she will realise him from any parental responsibility. She tells him “I didn’t ask you to have a kid. I asked you to help me to have my kid. I just want the sperm from you” (31). Patricia Also gives Trevor name which is the inverse spelling to his father name which is Robert there is slight difference in the level of V and B letter but there is betacism between the two letter i.e. “loss of distinction between the sounds of b and v in a language or dialect” (Merriam Webster Dictionary ). By giving her child this English name with another spelling to his father name she wants him to be like his father. Patricia once tells Trevor that he has similarity with his dad “You’re good with your money. You get that from your dad. You have your dad’s smile. You’re clean and tidy like your father” (127 Noah). These exactly the whites stereotypes that Fanon talks about and we deal with is in previous chapter which are clean, wealthy, and handsome because beautiful smile is index of beauty. Patricia sends Trevor to the school, she teaches him English and Afrikaans, she takes him to the church. The relative of Patricia often ask her “Why teach a black child white things?” (Noah 89).

In chapter The Mulberry Tree, there is another example of Lactification of race but this time with coloureds. Under apartheid, coloured people are given a status between white and black people, which the author claims is done by the state to create conflict amongst all the different peoples of colour. Coloured people whose features allow them to informally pass as white can petition the government to make them officially white. The government's definition of whiteness is "arbitrary" based on spurious measurements like whether or not a pencil may stay in place when tuck in one's hair. So, the coloured people try their best to whiten their race to join the white race and enjoy their privileges. Noah narrates:

Afrikaners used to call them amperbaas: “the almost-boss.” The almost-master.

“You’re almost there. You’re so close. You’re this close to being white Pity your

grandfather couldn't keep his hands off the chocolate, eh? But it's not your fault you're coloured, so keep trying. Because if you work hard enough you can erase this taint from your bloodline. Keep on marrying lighter and whiter and don't touch the chocolate and maybe, maybe, someday, if you're lucky, you can become white.”  
(Noah 139).

This long quote shows the desire of coloureds to be classified as white. So, they marry lighter skin woman to whiten their races. Noah resembles white women to the chocolate which is tasty but make who eats it dirty. The ancestors of coloured cannot avoid having relationship with black women because black women are attractive and therefore cannot avoid having a less lighter or black generation.

### **II.3 Mimicry and Internalization of Culture and Language Inferiority**

As it is dealt with beforehand, White colonizer's oppression and education makes the colonized people internalize their inferiority not just in terms of race but also in terms of ethnicity. The native's language and culture are hardly affected by the oppressor. *Born a Crime* (2016) brings to light how non-whites look down their language and culture and how they imitate their oppressor faith and language as way of releasing their sufferance.

An example of the internalization of language inferiority in the chapter Trevor, Pray English language is considered to be more valuable, because Black people believe that the *Bible* and Jesus language are English because the white missionaries bring the Bible to South Africa in English language. In the page (56) Patricia and her mother asked Trevor to pray to God to get rid of the demon which they believe that he is responsible for the existence of craps dustbin because they believe that God is likely to answer prayers in English. Another example of internalizing cultural inferiority in the page (111) when Patricia has cats as a pets, although



cats are associated with witchcraft among coloureds and blacks in South African. Trevor claims that his mother “She didn’t believe in any nonsense about cats” (111).

In order to gain similar power as the white man, colonized people mimic the oppressor. Jacques Derrida defines mimicry as: “when members of colonized society imitate the language, dress, politics or cultural attitude of their colonizer” (qtd. in Eichmanns and Franke 133). A clear example of mimicry at the level of language, Noah explains that the Xhosa people choose to learn English instead of resisting it (4). In addition Patricia Noah who learns Afrikaans and English and teaches them to Trevor because she believed that English is a language of money (65). Another example at the level of religion Indigenous people convert to Christianity because they want better life without suffering. Furthermore, they think of possibility of having a colonizer’s luxury life if they pray to the same (6). Another definition of mimicry by Bhabha is "the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (122). Here, Bhabha argues that mimicry is strategy of defence. This explains why black Christians prayed more than white themselves. In the chapter Run Patricia always takes Trevor to four different churches (Youth church, White church, mixed church and black church) and while comparing between the four churches Trevor says that they spend very long time in black’s church i.e. there is a kind of exaggeration on religion imitation.

In *Born a Crime* there is a whole chapter titled Chameleon, Trevor describes himself as a language chameleon because he uses his ability on speaking more than six languages to mimic the environment around him i.e. when he meets Xhosa people he talks in Xhosa language and if he meets Zulu guy he talks in Zulu, he changes his language as a strategy of resistance and gaining friend.

