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TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF BLACK RESISTANCE AGAINST WHITE HEGEMONY IN RICHARD WRIGHT'S SELECTED TEXTS



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MOHANAD GHANIM GLAYL

Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



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TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF BLACK RESISTANCE AGAINST WHITE
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MOHANAD GHANIM GLAYL

THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2020

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on Richard Wright, a contemporary African American writer who has produced novels, short stories, and non-fiction. There are three objectives of this study: 1) to identify how white hegemony over blacks is portrayed based on his texts, 2) to categorize the images of transformative resistance in resisting white hegemony, and, 3) to examine how Richard Wright uses allegory in his literature to present the black resistance against white hegemony. The study employs Bill Ashcroft's theory of post-colonial to first illustrate the process of hegemony in general between the blacks. Then it progresses to analyze each text highlighting how the writer presents evidence to the ongoing hegemony in his texts. The final step further uses the theory to talk about the resistance and anti-hegemony literature of the writer. The findings show that the transformative resistance is an effective tool for showing to the world, the pains, objections and the resistance of the Black African Americans in particular. Black African Americas writer tries to fight white hegemony through different means. He used both the English language, the language of the oppressor, and African American language to express his feelings. The implication of this study lies in the notion that the understanding of Right's depiction of the Black African transformative resistance can perhaps be replicated to understand other Black African narratives in this climate of increased border journeys.










PERSPEKTIF TRANSFORMASI PENOLAKAN ORANG KULIT HITAM TERHADAP HEGEMONI ORANG KULIT PUTIH DALAM KARYA TERPILIH RICHARD WRIGHT

Abstrak

Kajian ini menfokuskan tentang Richard Wright, penulis kontemporari kaum Afrika Amerika yang telah menghasilkan novel, cerita pendek dan juga cerita bukan fiksyen. Terdapat tiga objektif dalam kajian ini: 1) mengenalpasti bagaimana hegemoni orang kulit putih terhadap orang kulit hitam dipaparkan di dalam teks pilihan, 2) mengkategorikan imej rintangan transformatif untuk menentang hegemoni oleh orang kulit putih, dan 3) mengkaji bagaimana Richard Wright menggunakan alegori dalam sastera beliau bagi menggambarkan penentangan orang kulit hitam terhadap hegemoni orang kulit putih. Kajian ini menggunakan Teori Pasca-Penjajahan Bill Ashcroft untuk pertama, menggambarkan proses hegemoni secara keseluruhan dikalangan orang kulit hitam. Kemudian, menganalisis setiap teks dengan mengetengahkan bagaimana penulis mengemukakan bukti tentang hegemoni yang berpanjangan di dalam teks beliau. Langkah terakhir ialah menggunakan teori ini untuk membincangkan tentang rintangan transformatif dan anti-hegemoni di dalam karya sastera beliau. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan rintangan transformatif adalah alat yang berkesan untuk memaklumkan kepada dunia tentang kesakitan, bantahan and rintangan orang kulit hitam Afrika Amerika secara khususnya. Penulis orang kulit hitam Afrika Amerika cuba untuk melawan hegemoni orang kulit putih dengan cara yang berbeza. Penulis menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris, bahasa penindas, dan Bahasa Afrika Amerika untuk meluahkan perasaan. Implikasi kajian terletak pada tanggapan bahawa memahami gambaran sebenar Right tentang rintangan transformatif orang kulit hitam Afrika mungkin boleh diduplikasi bagi memahami hasil naratif orang kulit hitam Afrika dalam keadaan batasan yang semakin meningkat.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION PAGE	ii
DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY WORK	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
 05-4506832  1.1. Introduction	 Perpustakaan Tuanku Bainun Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah  PustakaTBainun  ptbupsi 1
1.2. Background of the Study	2
1.2.1 History of Post-Colonial Literature	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
1.2.2 Black Resistance Against White Hegemony	5
1.2.3 African American Writings	8
1.3 Statement of the Problem	13
1.4 Research Objectives	15
1.5 Research Questions	15
1.6 Significance of the Study	16
1.7 The Limitations of the Study	17
1.8 The Selection of Texts	17

1.9	Glossary of Terms	18
1.9.1	Resistance	18
1.9.2	Colonialism	19
1.9.3	Racism	19
1.9.4	Allegory	20
1.9.5	Hegemony	20
1.9.6	Black Americans	21
1.9.7	White hegemony	21
1.10	Summary of Chapters	21
1.11	Conclusion	23

 05-4506832 **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW: PART ONE**  PustakaTBainun  ptbupsi **24**

2.1	Introduction	24
2.2	Richard Wright's Writing Career	25
2.2.1	Richard Wright's Background	25
2.2.2	Previous Research on Richard Wright's Works	26
2.3	Background: Black American	44
2.4	The Selection of Texts	49
2.4.1	<i>Uncle Tom's Children</i> (1938)	53
2.4.1.1	<i>The Ethics of Living Jim Crow</i>	55
2.4.1.2	<i>Big Boy Leaves Home</i>	57
2.4.1.3	<i>Down by The Riverside</i>	58
2.4.1.4	<i>Long Black Song</i>	59

2.4.1.5	<i>Fire and Cloud</i>	60
2.4.1.6	<i>Bright and Morning Star</i>	61
2.4.2	<i>Black Boy</i> (1945)	62
2.4.3	<i>Native Son</i> (1940)	64
2.4.4	<i>The Long Dream</i> (1958)	66
2.4.5	<i>The Outsider</i> (1953)	67
2.5	Conclusion	70
CHAPTER 2 PART TWO: BLACK AFRICAN TRANSFORMATIVE RESISTANCE		72
2.1	Introduction	72
2.2	Black American Literature	74
2.3.	Resistance and Hegemony in Literature	78
2.4	Racism in the United States	85
2.4.1	The Relationship between Hegemony and Racism	89
2.5	Colonialism	91
2.5.1	Post-colonialism	95
2.5.2	The Effect of Colonialism	99
2.6	Richard Wright's Literature	101
2.7	Conclusion	106
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH THEORY		108
3.1	Introduction	108
3.2	Concept of Resistance	109
3.2.1	Concept of Transformative Resistance	111
3.3	Factors Associated with Transformative Resistance	115

3.3.1	Hegemony	118
3.3.2	Reconstructing the Image of Displacement	120
3.3.3	Reconstructing the Image of Hybridity	123
3.3.4	Reconstructing the Image of Disturbance (Sense of Loss)	127
3.4	Allegory	128
3.5	Conclusion	131

CHAPTER 4 RESISTING HEGEMOBY IN BLACK AFRICAN CULTURE: SEEDS OF TRANSFORMATIVE RESISITANCE 133

4.1	Introduction	133
4.2	Resisting Cultural Hegemony	134
4.2.1	Hegemony in <i>Black Boy</i> (1945)	134
4.2.2	Hegemony in <i>Native Son</i> (1940)	152
4.2.3	Hegemony in <i>The Outsider</i> (1953)	158
4.2.4	Hegemony in <i>Uncle Tom's Children</i> (1938)	162
4.2.5	Hegemony in <i>The Long Dream</i> (1958)	164
4.3	Reconstructing the Images of Transformative Resistance	166
4.3.1	Reconstructing the image of grey shadow of the New culture: Hybridity	170
4.3.2	Reconstructing the Image of Sense of Loss: Displacement	179
4.3.3	Reconstructing the Image of the Black American Self-discovery: Disturbance	191
4.4	Conclusion	195