### III. Hybridity

Haj Yazdihya claims that "hybridity arose out of the culturally internalized interactions between 'colonizers' and 'the colonized' and the dichotomous formation of these identities" (qtd. in Ghasemi and Sasani 36). Hybridity in colonized country it is something unavoidable. For example although Frances Noah embraced Christianity but she did not give up African traditional belief (Noah 6). In addition, Noah states that South Africans mixed between traditional belief and Christianity he adds that South Africa court till today considers witchcraft as a crime despite that South Africa is one of advanced country (39).

seman si ytidirbyh fo tcepsa rehtonA. tnenrevog etihw rof reisaet i ekam oT, kcalb  
 seman naeporuE evah ot degilbo erew snacirfA htuoS. elpmaxe roF, seman owt sah aicirtaP,  
 eman nacirfA reh si olesiyubmoN saerehw eman naeporuE reh si aicirtaP. Abel has two  
 names; Abel is his European name and Ngisavani his African name. In addition, in South  
 Africa there is whole race called coloured which Trevor belongs too. This race is mixed  
 between black race and white race. Their skin is mixed between black and white. Their  
 language is Afrikaans which is mixed between Dutch language and African languages. They  
 believe in Christianity as well as they believe in witchcraft. Furthermore, Trevor In chapter  
 Run tells that during his childhood he goes with his mother to mixed church which is a mixed  
 church between blacks and whites. To admit that South Africa is a hybrid country, after  
 apartheid, the government made eleven languages official (Noah 186).

Trevor Noah is a polyglot who masters several languages; five of the languages he  
 speaks are African (Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana and Tsonga) and the colonizer's  
 language which is English. In addition, he is learning German to make it his seventh language  
 (Price). However, he chooses to write his memoir in English. Code-mixing and translation  
 are two aspects of hybridity in language, the latter is related to postcolonial literature. Fanon

claims that "The use of language as a tool of assimilation and subsequent rebellion against linguistic integration and alienation have become familiar aspects of colonial life"(qtd. in De Zepetnek 5). This means That Noah uses the colonizer language as a means of resistance. Moreover, Ngugi claims that "Language carries culture, and culture carries, particularly through orature and literature, the entire body of values by which we come to perceive ourselves and our place in the world" (Ashcroft et. *Al, Studies Reader* 267). Therefore, this strategy enriches English but, at the same time, modifying it shows Noah identity and awareness of his own roots and society. Trevor employs numerous borrowings from other languages, a wide variety of registers and dialects and some times even switches to a different language and various accents. Several examples show hybridity in language in narrative. Among them; Trevor uses the word "Sun'qhela!" and explains it as Xhosa expression with several meanings. "It says "don't undermine me," "don't underestimate me," and "just try me." It's a command and a threat, all at once. It's a common thing for Xhosa parents to say to their kids" (Noah 11-12). Another example of using Zulu language when he met Zulu guys who want to bully him they said to each other "Asibambe le autie yomlungu. Phuma ngapha mina ngizoqhamuka ngemuva kwakhe" which means "Let's get this white guy. You go to his left and I'll come up behind him" (Noah 67).

#### **IV. Resistance of Oppression**

##### **IV.1 Language and Mimicry as Strategies of Resistance**

The oppressed group uses the strategy of mimicry as a tool of resistance. Huddart defines mimicry as "an exaggerated copying of language, culture, manners, and ideas. This exaggeration means that mimicry is repetition with difference, and so it is not evidence of the colonized's servitude" (qtd. In Ghasemi and Sasani 39). Noah claims that Xhosa choose to learn English to use it in negotiation process with English colonizer because they discover

that the white army is very advanced comparing with them and they must be wise to deal with them (4). Patricia uses English language to survive and it helps her to work in a white area. Patricia teaches Trevor white culture and language because she believes that “even if he never leaves the township, he will know that the township is not the world. If that is all I accomplish, I've done enough” (Noah 89).

Trevor argues that language is a very powerful tool to reach people heart because speaking their language makes them feel that you respect their culture and see them as human being. When shopkeeper stereotypes Patricia as thief she uses the same language to tell him that she is not a thief, so the shopkeeper apologized to her because with speaking his own language makes him confused (Noah 66). Trevor argues that:

If the person who doesn't look like you speaks like you, your brain short-circuits because your racism program has none of those instructions in the code. “Wait, wait,” your mind says, “the racism code says if he doesn't look like me he isn't like me, but the language code says if he speaks like me he... is like me? Something is off here. I can't figure this out. (59)

In this quotation Trevor highlights the power of language on dealing with racism. He shows that racism is stupid because it deals with the colour of skin not with personality. People most the time scare of what is different of them but when they discover that thing it will not be scary anymore. The colour of skin creates the misunderstanding but the language has the power to solve this misunderstanding.