CHAPTER 5 HEGEMONY RESISTANCE IN BLACK AFRICAN AMERICAN LINGUISTIC TECHNIQUE: TRANSFORMATIVE RESISTANCE 197

5.1	Introduction	197
5.2	Imperial Language as Spring of Witness and Transformative Resistance	199
5.2.1	History as Means of Resistance	204
5.2.2	Allegories as a Means of Wisdom and Resistance	208
5.2.3	Place as a Means of Existence and Resistance	219
5.5	Conclusion	234
CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION		235
6.1	Summary of Findings	235
6.2	Recommendations for Further Studies	244
6.3	Conclusion	245
REFERENCES		249



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Richard Wright comes from a tradition of African American writer who lives in the United States and who has made his name well known. Wright's black resistance background gives his work a different appeal, precisely in the context of black resistance against white hegemony in which the climate of suspicion and dread marks the relationship between the white hegemony and their coloured residents. As a remarkable writer in African American literature, his novels including *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) depict real experiences of black Americans whose conditions become progressively more challenging in the different era of post colonialism. This condition, however, is revolved into asset, tolerating the author to previsualize his past and history, giving him voice for "freedom to create and to recover the lost time, the lost home" (Galvan 2008, p.117). Compared to many writers of the black resistance, Wright, as one detractor proposes, continues to add to his past, to the "imaginary homelands, to English literature" (Galvan 2008, p. 117). This research embarks on the principle of Wright's works which have offered other concerns into the issues of





transformation aspects; construction of black resistance in fiction vis-à-vis post-colonial perspective in the United States.

1.2 Background of the Study

The contexts of this study are based on two aspects: the black resistance and the white hegemony. Explaining transformative involves a lengthy discussion because it requires aspects of definition as well as theories concerning the resistance existence. The occurrence of the transformative further destabilizes the white hegemony experience, especially when the resistance is an African American, in which the essence is an important



theme in Wright's works.

1.2.1 History of Post-Colonial Literature

European Colonization of the world started earlier than the Renaissance and has been considered as the critical topic to study for various scholars. The analysis of colonialism involves literature, culture, history, and styles of discourse in the Third World nations such as Africa. Colonialism is a practice of power, which includes the subjugation of one society against another. One of the problems in understanding colonialism is that it is hard to distinguish it from imperialism. For example, gender and race mutually play a part in positioning the African-American literature writers in an uncertain position with regards to





colonialism. Furthermore, colonial governance is partially de-familiarized and viewed from a position similar to the native character's disconcerted awareness (Pakri, 2015).

There are various groups living in the United States who are not identified by society and government because of their races. The African Americans form one of the people who are originally from Africa who have become the citizens of the United States. The race concept was introduced to the Americans during colonization. For the African-Americans, racism has led to the refusal to recognize their ethnic and family heritage by the dominant whites, both at government as well as societal level (Barbara, 2002). Thus, the African-Americans saw the need to resist the white hegemony as a form of resistance for equality and justice.



The explosion of the Post-Colonial literature is a significant feature of English literature written in earlier colonized societies like the United States. The literature has also stimulated a variety of concepts and theoretical ideas as a way to analyse various books, novels, essays, poems, and articles, written and published in regions where colonialism and neo-colonialism still persist (Lawson, 2006). Literature has been identified as one of the acts of black resistance against white hegemony in the United States to reveal racism and oppression against the black population by the dominant whites.

This study is concerned with the analysis of Richard Wrights' texts through a selection of theoretical concepts in a way that specify the immense variety of Post-Colonial Theory. Discrimination against people of different skin colour has been one of the by-





products of ethnic encounters and colonial domination in the history of the United States of America. The recent years have also seen the rise of white neo-nationalism and the formulation of racist legislations in the United States and many European countries (Keskinen, 2017).

There are various writings that reveal the nature of the domination against blacks as similar to feminist criticism against women. Toni Morrison, an African-American novelist discusses that American founding principles are built on, and is assumed by the incident of blacks as outsiders and slaves. Morrison also indicates the reluctance of academics in a racist society to comprehend the place of Africanism in academics, literature and philosophy as similar to the eras of unwillingness to see feminist discourse, apprehensions, and characteristics in to the mainstream thoughts (Frost, 2016).

This study applies the Post-Colonial theory to expose the cultural effect of white American aggression against African-Americans in the United States based on Wrights' novels.

The Post-Colonial Theory used for this research highlights the dynamics of colonialism as a tool of oppression considered in the current study. White hegemony is another literary theory used in this research to disclose the power configurations of the white-black as master-servant interactions which are the crucial result of colonialism, imperialist abuses, capitalist misuse and white domination (Smith, 2014).





Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1998) suggest that the term Post-Colonial should not be restricted to signify the end of colonialism. The writers assert that "All Post-Colonial societies are still subject in one way or another to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, and independence has not solved the problem" (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2000). This is proven by the fact that after colonialism, new political elites, mostly indigenous who serve the former colonizers, often take control of the newly liberated countries by way of dictatorship and nepotism which mostly benefits very selected few who give their loyalty to the former masters.

The theory of Cultural Hegemony has been developed by Gramsci (1971). This theory explained the nature of society under capitalism which basically oppresses the general population but hiding its true nature by controlling societies through the media, political, intellectual and cultural institutions. The theory of hegemony is a theory of international relations, embedded in the study from the areas of economic, historical and political science.

1.2.2 Black Resistance against White Hegemony

The history of South Africa can be seen as the history of black resistance to white conquest and white command. This resistance has engaged many procedures which certainly experienced deep changes in the years subsequent to the coming of the first migrants in 1652 by Jan Van Riebeeck. Each type of resistance indicated a careful reaction and strained





key to the material, political, and administrative problems made by white hegemony; each expressed simultaneous continuity and rupture with the practices of the past. The procedures of African resistance were specified by modifications in African desires and awareness, and by the organizational transformations in the political and economic structures. In turn, these variations and organizational transformations forced serious restrictions on the efficacy of African resistance. They were rarely originated or organized by Africans.

For more than half of the 20th century, the cultural hegemony of white liberal values and white middle-class existence made it problematic for numerous generations of African nationalists to compete against a scheme to which they allocated their loyalties. The purpose to use a region (Africa) instead of another country is because slave masters decisively eliminated ethnic origin, language, and family units in order to destroy the soul of the societies they confined, thus making it difficult for them to trace their history before being born into slavery. Consequently, Wright's biography and literature shed light on the uncertainties that are essential in theorizing the African-American ambiguities that constitute the colonial discourse of the African-Americans in the United States.

An assessment of the industrial, social, and educational outcomes for blacks creates an image of ethnic stratification in American culture. There are high jobless rates especially for the black males (Allen, 2015). The black male income was vastly inferior to white males irrespective of social class. There are various researches about black resistance against ethnic discrimination in the United States. Many researches on black





resistance in education in the type of school resistance has focused on student agency. Specifically, investigation on student agency has studied the methods youth come to recognize education as a reproducer of discriminations and are involved in acts of resistance in contrast to school prospects and procedure (Cammara, 2014).

Cultural hegemony is the theoretical and sociological model that explains the cultural diversity which can be governed or subject to a special group of society. Hegemony indicates the dominance and leadership of one group over another. In the United States, hegemony is seen as an ongoing political and cultural processes and domination by whites against the African Americans. Because hegemony is also undergoing changes due to compromises between the prevailing whites and the subjugated groups such as the African-Americans (Stoddart, 2007). This process of compromises and control develops continuous resistance as well as partial integration.

Racial hegemony defines the power of a special race or group which is dominant and superior over other races such as the privileges given to white to the detriment of other races in the United States. This situation is addressed in the novels written by Wrights. The common factor in various literature was their distinctive and unique regional features in that they developed in their contemporary form out of the involvement of colonization and emphasized themselves by foregrounding the pressure and tension and by highlighting their variances from the expectations of the imperial focus. This common characteristic makes different works of literature particularly post-colonial.





Apart from African-American citizens who make up part of the United States' population, there are also the undocumented African migrants. However, these groups of people have been grouped under one umbrella labelled as 'illegals' specifically by the United States government, the general society and major activists.

Powers in the United States tried to name popular categorizing by the public and the media, covering such diverse topics as racial reporting, workplace discrimination, mob violence, behaviour at boundary crossings, barriers to accomplishment in schools, and many more. It indicates how the government and social developments of racializing are also rarely understood by the majority of the society, and the insinuation of associated policies are truly neglected.



The persistent idea that African-Americans are delinquent is rooted in the long history of America, dating back to the era of slavery when the dominant powers were in constant fear of the occurrence of a revolution.

1.2.3 African American Writings

Keller (1968) states that over the previous several decades, critics and scholars in literature have been clearly interested in studying the concept of resistance, most possibly because of its significance and close concerning with the history of post-colonial. There are many scholars who have stated their opinions regarding the implications and impacts of





resistance on the cultural history of colonized societies. The concern of the current study involves Black African American who is totally opposite to the concept of colonialism and reveals his discontentment by resisting colonial principles. Therefore, the movements such as coloured people's campaigns for both identity and sense of self have been marked in the literary era (1920s-1930s) in the United States. The issues of identity relating to people of colour were cumulated in the of Harlem Renaissance literary movement.

A group of coloured writers along with a few white supportive living in Harlem in New York began to publish ideas and raise awareness of the demand for equality for all Americans. During this era these writers got the impression of belonging to a movement, an association where their mutual concerns for the race dilemma came together.



As discussed above, during (1920s-1940s) the United States of America had moved out through changes regarding its people of origin and ‘an immense increase in population through immigration that had been ongoing for decades’. The government in America had documented the problem of this immense immigration and wanted to control it with legitimate acts, ‘since slavery had long been abolished’. Nevertheless, the issues of the slaves were in struggle to find their residence in American community just as well as some of the new comings.

Rampersad (2002, p. 87) “The publication of the anthology *The New Negro* by Alan Locke in 1925 is claimed to have marked the beginning of the Harlem Literary Renaissance period”. Thus, the perception of an African American was published for the first time on





artistic accomplishments and literature. That is to say, The New Negro forewarned the world in which something forthcoming; a ‘Cultural Revolution’ was happening among blacks in the United States as well as elsewhere in New York and conceivably around the world.

One of the most important aspects of the Harlem Literary Renaissance was, as stated above, the existence of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP). NAACP was led by W. E. B. Du Bois who was the association’s most influential spokesman, as the editor of Crisis which was one of the greatest support black writers in which it provided a platform for publishing their work along with providing literary awards and reviews (Rampersad, 1993).



America was changing, particularly, the conditions in the years after War World I and immigration had decreased severely to the point of virtually stopping with the “National Origins Act approved by the American Congress in 1921” (DiNardo, 2005, p. 27). In addition, this act is considered to be ‘an emergency legislation’ and with a further detailed in 1924, an attempt was set to control how several immigrants move in the United States from other countries. Consequently, these changes were encountered with “the revival of the Ku Klux Klan and its own form of 100 percent Americanism” (DiNardo, 2005, p.27). So, this generated difficulties for the black African Americans in forming their own identity as the obsessive actions of the Ku Klux Klan which means they were not accepted as a part of the community.



To put it in another way, the black African Americans could not look to the South or the North because the white man in the North could not accept coloured individuals adopting his white typical and the South would merely “hold them in bondage as workers in remote Southern farming” (Keller, 1968, p. 29). While the North appeared to be the more required chance for African Americans providing more opportunities than Southern farming, by which the coloured people would be stuck in the charges of poverty with no choice of getting out of the suffering. In this regard, Keller (1968) claims that:

freely arriving immigrants had no difficulty rooting themselves in their new homeland; their heritage was based on old traditions, which they had proudly brought with them “Irish-Americans grew more Irish than they had ever been, the Polish established Polish Lodges in America and the Italians built their ‘Little Italy’,” by difference “the Harlem Negro could not grow more Southern, for this defeated his need for dignity and status (p. 30).

As discussed earlier, we can say, since other migrants could look back to the traditions of their history and their legacy, the African American look to Africa as his own heritage. Therefore, this would be very different for them since all of them were born in America and for most of them their families and ancestors as well. As a result, their links to Africa were more or less none, what persisted was only the uncertain fact that their ancestors had been transported to America from Africa. This would give them the vague identity of being black African American. That is to say, for the black people to look back to Africa, their ancestor’s homeland for their heritage was as unbelievable as for other



Americans to grow more middle ages (Keller, 1968). In the essential of these transformation in the American community, a group of individuals made an alliance for the recognition for black African Americans in the community through their writings tracking their movement in Harlem, New York.

Richard Wright is an innovative African-American novelist, author, and memoir writer. He is famous for highlighting the African-Americans' social life in the United States especially those concerned with identity and power relationship. The inspiration behind his literary accomplishments and their impact on his contemporaries can be understood by tracing two of the most important themes in his life: socialism, and identity.



The works and life of Richard Wright convey a distinctive view of the significant role that socialist philosophy had in the life of a lot of African Americans in the United States. Through his novels, short stories, and poems, which are in various means an extension of the author's developing beliefs and struggles, Wright shows a deep understanding of challenges and hopes through socialist ideology as a pathway in the pursuit for racial fairness in the United States.

Wrights' novels describe the progress of his association with his social democracy point of view and are well-known works from the political and social perspectives. The current study is going to explain the vibrant understanding of the social and cultural effects of racism on African-American social life in the United States based on writings by Wrights. Wright was concerned with integrity, but not only at a local level. In his search





for understanding hegemony, he became a well-read scholar who ventured into many places in trying to understand racism, violence, and injustice, as well as familiarizing himself with the writings of Black and Third World literati.

Richard Wright's works, including *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), *Native Son* (1940), and *Black Boy* (1945) highlight social protest with the dilemma of African-Americans in both the old North and Southern ghetto metropolitan. Wright's novel, *The Outsider* (1953), is a narrative of impressive scopes and a complex directing story to express American racism in the rare and horrid position which African-Americans could not escape in his own period of time.



1.3 Statement of the Problem

Previous studies (e.g. Scott, 2004; Stigter, 2005; Sandler, 2010) were conducted to investigate Native American literature. However, little attention has been focused on transformative perspective of novels. A number of studies that dealt with transformative perspective in literature do not explicitly delve into Black American novels, especially by the selected writer for this study. Researchers have investigated the existence of resistance however, the relationship between resistance and hegemony in novel has not been investigated in details (Lawson, 2006). While studies have been conducted on this selected writer; none have dealt with the role of transformative perspective in maintaining resistance against white hegemony in his texts.