#### **IV.2 Humour as a Defence Mechanism**

Despite the fact that in his *Born a Crime* (2016) Noah tackles serious topics, he also shows his capacity to present the tragic situation from a brighter perspective. Throughout the book, there is frequent sense of humour and irony. Patricia and Trevor show that even during

hard times, there will always be room for laughter. For instance, after Patricia and her children are saved from Zulu gangsters who wants to kill them, Trevor tells his mom covered with blood: “Look, Mom. I know you love Jesus, but maybe next week you could ask him to meet us at our house. Because this really wasn’t a fun night” (21). This quote shows that although Trevor is on pain but he still able to laugh. A similar situation when Patricia is in Hospital and she gets scare in her face, she tells Trevor to be happy because he is the best looking in the family after what happens to her and both of them start to laugh.

Noah uses satire as mockery of apartheid system as rebellion to such segregative system as Patricia Noah says “Don’t fight the system. Mock the system” (297). Noah mocks the arbitrary classification of apartheid for example, it promotes coloured to white or demotes them to black or classify them as Indian (139). Chinese people is classified as black while Japanese people were classified as being white for political and economic reasons. Noah imagines dialogue between policeman who cannot distinguish between Chinese and Japanese and Asian guy which he finds sitting on “whites-only bench”:

Hey, get off that bench, you Chinaman!

Excuse me. I’m Japanese.

Oh, I apologize, sir. I didn’t mean to be racist. Have a lovely afternoon. (90)

### **IV.3 Patricia Noah**

Patricia Noah, who the author claims that after he finishes writing the memoir he discovers that his mother is the protagonist of the memoir not him she is a rebel woman. In chapter Born a Crime shows that she refuses to work as domestic worker when is the available work for her is just that kind of work as a black woman. She studies secretarial and she work in whites’ environment where she is not allowed too because of segregative system.

She lives in white's area where she is forbidden to live in. She has a child from a white man despite this act consider as crime during apartheid regime. Patricia teaches her child white culture and language. She sends him to school just to makes her son refuses ghetto life. She gives him a Trevor as a name which Noah states that it has no meaning just to make him free because names in South Africa community decides your future and identity(80). Patricia lives in Patriarchal society and that makes her bows to her husband Abel in his family presence However, Patricia exaggerating on doing that thing, she puts her head on the mud and makes it dirty and stays long time on that situation which makes her husband feel bad. She tells her son that the best way to rebel the system is to mock it (297).

### **V. Trevor's Alienation**

The identity of Trevor is generally seen through his skin's colour. The racist society classifies him inferior to his white father and superior to his black mother. Growing up, the author struggles to fit in wherever he go; he does not look like people in predominantly white or black areas, and even in the predominantly coloured Eden Park, he sticks out due to his exposure to and experience with other cultures. For instance, he feels alienated when he joins H.A. Jack Primary school none of the racial groups accept him immediately. Something happens to him when he attends Sandringham High School he claims: "Where was I supposed to go? Even with so many different groups to choose from, I wasn't a natural constituent of any particular one" (161). Melville Seeman, an American sociologist, classifies five types of alienation among them isolation (Mahameed and Abdul Karim 65). Trevor is an isolated child. In his early childhood, Trevor is not allowed to go outside the house because this thing would puts the whole family in danger. Alienation and isolation have positive outcomes. Hegel argues that "alienation is not purely negative phenomenon; it is a stage in the process of human development" (qtd. in Mahameed and Abdul Karim 65). The author denies that he is a lonely child "I was good at being alone. I'd read books, play with the toy that I had, make up

imaginary worlds. I lived inside my head. I still live inside my head. To this day you can leave me alone for hours and I'm perfectly happy entertaining myself. I have to remember to be with people" (37). To protect himself from his oppression Trevor learns to cope with it. In addition Trevor uses language and Humor to fit and integrate with different races and ethnicity. Noah also develops himself to understand others and he became a successful comedian and podcaster.

This chapter sheds light on how colonizer imposes his racial and cultural superiority on South Africans and as response they internalized oppression that had impact on their cultural identity through imitating white culture and language which created a mixed culture and language between colonizer and colonized. In addition, this chapter shows the power of language as a tool of solving misunderstanding between races. Moreover, this chapter mentions different ways of resistance of oppression strategies through the analysis of Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime* (2016).

## Chapter Three: Violence in Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*

In Trevor Noah's *Born a Crime*, different types of violence are practised whether between people from the same race or between people from different races. This chapter analyses the different types of violence in the memoir using Frantz Fanon and Johan Galtung classifications of violence.

### I. Direct Violence

According to Johan Galtung direct violence “involves physical force such as beating rape, torture and murder” (qtd. in Wale 16). This analysis tackles several types of direct violence which are presented throughout the memoir.