Many studies on Black African Americans show that there is hegemony over this writer, but this study is more concerned in examining transformative resistance against white hegemony in the texts of the selected writer. Hegemony, disturbance and displacement are inseparable in colonialism and the current research will highlight and analyse all these aspects in detail.

The current study focuses on influences of the white hegemony on black's sense-of-self as a black American. This is realized by examining the extent to which the protagonists' identity is influenced by their black resistance and white hegemony in the United States. This study deals with the utilization of transformative aspects as tools against hegemony into the white culture which deprived Black African American people of their homes, culture and their freedom. The study problematizes this profound sense of loss experienced by Blacks at some point in their history, which contemporary Black African American writer wishes to negate through his literary works. The selected Black African American writer strives to make his past comes alive by narrating his ancestral stories and ceremonies of his people to imbue readers with his artistic passion, value and traditions.

In addition, this study will also focus on transformative perspective in the works of selected writer who resisted the White American hegemony, in the light of post-colonial theory. Postcolonial writing addresses the issues and outcomes of the decolonization of a nation and a country, particularly the political and social autonomy of these people. Hardly any research has dealt with the selected writer in the light of Bill's views about the Blacks.





The study uses Bill's framework in analysing post-colonial works through three main processes: hegemony, resistance and allegory. How this writer embraces his transformative perspective in his writings to oppose hegemony will be examined here.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives are to:



1. examine how white hegemony is over blacks portrayed in the selected texts,
2. categorize the images of the transformative resistance to resist white hegemony against blacks in the United States of America as a postcolonial phenomenon,
3. interrogate the white hegemony notion through imperial language, history, allegory and place context,

1.5 Research Questions

This research aims to answer the research questions below:

1. How is white hegemony over blacks portrayed in the selected texts?
2. What are the images of the transformative resistance to resist white hegemony against blacks in the United States of America as a postcolonial phenomenon?
3. How does the writer interrogate the white hegemony notion through imperial language, history, allegory and place context?





1.6 Significance of the Study

The constructed white hegemony in Wright's works embodies the real history of a black resistance fiction vis-à-vis postcolonial writings. *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) have been discoursed in terms of their structure, historical background and genre as black resistance literature which came out as an outcome of the white hegemony specifically at the end of the 19th century (Hand, 2010). Thus, the current research will add a new horizon concerning the black resistance based on the white hegemony in the United States.

Since not much research has been made on Wright's black resistance against white hegemony, this study can be regarded as a step towards inspiring the contemporary postcolonial studies on Wright's literary contributions. The current study examines the issues regarding postcolonial in Wright's works of fiction from the postcolonial theory viewpoint particularly on the black resistance in contemporary postcolonial studies. It is also an attempt to examine the images of black resistance in Wright's novels vis-a-vis the theory of postcolonial that represents the essential significance of the study. This study focuses on the impacts of the black resistance on the protagonists' sense-of-self as a crucial consequence based on the issues of white hegemony and transformative resistance perspective in the life of a black American as seen in Wright's selected texts. In addition, the study scrutinizes the emerging themes of hegemony and themes of racism in which black resistance appears visible in the postcolonial transformative resistance perspective of the selected works.





1.7 The Limitations of the Study

The most limitation of this study is that it focuses on one novelist, his four novels and his short stories. The study merely uses one framework and the discussion of the text is limited to black resistance fiction. Even though these are the limitations, the study will still involve with issues that are appropriate to the reading of Wright's fiction vis-à-vis black resistance in contemporary postcolonial studies. The texts selected are dwell mostly on the white hegemony and transformative resistance perspective. As such, other types of texts written by other black resistance or African American authors will not be examined or considered.



1.8 The Selection of Texts



In this study, the novels selected are *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) as the central corpus based on themes of the black resistance and the white hegemony which have constructed the notion of Postcolonial Transformative Resistance Perspective. The selected texts are used to examine the black resistance against the white hegemony. The characters in the selected texts are black African American who immigrated to America to escape from the dreadful economic, political and social conditions in Africa. The black Africans who live in the United States seek to challenge and find peace so that they would be able to improve their families and social standings.





The texts reveal the notion of black resistance as an ultimate product for social interaction, which also causes black Americans resist against the white hegemony. The selected texts offer issues and images related to the themes of resistance and hegemony such as racism and allegory based on the postcolonial transformative resistance perspective. The link of time and location in Wright's selected texts is on the phase of the protagonists as well as the depiction of the black American' experiences. In addition, the theoretical framework is designed for analysis as it explores the images of transformative resistance to resist white hegemony against blacks in the United States.

1.9 Glossary of Terms



1.9.1 Resistance

It means the oppositional act (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013). Acts of resistance were powerful, challenging, indirect, violent, remarkable, and outrageous and moving. Resistance is a frequent term and at least inherent site of much Post-Colonial theory and criticism, mostly for the analysis of the failure, or rescheduling, of liberation in Africa (Jefferess, 2008).



1.9.2 Colonialism

It is a practice of power, which includes the subjugation of one society against another. One of the problems in understanding colonialism is that it is hard to distinguish it from imperialism. For example gender and race mutually play a part in positioning the African-American literature writers in an uncertain position with regards to colonialism. Furthermore, colonial governance is partially de-familiarized and viewed from a position similar to the native character's disconcerted awareness (Pakri, 2015).

1.9.3 Racism

Racism is an ideology opposed by the material philosophy of Marxism. Discussions over racism are essentially conceptual incomprehension. The matters of race efficiently come down to the matters of ideology (Barbara, 2002). Racism is a thought system which is related to social, economic and political circumstances. The study of literature about racism in the United States and Black African under apartheid. Demonstrates how racial ideologies are instrumental to support abuses by the dominant groups.



1.9.4 Allegory

Allegory is an instrument as a form of symbol presented through literature. It regularly contains concepts such as enemy, love, death or the way people live to give the reader opportunity to find meanings of truth. In fact, using allegory in literature helps the reader to find the purity of value and helps the author to express the deep emotions. This work explains how Wright's allegories offer to pursuits for 'values worthy of actions', grounded upon a related essential cyclical configuration of value alignments, moving from and to the centre of Wright's works. Thus, allegory requests the reader or eyewitness to pursue and find implications and values, which can be useful to authenticity. These senses are not morally critical or amusing explanation (Cattenburch, 2017).



1.9.5 Hegemony

The idea is rooted in (Gramsci's 1996 cf. Stoddart, 2007) difference between oppression and consent as marginal tools of social power. Hegemony addresses violence, which it can be used alongside with those who reject to take part in capitalist dealings of production. On the other hand, hegemony describes how the reality of a racial group is structured. Gramsci highlights the ethical effect, in which the power of the people classification would perform ordinary and anticipated. Gramsci stresses that hegemony is not a constant process, so the process of hegemony must be clearly understood and frequently studied (Gramsci, 1971).





1.9.6 Black Americans

Black Americans or also known as African Americans are a racial group in the United States with partial or complete origin from Africa. The term characteristically refers to offsprings of enslaved black people who are from the United States (Baily & Locke, 2013). As an adjective, the black has been chosen as African-American in this research. African-American is quite a new idea, formed as a means to exploit the ethnic black by whites in favour of certain urban political benefits. The fact that in many places, black persons are the ones oppressed can be clarified mainly by chance of selected geography and chance actions in history.



1.9.7 White hegemony

It refers to a political or socioeconomic system, in which white people enjoy a structural advantage (privilege) over other ethnic groups, on both a collective and individual level.

1.10 Summary of Chapters

This chapter presents the introduction to the study of African migration in the discourse of postcolonial literature as seen in Richard Wright's selected novels. The following chapters will present the literature review, methodology, analysis and findings of the study.





Chapter 2: This chapter presents a brief review of Richard Wright's background and his unique experience as an African American writer followed by a detailed discussion of previous researches on his literary works. This chapter also presents a review of relevant literature that is essential in building the link between the issues of black resistance against white hegemony in the United States in Richard Wright's fiction vis-à-vis Postcolonial Transformative Resistance Perspective.

Chapter 3: This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study which is based on relevant principles of postcolonial theory and the white hegemony and discourse of black resistance.



05- Chapter 4: This chapter presents the analysis of the texts, *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) based on Postcolonial Transformative Resistance Perspective framework.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the previous chapters. It also highlights the limitations of the study and consults the probability of future studies on black resistance against white hegemony in the United States in the discourse of postcolonial literature.





1.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, the discussion in the previous sections covers the Postcolonial Transformative Resistance Perspective period of African American as the circumstantial of the selected novels. In this discussion, aspects of resistance, hegemony, postcolonial transformation are detected and discussed. The attachment of relevant aims and concepts are also provided to give a better understanding on the analysis of the aspect of Postcolonial Transformative Resistance Perspective as the main concept in the selected works. In addition, it explores the images of transformative resistance by the characters who make black resistance against white hegemony in the United States.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

PART ONE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part will present a brief review on Richard Wright's background and his experience as an African resistance writer followed by a detailed discussion on previous researches on his literary works. The second part will present the historical background of black African American followed by summaries of the selected texts which are *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958).



2.2 Richard Wright's Writing Career

This section begins with an overview of Wright's early childhood followed by the emergence of his talent for writing fiction, which can lead to a better understanding of Wright's career in writing.

2.2.1 Richard Wright's Background

Richard Wright was born on September 4, 1908, in Roxie, Mississippi in the United States. Richard's father left the family when he was six years old, and he did not see him for 25 years. In 1916 his mother Ella moved with Richard and his younger brother to live with her sister Maggie (Wilson, 1999) and her husband Silas Hoskins (born 1882) in Elaine, Arkansas. This was also in the area of the Mississippi Delta and former cotton plantations. Richard Wright was forced to flee after Silas Hoskins disappeared, reportedly killed by a white man who coveted his successful saloon business after his mother became incapacitated by a stroke, Richard was separated from his younger brother and lived briefly with another uncle.

At the age of 12, he had not yet had a single complete year of schooling. Soon Richard and his mother moved to the home of his maternal grandmother in the state capital, Jackson, Mississippi, where he lived from early 1920 until late 1925. There, he was finally able to attend school regularly. After a year, at the age of 13 he entered the Jim Hill public





school, where he was promoted to sixth grade after only two weeks. In his grandparents' pious, Seventh-day Adventist household, Richard felt stifled by his aunt and grandmother, who tried to force him to pray so that he might find God.

At the age of 15, he was educated in Lanier High School, Howe Institute, while in eighth grade, Wright published his first story, *The Voodoo of Hell's Half-Acre*, in the local Black newspaper Southern Register. No copies survive. Wright was an American author of novels, short stories, poems, and non-fiction: *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958). Much of his literature concerns the themes of racial, especially related to the plight of African Americans during the late 19th to the middle of the 20th centuries, who suffered discrimination and violence in the South and the North. Literary critics believe his work helped change race relations in the United States in the middle of the 20th century.

2.2.2 Previous Research on Richard Wright's Works

Most prior academic studies on black American literature particularly in Wright's narratives tend to focus more on his historical heritage, as his works focus on "the moral psychological dilemma of current African intellectuals, most of whom go through painful procedure of Westernization in order to recognize themselves (Nakamura, 2014). The depiction of black American in his fiction is almost initiated by the United States environment as part of the grand-scale demographic society. Nevertheless, Wright's



fiction also shows that these images of black American “belong to a multi-faceted past that predates the intrusion of Western powers” (Falk, 2007, p. 25).

This concern asserts that the history of his cultural experience is the central focus in Wright’s writings, which produces clues of the social instability and multiple overlapping identities that are representative of the characteristics of black American communities. He only depicts the estrangement that affects the unstable society, the ending of a complex interaction of competing and converging codes, and expectations that build up African social reality (Falk, 2007).

Wright’s fiction, as studies indicate, also examines the ambiguities and the distinctions of these aspects as his characters are ‘apathies’ i.e. not at home anywhere; their rootless state is a result of a complex and incompatible overlap between ideas such as geographical home, cultural identity and social collective belonging (Lewis, 1999). Consequently, it seems that Wright’s works represent nothing in particular of his identity and belonging simply for the fusion of both cultural belonging and identity. In this respect, Wright’s *Native Son* in 1940, *Black Boy* in 1945 and then *The Long Dream* scrutinize the tragic portrayal of the blacks’ cause of hate and fearing relation to the white man of the Deep South in this context. The current concern with regards to Wright’s novels in which the previous reading does not set out will scrutinize the synthesis of black resistance and white hegemony on the black protagonist’s sense-of-self. Based on the discussion above, Wright’s novels, *Native Son* (1940), *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) depict the complicated integration of social codes, emotions, and narratives



that constitute transformation aspects construction of black resistance in fiction vis-à-vis postcolonial perspective.


Richard Wright is one of the Americans in Literature whose affiliation with socialism helped to describe him as a writer and as a person. Thus, the inspiration behind his accomplishments in literature and their impact on his contemporaries can be assumed by tracing two of the most central themes in his life; identity and socialism. The evolution of Wright's relationship with socialism was in order to better understand the author and his best-known works in their political and social context. In a nut shell, this context helps to understand the cultural and social effects of socialist ideology in the United States particularly after the First World War (Gómez, 2015). The current study will pay particular attention to the impacts of being a black American in the United States, as well as the consequences that follow the postcolonial transformative resistance perspective.

Gómez (2015) argues that the life and works of Richard Wright offer a distinctive view of the significant role that socialist ideology used in the life of several African Americans before the Second World War. Through his novels, poems, and short stories, which are in various ways an “extension of the author's struggles and evolving beliefs” (Gómez, 2015, p. 33), Wright works through various challenges and hopes that derived from seeing socialist ideology as an imaginable ally in the search for racial equality particularly in the United States. It is contended that the manifestations of the themes of conflict and themes of transition exist in Wright's work, and his representation of the



overlapping conscious issues portrays the black resistance against the white hegemony which predominate the issues of postcolonial transformative resistance perspective.

Wright's literature expresses his existentialist thoughts about the struggle of sustaining significant human relations in an extremely separating modern world. These features are touched in *Black Boy* or *The Outsider* as the strategic aspect of his 1930s fiction as well. Such representations propose a binary resistance between communist prejudice and deep personal psychological analysis that generalizes Wright himself and the dialectical dealings between individualism and collectively that he was at efforts to come out.