#### I.1 Direct Top Down Violence

Top down violence is the practiced violence towards powerless groups by powerful groups (Wale 17). In *Born a Crime (2016)*, Noah highlights the direct violence which was practiced from the dominant groups against the oppressed groups. Noah argues that when the British army invades South Africa they slaughtered thousands of Zulus (3). Furthermore during Apartheid, Black South Africans face an arbitrary arrestment by the government forces (Wale 16). Noah claims that he is not the only child who lives far away from his father because many black children have the same suffering. Many black fathers are in prison or in exile (45). Direct violence also is practiced to enforce Apartheids' Laws and jail is the punishment for who do not obey those laws. For instance, the Immorality Act which Noah starts his book with. It states that interracial intimacy is considered as crime and any citizen who does not respect this law would be sentenced for at least five years. In addition to The Group Areas Act which obliges Noah's family, along with approximately one million of Black people, to live in Soweto. Noah describes Soweto as a prison because it was besieged



by the army. He states that it is “designed to be bombed”. Moreover, that army shoots protestors and fires tear gas on them (34-35). Even Patricia, she is several times almost imprisoned because she is caught in White arias during curfew without ID but she prevents that with paying half of her salary as fine (28-29).

Black South Africans are not the only oppressed group who are dealt with in the narrative. Few colonized countries such as North America, Germany, Congo and Angola are referred to, as well. Pointing to the world’s injustice, Trevor Noah argues that it does not mean that if there are no statistics of victims of wars like in Holocaust in Germany when Hitler killed six million Jewish minorities during Second World War that European colonizer do not kill Africans during occupation to their countries (228-229).

## **I.2 Violence for Liberation**

Gamal Abdel Nasser says that “What was taken by force can only be restored by force” (qtd. in Tristan Dunning 68). Fanon argues that the oppressor uses violence to occupy the land and exploit its people. Therefore, he suggests that the only way for colonized people to stop colonizer oppression and achieve their freedom and thus obtain self-respect is force. Fanon thinks that peaceful methods are useless to convince colonizer to withdraw from the country (qtd. in Eyo 66-67).

Noah claims that the aboriginal South African people wage a war against white colonizer when they invent their country. He argues that the war is not fair because the white army are using advanced weapons such as guns whereas, Xhosa and Zulu are using “spears and shields” (3). Noah describes the Zulu man “as as the warrior. He is proud. He puts his head down and fights”. The Zulu tribe chose to continue their losing war against the oppressor. However, The Xhosa after a long war against the white colonizer decid to stop and accept colonizer existence (4).

### **I.3 Horizontal Violence**

Fanon states that when oppressed groups internalize the oppression, several literal violence will appear (qtd. in Wale 17). Horizontal violence is a form of violence between people from the same community and it is also called Literal violence (Gooda 8) In *Born a crime* many forms of horizontal violence are shed light on.

#### **I.3.1. Intra-Racial Violence and the Civil War**

“Divide and rule” is a common strategy that is used by the colonizer. Trevor says that the white colonizer divides South Africans to several groups and persuades them to hate one another through giving deferent privileges to certain group without the other. Zulu and Xhosa are the overwhelming majority in South Africa and discord between these two ethnicities are huge especially that Xhosa accept the existence of white colonizer whereas the Zulu did not (3-4). Fanon, Sidanuis and Moane claim that “Horizontal or Lateral Violence enacted by the oppressed against those they view as aligned with the oppressive regime with their own group” (qtd. in Wale 17). Noah narrates that when he was nine his mother throws him from moving car (5) that vehicle gives transportation for non-whites. He describes the violence of the Zulu driver, and the driver’s verbal insults on his Xhosa mother, including a reference to her mixed-race child. By throwing her child from the vehicle Patricia was saving her son from the Zulu driver and their fellows who attempt to harm her with her children (18-19).

Fanon believes that colonizers “have corrupted the leaders of the decolonized state, making them to tend to put their own interest above that of others, thereby perpetrating what the colonizers had started” (qtd. in Eyo 67). Noah states that after apartheid ends there are a brutal political clash between black parties for the power. He claims that he will never erase the memories of violence that comes after victory of democracy. Noah mocks the name of that revolution which was “Bloodless Revolution”. He argues that the reason of giving it this

name is because a bit of white blood is shed comparing to “Black blood ran in the streets” (14). Noah criticizes the civil war arguing that:

Instead of uniting for peace they turned on one another, committing acts of unbelievable savagery. Massive riots broke out. Thousands of people were killed. Necklacing was common. That’s where people would hold someone down and put a rubber tire over his torso, pinning his arms. Then they’d douse him with petrol and set him on fire and burn him alive. The ANC did it to Inkatha. Inkatha did it to the ANC. I saw one of those charred bodies on the side of the road one day on my way to school. In the evenings my mom and I would turn on our little black-and-white TV and watch the news. A dozen people killed. Fifty people killed. A hundred people killed. (14)

This passage describes the horrifying and disappointing situation of post-apartheid South Africa. The black people take their freedom from white but instead to collaborate with each other, they fight each other.

### **I.3.2 Bullying**

Bullying is defined as “aggression between peers” (Spielberger 296). Noah suffers several times from bullying because of his race. When he is young, three kids stole his bike by pretending to be their friends (141-142). Moreover Noah narrates that Once, he is picking berries under the mulberry tree in Eden Park, when a group of colored boys start calling him "Bushman" and pelting him with mulberries (143-144).

### **I.3.3 Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is a type of aggression and abuse within the home. It involves parents against children or vice versa violence, wife abuse, battered males, a ex-spouses abuse, dating violence, same-sex violence and any other abuse among household members

(Newman and Newman 3; Jackson xix). Trevor Noah introduces several forms of domestic violence in *Born a Crime*.

### **I.3.3.1. Violence against Wife and Ex-wife**

Violence against women is a serious phenomenon in South Africa. Studies show that “40 – 50 percent of women have reported experiencing such violence” (Langa-Mlambo and Soma-Pillay18). Patricia Noah suffers from very abusive husband Abel. Abel is a violent, traditional man who eventually becomes the husband of the author's mother. The author states that Abel has dual personalities and these two personalities are matched with his two names. Noah portrays Abel first personality as being superficially charming and like-able. And this matches very well with his good personality because Abel is the name of Adam's good son in Christianity. This personality allows him to develop a good reputation by helping others, which makes things more difficult for Patricia and Trevor once Abel starts abusing them. However, his Tsonga name is Ngisaveni which means in English be afraid. The Tsonga name matches with his evil personality is very aggressive one but it just appears only to those who spend extensive private time with him (294). Abel's aggressive personality can be a result of, in no small part, a result of living under the circumstances of apartheid and, on another level, as a result of living under the constant threat of violence. He is like most black men in general living in those circumstances, lives with the danger of arbitrary arrest and violence every day. There is a clear sense that consequently, his fear and stress combined with his natural tendencies to lead him to both alcohol and to violence. After marrying Patricia, Abel stops smoking marijuana and starts drinking, which led to reddening eyes and increased violence from his part. Noah describes Abel when he drinks alcohol as follows:

When Abel drank, his eyes would go red, bloodshot. That was the clue I learned to read. I always thought of Abel as a cobra: calm, perfectly still, then explosive. There was no

ranting and raving, no clenched fists. He'd be very quiet, and then out of nowhere the violence would come. The eyes were my only clue to stay away. His eyes were everything. They were the eyes of the Devil. (300)

This passage describes Abel when he is drunk and aggressive. Noah shows his anger is very dangerous and avoiding Abel in those moments is the way to survive.

Abel's violence increased throughout the narrative especially in the chapter My Mother Life where the author highlights all husband abuse that his mother suffers from. Noah describes one night in which Abel comes home drunk and forgets a pot on the stove, which caught fire. Patricia catches it on time, and is in the middle of berating Abel for his carelessness when he loses his temper and hits her twice. Furthermore; After a difficult time in which the entire family participate in the running of Abel's failed business for which, Noah claims, his mother sacrifices all her hard-won financial success. Noah narrates that his mother once again pursues independence and, as a result, Abel's drunkenness increases. Patricia separates herself from Abel in every way she can accept a full departure. She tells Trevor that if she left, Abel will kill the family. Therefore, she stays even after Abel hits her with a bicycle. That shows the mother love and sacrifice to her children she can handle all hardship to keep her children safe. The violence of Abel reached its highest point when he attempts to kill Patricia. After the author left the house and things just got too much for Patricia. The author describes how she moves out and remarried. Noah then tells how one day, while coming home from church, his mother and her new husband are ambushed by Abel. Who shoots her first in the leg and then, after the gun misfires several times in the head.

### **I.3.3.2. Violence against Husbands**

Battering husband is an uncommon issue; it is three decades old. It is defined when wife uses violence against her husband (Jackson 53). Noah claims that in Soweto women throw on their

husbands boil water in order to teach them lessons and this is not the worst option because he writes that he sees women who throw very hot cooking oil on them. Noah's aunt Sibongile, often hits her husband Dinky as a reaction to his abuse. Noah claims that after Dinky abused Sibongile "she'd snap and smack him down and put him back in his place" (43-44).