 05-4506832 One of the aspects of resistance is the cultural resistance context mostly used in Post-Colonial literature. Richard Wright, like other Post-Colonial authors, used this method by assuming that writing creates acts of resistance that exposes the cultural norms and dualistic thought based on the colonial narrative and deliver an alternative interpretation from colonial authority. On the other hand, resistance has been used as the opposition in context. Based on binary religious beliefs such as good and evil framework, this method encounters the social-material associations formed by colonial variance.

Wright created the character of *Bigger* as a colonized native involved in the struggle for freedom and self-definition. According to the theory of blackness against whiteness by Cusick (2007), there is native's psychological need to face white people as an equal. This matter needs to challenge practice of the white man's tools of domination and the skill to



find a chosen innocent enemy alongside whom all the violently encouraged by the cruel structure is focused.

This performance, as Fanon (1952) illuminates, lets the native to reject the white man as the actual source of his depression and to find victims between his own kinds. In this case, the black individual creates a psychological barrier which lets him to strengthen his resistance to whiteness. Indeed, the black man can resist the white idea that identity and politics in the United States could not make one become independent. Though the temptations of whiteness often push the black man in the direction of whiteness and therefore, the policy of identity in the United States are initiated upon two polar contraries of integration and resistance (Rosenberg, 2012).



Wright tried to show African-American resistance against white hegemony in the character of Bigger Thomas in *Native Son*. The *Bigger Thomas* character portrays the atmosphere of Wright's personal experiences witnessing African-American in real-life reflection on social effects of racism. Jim Crow laws in the American South clarify the racial segregation role in restricting the possibility of African Americans to access the social rights such as using public transportation.


Actually, Jim Crow laws perform and condition the personal character of Bigger. By defining some of the actions of Bigger's violence, there are some of the points that come from methods that demonstrate Wright's writing through the framework presented



by Post-Colonial theories. Wright clarified that Bigger's violence came from his inner location of the social restrictions in upholding Jim Crowism (Mehervand, 2009).

Wright was a writer whose philosophical views saturated his words. According to Hayes (2012) he was a 'towering figure in twentieth-century Africana literary, philosophical, and political thought' (p. 47). Hayes states that Wright was on a mission to "extirpate the root motives that underlie' both 'Western civilization's violent anti-Black racism and Black peoples' struggle for meaning and liberation in an absurd world" (p. 47).

According to Hayes (2012) Wright's work:

 05-4506832 ... forced white America to confront the absolute evils of racist oppression, economic exploitation, and cultural domination. Wright put forward ideas that were controversial and thought-provoking as he fearlessly sought to expose white people's "perpetual war against the human dignity of Black people—a war of which most white people had kept themselves blithely unaware" (Delbanco, 1996, p. 193). Therefore, it can arguably be said that Wright helped to shape the Black American literary tradition of the twentieth century (p. 48).

Wright was concerned with justice, but not only at a local level. In his search for understanding, he became a well-read scholar who looked into many places in trying to understand racism, brutality and injustice – including the writings of Black and Third World intellectuals.



Rampersad (1993) in his introduction to *Native Son* refers the reader to the opening lines: Brrrrriiiii! An alarm clock clanged in the dark and silent room. A bed spring creaked. A woman's voice sang out impatiently. 'Bigger, shut that thing off!'

According to Rampersad (1993) it is in these lines that Wright is making an "urgent call in 1940 to America to awaken from its self-induced slumber about the reality of race relations in the nation" (p. 1). Rampersad (1993) stated that Wright insisted America was in such 'grave danger' that it might be destroyed if it didn't wake up. He said *Native Son* was written to be 'America's guide in confronting this danger'.

In his introduction Rampersad (1993) states that Wright fully understood the radical nature of his message and that *Native Son* was "like no other book in the history of African American literature" (p. 2).

Waligora-Davis in her 2011 essay writes about the complex nature of violence and blame in America. In her account of the afraid white woman surprising four black men, then calling out to her companion Jim who answers her call with a rifle, she refers to the shared innocence of the black men and 'the disproportionate and violent response of white supremacists to blackness'.

Waligora-Davis (ibid) refers to Wrights, 'How Bigger Was Born' and his well-known passage where he explains that: 'The birth of Bigger Thomas goes back to my childhood, and there was not just one Bigger, but many of them, more than I could count





and more than you suspect'. This is just one example she uses to support her claim that Wright used (with effect) his experiences and position as a 'black man' to push his points.

Waligora-Davis in her essay (2011) explains that "*Native Son* with its expose of white injustice must have been what many Americans were looking for – it sold 250,000 copies in its first month" (p. 321). She states that Wright sought to raise social consciousness and that he successfully did this by engaging "the effects of being denied access to social spaces and its privileges, and of being part of a community historically represented as deviant and dangerous" (p. 321).

According to critics, the impact of Wright's works on the reader varies. For example, Miller states that *The Outsider*, after an opening ninety or so pages that are everything one could want in a story with ideas crackling and humming beneath concrete characters, then falls apart (Miller). Miller goes on to argue that the novel regresses into 'tedious speeches' and dialogue, clearly emphasizing that it is in the action and events that Wright best portrays his ideas. However, it should be kept in mind that *The Outsider* was Wright's first book to receive overwhelmingly negative reviews. This may be the case with *The Outsider*, but not with *Native Son*, where it is believed that metaphor, couched in events rather than, but also sometimes in, introspection, is what etches the book into the readers' minds.

When *The Outsider* was first published (1953) twelve years after his first significant book, Wright had left Marxism and was involved in existentialism, and held less hope for





social change that he had held previously. This existentialism – and for Wright it may have been an aspect of what is known as ‘Black existentialism’ (a branch of African philosophy) – stems from the traumatic experience of being Black in a white world.

In Karolides, Bald and Sova *120 Banned Books* (2011), it is stated that, “Wright’s childhood was one of trauma and indignity, narrowness and poverty” (p. 22) and a sense of abandonment (p. 23). His own circumstances clearly influenced his writings, which were honest and brutal. Yet the response from bureaucracy at the time was vicious.

Karolides, Bald & Sova (2011) has much to say about Wright and the response to his writings. And in what better way than in his book, *120 Banned Books* Wright’s book *Black Boy* was banned (Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, p. 25) in some parts of the United States from 1974. It was removed from shelves and reading lists in schools and many legal and other debates ensued. In congress it was claimed that the book, “...built fabulous lies about the South. The purpose of the book was to plant seeds of hate and devilment in the minds of every American”. And that it “came from a Negro from whom one could not expect better”, and “teaches blacks to hate whites” (Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, pp. 25-26).

Wright certainly stirred up the American public with *Black Boy*. But not only the public, the authorities too. It went beyond the school's system. Between the writing of *Native Son* (1940) and *Black Boy* (1945), Wright was targeted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) about his affiliation and activities with the Communist Party





(Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, p. 25). His neighbours had been questioned (ibid.). There is little doubt that this stemmed from his publication of *Native Son*. Then in the 1950's when *Native Son* (1953) and *The Long Dream* (1958) were published, it was stated by the House Un-American Activities Committee that "his work should have been withdrawn from U.S. libraries overseas" (ibid).

So, the governing authorities were stirred by Wright. Their response was to ban him from schools and libraries. There was obviously interest by the public in his writings, but due to negative interest even his publishers held back and banned the books in some ways. When *Black Boy*, originally titles *American Hunger*, was initially accepted by Harper and Row, his editor told him that the book would be divided into sections – that his experiences in the south would be published separately from his experiences in the north (including Chicago and New York) (Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, p. 25).