### **I.3.3.3 Domestic Violence against Children**

Violence against children inside the house may be because of many reasons such as punishment or love. The first chapter *Run* started with the scene of Patricia throwing her nine years old son from a minibus. It was an act of violence out of love because she is trying to save her child life. Noah states that "I was too confused and too angry about getting thrown out of the car to realize what had happened. My mother had saved my life" (20). Patricia disciplines the author strictly when he is a child, which he claims many black parents does to prepare their children for the omnipresent strictness of the South African police state. That leads Trevor to be scared of his mother more than other authority even police. Trevor writes that when he is a young man, he is arrested for driving a car with no papers; he is so afraid of what his parents would think that he decided to navigate the situation on his own, without telling them. Thanks to a lawyer who provides him with funds allegedly from a friend's father, the author is able to go free. After the author gets home, Patricia reveals that she knows all along that her son has been in jail, and that she is the one providing money for his lawyer and bail Patricia explains that:

I know you see me as some crazy old ... nagging at you," she said, "but you forget the reason I ride you so hard and give you so much ... is because I love you. Everything I have ever done I've done from a place of love. If I don't punish you, the world will punish you even worse. The world doesn't love you. If the police get you, the police

don't love you. When I beat you, I'm trying to save you. When they beat you, they're trying to kill you. (287-288)

In addition to Patricia who uses violence as a means of love to protect her son from the scary world. Trevor also is abused by his stepfather Abel who beats him viciously due to his misbehavior at school. (312-313). Moreover Trevor's cousins Bulelwa and Mlungisi are beaten from his grandmother Frances Noah when they misbehave or sometimes they are hit unfairly on Trevor's behalf (62).

### **I.3.4. Violence against Non-white Children**

Besides women, children are the most affected by violence in South Africa. An example of violence against children in *Born a Crime (2016)* is when Abel took revenge from the kid who bullies Trevor with incitement from Trevor. Trevor regrets it later on after he pities him. Noah describes child fear from Abel when he was beaten from him he says

The kid was whimpering, trembling. He looked me in the eye, and I had never seen fear in someone's eyes like I saw in his. He'd been beaten by a stranger in a way I don't think he'd ever been beaten before. He said he was sorry, but it was like his apology wasn't for what he'd done to me. It was like he was sorry for every bad thing he'd ever done in his life. (147)

Although it is tragedy moment when an adult man abuses a child, however Noah uses a humour to describe this moment. Humour is a way to protect the self from the abused image that the author sees or from the feeling of guilt.

## **II. Cultural Violence**

According to Johan Galtung, cultural violence refers to ideologies which legitimize direct or structural violence (qtd. inWale 25). An example of cultural violence, is scientific

racism. Scientific racism attends to argue that white race is genetically inherited more intelligent than black race (Lamont 73). In dialogue between Trevor and the school counsellor when he asks her to transfer him to B class which is black class. The counsellor tries to make him change his mind pointing out that this decision will affect negatively on his future because according to her black pupils are less intelligent than other races. (71)

### **III. Structural Violence**

Johan Galtung defines Structural violence as “the cause of difference between potential and the actual, between what could have been and what is” (168). This analysis tackles several types of structural violence and some of its marks which are presented in the narrative.

#### **III.1 Apartheid**

Apartheid is a form of deep structural violence. According to Bulhan Black South Africans were dispossessed of their rights. The apartheid acts forced Blacks to move to very poor land which is just 13,7 percent from whole South Africa. They were working very difficult and dangerous jobs in the mines and farms for very little payments (Wale 16). Trevor claims “Under apartheid, if you were a black man you worked on a farm or in a factory or in a mine. If you were a black woman, you worked in a factory or as a maid. Those were pretty much your only options” (27). This shows the limited options that black people have during apartheid regime. They are working dangerous and hard jobs for a little payment.

#### **III.2. Criminal Justice and Discrimination**

In a *Born a crime*, Noah introduces two types of criminal justice. The first type is society justice when the black society punish the criminals’ themselves before the coming of the policemen. The black community would interfere and get justice of any type of crimes and



especially rape which it is better for rapist to police catches him before black community does. When Trevor is child and Patricia is running after him to heat him but she cannot catch him. Patricia shouts thief pointing to him. So the crowd start to run after him. This shows the collective spirit of implying justice. However, the black community would not interfere if a man hits his wife (257). The second type is government criminal justice, which Noah describes as sexist discriminated justice. Noah talks about double standards of justice when police catches interracial couples together during Apartheid regime; he says:

Police would kick down the door, drag the people out, beat them, arrest them. At least that's what they did to the black person. With the white person it was more like, "Look, I'll just say you were drunk, but don't do it again, eh? Cheers." That's how it was with a white man and a black woman. If a black man was caught having sex with a white woman, he'd be lucky if he wasn't charged with rape. (26-27)

This quotation shows that blacks and whites are not equal when they do the same crime. In addition police may put black person in a hard situation by accusing him for rapping to set the white woman free.