His biographer, Constance Webb, said a bit about this (ibid, p. 25) explaining of Wright that subsequently he felt "in his whole being that his book was being censored in some way" (ibid).

Karolides, Bald and Sova article in 120 Banned Books (2011) is quite informative:

At the time of publication, despite [*Native Son*] being a Book-of-the-Month Club selection and achieving both broad readership and significant acclaim in reviews, Mississippi banned it; Senator Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi condemned the book



and its author in Congress: *Black Boy* should be taken off the shelves of stores; sales should be stopped; it was a damnable lie, from beginning to end; it built fabulous lies about the South. The purpose of the book was to plant seeds of hate and devilment in the minds of every American. It was the dirtiest, filthiest, most obscene, filthy and dirty, and came from a Negro from whom one could not expect better (p. 25).

Karolides, Bald and Sova (2011) explains that in the years following its publication in 1945, Wright's autobiographical *Black Boy* was controversial in school districts in all regions of the United States.

- In a 1963 school censorship survey of Wisconsin, *Black Boy* was removed for being unsuitable for high school students.
- In a 1966 national survey reported the book was said to be obscene and to teach blacks to hate whites.
- In 1972, parents in Michigan objected to the book's 'sexual overtones' and claimed it was unsuitable for impressionable sophomores. Therefore, it was removed from the classroom.
- It was banned in Baltimore in 1974.
- In 1975, the book was removed from Tennessee schools for being obscene, instigating hatred between races, and encouraging immorality.
- In other states it was monitored in order to safeguard "traditional Judeo-Christian values" (Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, pp. 25-26).

Not everyone accepted these bans. Clearly there were many objections and in 1978 the Anaheim (California) Secondary Teachers Association charged the Anaheim Union High School Board of Trustees with outrageously banning thousands of English texts (more than half of the available reading material) from English classrooms. *Black Boy* was one of these banned books, and teachers were cautioned not to “provide the books for supplemental reading or to discuss the books with students” (p. 26) and that they “risked dismissal if they taught any of the banned books. Consequently, there was a ‘recall campaign’ and the trustees behind the bans were removed” (ibid).

In September 1987, Nebraska governor Kay Orr was behind a move to remove *Black Boy* for having an “corruptive obscene nature” (involving profanities and ‘incidents of violence’) (ibid). Further to this, other examples of banning *Black Boy* included:

Objectionable language was the basis for challenges in California (1977) and New York (1983); both failed. In Oxford, North Carolina (1994), objections focused on ‘Filthy words’, ‘lustful talk’, and ‘immoral sex’; ‘the putting down of ALL kinds of people: the boy’s family, the white people, the Jew, the church, the church school and even his friends’. Also, in 1994, a complaint in Fillmore, California, pointed to violence the killing of a kitten — and profanity; the parent stated that the book is ‘not conducive to teaching what civilized people are supposed to behave like’.



The autobiography was also challenged in Round Rock, Texas, in 1996, for graphically describing three beating deaths and for having been ‘written while the author was a member of the Communist Party’. The charges against the book in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1997, were made by a minister complainant, who alleged the book was profane, could stir up racial animosity, and was not appropriate for children; he urged the school board to ban the book and to fire the teacher who had assigned it (Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, p. 27).

In other cases, the book was removed from Island Trees (New York) Union Free District junior and senior high school libraries in 1976, as well as from some classrooms, for being anti-American, anti-Christian and/or anti-Semitic. The local teachers’ union filed a complaint about this ‘alleging a violation of the provisions of academic freedom’ in their union contract, and a group of residents also objected. A group of five students also objected to the censorship of *Black Boy* and took the school board to court. However, the ruling on August 1979 (Pico board of Education) favoured the school board (p. 28). On appeal, this was followed by a Supreme Court decision which found that ‘the First Amendment rights of the students had been violated and the criteria for the removal of the books were too general and overbroad’.

The Supreme Court justices, sharply divided in a 5-4 decision (Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District v. Pico), upheld the appeals court. The Supreme Court mandated further trial proceedings to determine the underlying motivations of the school board (Karolides, Bald & Sova, 2011, pp. 28-29).





Just the fact that Wright had so many critics been an indication that he stirred a response in his readers. However, the fact that most of these critics were ‘White’ Americans indicates a need to go further and apply sociocultural theory to what happened. Wright wrote about wrongs. Most of these wrongs were perpetuated by White Americans who saw the Black American as inferior and less deserving. It seems to be primarily these White Americans – many from privileged backgrounds and almost all taught that they were superior to the ‘Negro’ – who became Wright’s critics.

Theresa Drew Hayman in her 1976 PhD thesis – *Alienation in the Life and Works of Richard Wright* – is one researcher who drew attention to this.



Three times within this century, writing by Negroes has been done nearly to death: once by indifference, once by opposition, and once by the enthusiasm of misguided friends (Redding, 1966). Perhaps no black author's fate better illustrates this lament than that of Richard Wright. Less than three months after Wright's untimely death, Howe (1961) author of some of the most provocative criticism of Wright, wrote, ‘It is hard to suppose that he [Wright] will ever be regarded as a writer of the first rank, for his faults are grave and obvious (Howe, 1961). Yet Howe also expressed an enthusiasm that provoked his now famous exchange with Ralph Ellison (Howe, 1961) by calling the works of Wright ‘one of the great American testaments’ and by bemoaning Wright's neglect by ‘serious literary persons’.





Contrary to this is Redding (1966) in ‘The Negro Writer and American Literature’, in *Anger and Beyond: The Negro Writer in the United States*, ed. by Herbert Hill (New York: Harper and Row, 1966, p. 3), and Howe (1961), ‘Richard Wright: A Word of Farewell’, *New Republic*, CXLIV (February 13, 1961, p. 18). These are two authors with research offering interesting viewpoints on the success of Wright in influencing Americans to reconsider racism. Both state that Wright’s influence is admirable and much needed, helping to open the eyes of all Americans.

Howe's *Black Boys* and *Native Son* (1963) was a commentary on James Baldwin's criticism of Wright in his essays *Everybody's Protest Novel* (1949). In his essay, ‘Many Thousands would always be considered inferior’, Howe's (1961) concluding remarks are that ‘any view of 20th century American literature which surmounts critical sectarianism will have to give Wright an honoured place’. In the same essay, he further remarks that Wright ‘had told his contemporaries a truth so bitter that they paid him the tribute of striving to forget it. Such ambivalence is unfortunately representative of Wright criticism.

Hayman states in her thesis that, “Wright comes to us with a firmly established, yet continually debated reputation as a ‘protest novelist’, a spokesman for the Black man in America.” That his creations are often judged ‘by these assumptions and found deficient’. Then she adds that, “If Wright is indeed to be remembered primarily as the founder of the ‘Wright school’ of fiction, then indifference or mere historical acknowledgement does not seem unfair. If ‘Wright's’ contribution to the Negro was precisely his fusion of a pronounced racialism with a broader tradition of social protest, then it is understandable



that Wright is treated in literary histories more often than he is represented in literary anthologies.” (Haymon, 1976.)

Another commentator, Kent (1972) states, “... the term protest covered Richard Wright for thirty years, concealed his depths from us ...” (p. 11). Kent (1972) adds that now Wright's ‘protest themes’ are being recognized as universal.

Bone (1958) adds to this by stating that a presumed lack of universal interest, was often attributed to Wright as proof of his severe limitations. Linking Wright firmly with the protest tradition, Bone (1958) called those disciples of the middle of 1940’s who stressed social consciousness in their fiction the ‘Wright School’ (ibid.).