Noah also introduces elements in which gender roles and sexism, and the discriminatory actions and attitudes associated with both, interact with the discriminatory actions and attitudes associated with apartheid. There is the clear sense here that the lack of justice metes out to Abel in consequence of his actions resulted from the fact that his victim, the author's mother, is a black woman. A white woman is attacked by a white man would likely sees justice done; a white woman is attacked by a black man would definitely sees justice done, and probably in a horrible way; but a black woman is attacked by either a white man or a black man, in the way that the author's mother is, would very likely do not see justice done,. Patricia reports Abel each time he abuses her to Police but they never opens a

case for her. Moreover, Abel attempts to kill her but the justice does not prevail, Abel does not spend one night at jail.

### III.3 Poverty and Crimes as Marks of Structural Violence

During and before apartheid non-whites economic condition are horrible even after parted the socioeconomic condition of nonwhites are not much better than apartheid era; the rates of poverty, unemployment were increased in addition to inequality is worse than before (Wale1). Barret describes Post apartheid era as “Transition without transformation” (qtd. in Hesse 59). Moreover, South Africa has very high levels of crimes in the world. In *Born a Crime*, Noah describes the misery that he, his mother and non-whites are suffering, he also links poverty and crimes to each other.

In his book *Wretched of the Earth* Fanon writes:

Colonialism hardly ever exploits the whole country. It contents itself with bringing to light the natural resources, which it extracts and exports to meet the needs of mother country's industries, thereby allowing certain sectors of the colony to become relatively rich. But the rest of the colony follows its path of under development and poverty or at all events sinks into it more deeply. (158)

This quotation highlights one of the important goals of colonization which is economic reason. Noah argues that if there is one parson South African would like to kill it would be Cecil Rhodes (228). Cecil Rhodes plays a great role for the British Empire Expansion in South Africa and he also takes possession of South African mines and hires the Blacks as forced labor (Marquard 18). This leads to non equal distribution of resources between whites and non-whites, the non-whites have no share from South African wealth. When Apartheid finishes South Africa adopted Neoliberalism policy which is defined as “policy model that emphasizes the value of free market competition” (Encyclopaedia Britannica). This policy is

responsible for making rich be richer and poor be poorer. Noah discusses this point in *Born a Crime* (2016). He wonders why people blaming the poor for not taking responsibility for themselves whereas the poor has no raw material (221). According to Noah poverty is black people's fate; it inherits from generation to another. Poverty recreated and reproduced itself in a seemingly endless loop or cycle; he argues that:

So many black families spend all of their time trying to fix the problems of the past. That is the curse of being black and poor, and it is a curse that follows you from generation to generation ... because the generations who came before you have been pillaged, rather than being free to use your skills and education to move forward, you lose everything just trying to bring everyone behind you back up to zero. (79)

This quote indicates that colonization and apartheid are responsible for the destiny of blacks to be poor. Apartheid and colonization end however their consequences do not end.

An example of poverty in *Born a Crime*, while the author describes Christmas day, he draws a pointedly comic comparison between the North American traditions of Christmas and Santa Claus with South African tradition. This comparison which, in turn, carries with it echoes of experience living under the economic circumstances of black people living under apartheid - that is, mostly near poverty. In which anything extra like a Christmas gift is something to be acknowledged as a major success. Noah says "When an African dad buys his kid a present, the last thing he is going to do is give some fat white man credit for it. African Dad will tell you straight up 'No, no, no. I bought you that'" (125). In addition, Noah describes Soweto Houses which is consisted of two rooms without toilet or kitchen to each family. Trevor and their cousins are sleeping in the floor (49). Moreover, Patricia never buys for him new clothes but he all the time wears second hand or charity shoes and clothes (86). Most things that Patricia buys for him or herself secondhand even her car which Noah holds it the

responsibility for all his and mother suffering (10). Furthermore, Cheese is very expensive in the hood, which makes it something of a status symbol; people who can afford it are called cheese boys, and are seen as not really being from the hood (42). At one point, the family is so poor that they had to eat marogo, a stew of wild spinach and caterpillars, and the author describes this period as the worst time of his life. There are times when he and his family eat a dog food because they cannot afford to buy meat, Noah claims:

My mom was an expert at cracking open a chicken bone and getting out every last bit of marrow inside. We didn't eat chickens. We obliterated them. Our family was an archaeologist's nightmare. We left no bones behind. When we were done with a chicken there was nothing left but the head. Sometimes the only meat we had was a packaged meat you could buy at the butcher called "sawdust." It was literally the dust of the meat, the bits that fell off the cuts being packaged for the shop, the bits of fat and whatever's left. They'd sweep it up and put it into bags. It was meant for dogs, but my mom bought it for us. There were many months where that was all we ate. (86)

Noah's family is extremely poor to eat such food. However, Noah family is better than other black African who do not even find what they eat.

Many studies argue that there is an association between poverty and crime. Aristotle claims that "poverty is the parent of revolution and crime" (41). *Born a Crime* (2016), shows that poverty, inequality and the fail to find decent jobs lead nonwhites to commit crimes. James Fitzjames Stephen defines crime as any action "punished by the law" (109). This means that laws decide what crime is and what is not. Not society. This definition shows that crime is not necessarily subject to moral and ethics. Crimes are not fixed because Laws changeable. For example, the birth of Trevor itself was crime according to the *Immorality Act*. The end of apartheid regime cancels this law. And it is not a crime anymore. *Born a Crime*

(2016) highlights the opinion of non-whites on laws which is if law do not go hand in hand with their needs there is no obligation to respect it. Simply nonwhites need to survive. Parents need to feed their own children and they do not have money, they do not have any other option but stealing to fulfil their needs. In addition, Gangsters are included as normalized members of society in the hood, many individuals lead lives touched by crime to some degree, and for many of them crime is the only avenue for social support or advancement (244-245). Noah also uses crime to survive. He pirates CD's and sells them. However, he never considers that as a crime.

This chapter discusses one of the crucial impacts of colonialism in South Africa which is violence. In the colonial state, violence is used to impose oppression by the colonizer, defeat oppression by the colonized through wars of liberation or through internalizing the oppression by the marginalized group. Indeed, violence is the language of oppression, fear, resistance and love.

## Conclusion

This Study examines some impacts of colonialism related to non-white ethnicities in general and mixed-race in particular of South Africa during the last days of apartheid and the tumultuous times of freedom using Trevor Noah's memoir *Born a Crime: Stories From South African Childhood* (2016).

The white colonizer adopts the Eurocentric ideology which makes colonized peoples regard themselves as inferior to white race and culture. In addition, the colonizer imposes his racial and cultural superiority on South Africans by spreading Christianity and belittling the African traditional religion in addition to opening missionary schools to non-white races. As a response, blacks internalize oppression that has an impact on their cultural identity through imitating both the white culture and its language. The thing that led to the creation of mixed culture and language between colonizer and colonized.

White the authority imposes apartheid regime which classify people in four races White, black, coloured and Indian. This regime privileges white race above other. It prohibits any interracial contact between them. Patricia Noah rebels this system, she works and lives in the white community. She has interracial relationship with the white man and she has a baby from him. Patricia refuses to work as a domestic worker like most black women do. She chooses to study secretarial and work at office among the white people which is outlawed.

This study indicates the positive side of alienation. Trevor Noah is an alienated and isolated child but he learns how to cope with his loneliness and develop himself and how he becomes a successful man. As Trevor states that language confuses racism. He also uses his ability to speak more than one language to interact between different races and ethnicities where he supposes to be outsider. He shows the power of language as a tool of solving misunderstanding between races. Furthermore, this study highlights the power of humor,

Patricia and Noah uses Jokes and humor to cope with their difficulties and as way of rebellion.

This study discusses a crucial impact of colonialism in South Africa which is violence. In the colonial state, violence is used to impose oppression by the colonizer, but to defeat the oppression by the colonized through wars of liberation or internalize oppression among oppressed group i.e. they will turn their anger to themselves or toward their own society. It highlights the aspect of crime which increases even in the post-Apartheid era as a consequence of poverty.

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## التلخيص

ما زال الناس في جنوب إفريقيا يعانون بسبب نظام الفصل العنصري والعصر الاستعماري حتى اليوم. تناقش هذه الأطروحة بعض نتائج الاستعمار المتعلقة بالأعراق غير البيضاء بشكل عام والعرق المختلط على وجه الخصوص. من أجل إجراء هذه الدراسة، يتم تطبيق نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار على كتاب ترافور نوح (ولادته جريمة). بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تحاول هذه الدراسة إلقاء الضوء على تردد الأشخاص غير البيض بين الاضطهاد الداخلي ومقاومتهم. علاوة على ذلك، تفحص الأطروحة كيفية استيعاب هؤلاء الناس لدونية ثقافتهم ولغتهم الخاصة. ونتيجة لذلك، فإنهم يقلدون المستعمر ليخلق مجتمعاً هجيناً. يركز هذا البحث أيضاً على دراسة تكيف تريفور مع والدته باتريشيا كغرياء في مجتمع بطريكي عنصري. وأخيراً، تلقي هذه الدراسة الضوء على زيادة العنف والجرائم وعلاقتها بالفقر.