Albarrak (2016) from Damman University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, wrote an informative article entitled *Racial Discrimination and Violence: A Psycho-Social Analysis of Richard Wright's Native Son and The Long Dream*. His Abstract is well-written and informative.

Racial discrimination, the quest for freedom and the struggle for survival are the major aspects of African-American history. From the advent of the seventeenth century up to the twentieth century, African-Americans were exposed to various forms of oppression and discrimination that devastated their psyches and forced them to resort to escape mechanisms necessary for survival. Therefore, African-American writers, among whom Richard Wright (1908-1960) is a leading figure, have always been concerned with



pinpointing the African-American predicament within the socio-political context of that history.

The main objective of this paper is to explore Wright's portrayal of the African-American predicament in the first half of the twentieth century and to psychoanalytically examine the impact of racial oppression on African-Americans, especially in *Native Son* (1940) and *The Long Dream* (1958). Set in the North and the South during the 1930s and 1940s, *Native Son* and *The Long Dream*, respectively, strike at the exclusion of African-Americans and their futile hopes of integration. This paper demonstrates that in these two novels, the history of racial oppression produced psychologically disordered African Americans who are chained by the labyrinth of neurotic anxiety, fear, and castration complex. Based on the psychoanalytic criticism which argues that a literary text is an expression of its author's own neuroses, the paper also refers to Wright's autobiography *Black Boy* (1945) in order to prove that Wright's two novels are a portrait of his own life and ideological stances; his characters' ruthless experiences and their reactions in the two novels are simply his own.

This abstract endeavour to clearly state (and describe) the world Wright was writing for. It talks of 'various forms of oppression and discrimination that devastated their psyches and forced them to resort to escape mechanisms necessary for survival'. It also concludes with, 'Wright's two novels are a portrait of his own life and ideological stances; his characters' ruthless experiences and their reactions in the two novels are simply his own'.



Thomson (2012) is a scholar who has written about Richard Wright. In his book the search for black identity and racial consciousness in the novels of James Baldwin and Richard Wright he examines the changing aspects of the American society which has created an intensive identity crisis among Black Americans. In his writings, Nibu states that Black Americans are still very much trying to cope with the memory of the struggle to strike a balance between being black and being an American. They are still grasping for 'emancipation' from a more dominant group identity which is all pervasive, situated in the core of the individual and in the core of their community culture.

Another study, by Ranjitham (2006) – 'Colour and beyond quest for individual voice and racial transcendence in the selected novels of Richard Wright' portrays Richard Wright as a protester against the dehumanizing circumstances that the oppressed black lived under, with the passionate worries he had for the suppressed majority making him known to his readers as 'the man for mankind'.

'*Search for Reintegration of the Excluded Black American in Select Works of Richard Wright*' is a study made by Dorothy (2014) which examines the nature of exclusion felt by black individuals in the American community. Dorothy (2014) sees *Native Son* and *Black Boy* as superb examples of the denunciation of racial discrimination and the social and economic tension which shapes the lives of 'Negroes'. She states that the capitalist system in America intentionally robs the Negro community and keeps them in subjugation in appalling circumstances of agony and discrimination that results in plentiful criminal acts.



In his thesis ‘Fragmentation and identity is a study of selected novels of Richard Wright’, Sultan (2016) examines fragmentation and identity that spread and affected the black people in the early twentieth century. He states that Wright has displayed a universal view in his novels, a view that stems from his accumulated experiences of being black, a Negro and growing up as an American. Sultan’s study reflects the sabotaging effects of racial segregation, crime, political and socioeconomic forces upon the ‘blacks’, and how fragmentation has become a part of black literature.

2.3 Background: Black American



05 In America, slaves perform all types of jobs within the United States. They work on farms and in the cities or towns at numerous kinds of works whether they were skilled, unskilled or semi-skilled. Thus, the slave labour helps “to build the United States into the great country it is today” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p. 2). Enslaved black labour was essential for the survival of the economies of the European colonial in the Americas from centuries of 16th through the 19th centuries. Many black American slaves took part in the American Revolution in the United States as “many were promised freedom if they lived through the war, others fought in their masters’ places, still others were freed to fight” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p. 2). The American Patent office in the United States refuse to award slaves rights for their inventions because “slaves were not considered as citizens” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p. 3). In 1793 -1836, both freedmen and slaves could gain rights for their inventions. As in 1836, the law was reformed to prevent masters and slaves from locating a patent for the





“slave’s inventions” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p. 3). The slave owners were also banned from receiving a patent. Thomas Jennings was the first black American to obtain a patent in 1826, “for a dry-cleaning process called —dry scouring” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p. 3).

In this respect, the notion of racism is around the America especially in the South as the Black people were treated offensively. They have no full rights as those white citizens in the country. Based to these facts, many black writers reacted with a set of literary works and used their talents in writing to replicate on their life “American and Caribbean slaves often have been portrayed merely as unskilled agricultural field hands and domestics servants” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p. 1). Hence, they have grasped an artistic level and made creative works. African American literature involves slave narratives and poetry. The Black Arts Movements and Civil Rights played vital roles in the improvement of African American writing. Currently, African American literature establishes a basis in the works of literature of the United States. This study is an attempt to give a clear view to the reader on how Black American literature changed and developed throughout time (Abd al hakim, 2017). In this vain, Derousselle states that the accomplishments of black Americans and their contributions to the society in the United States have been ignored out of most history accounts. Consequently, most black Americans do not know of their influences to history.

In America, specifically in the South, of the United States, African slavery in America is a provocative issue in both society and history. It carries forth feelings of responsibility in people in the West, “whose ancestors hundreds of years ago may have





participated in the buying and selling of fellow human beings” (Abd al hakim, 2017, p.2). These historical and social incidents pushed many black Americans to be writers and poets. Thus, their journey dates back from the colonial era until the present, they look for social freedom and justice (Abd al hakim, 2017).

Shahjahan (2011) illustrates literature as a form of resistance which has a vital role in reflecting the feelings and the mood of the society. It is considered to be a widespread sound and current revolutionary means against ‘white’s offensive behaviour’. This type of literature can be considered as a tool to identify a society. Therefore, African-American writers enlisted literature, novels and poems to show their resistance against the whites, generally through the literature to construct awareness among the societies. The resistance literature helps slaves and blacks in the United States to be more aware about liberties and freedom as their own human rights (Fanon, Sartre & Farrington, 1963). It is contended that the manifestations of the themes of resistance and themes of hegemony exist in Wright’s work, and his representation of the overlapping conscious issues portrays the postcolonial transformative resistance perspective. As Milevoj (2015) declares:

African American literature is still a process of evolution, with its subjects being closely related to the slavery, the struggles and lives of the African Americans through history, race problems, literacy and new forms of verbal expressions. The fact that a lot of texts written have been lost somewhere along the way, presents a challenge, but new acquisitions and insights are constantly (p. 10).





In the 19th century, writers were crucial figures in an era of political and cultural transformation, with emancipation and racial unity being the main themes of own their creations. Thus, their works are considered to be as a way of “rebellion towards those still leaning to slavery and racism” (Milevoj, 2015, p. 11). Therefore, in order to maintain the arguments in this study regarding the theorization's black American resistance in contemporary literature, focus is given on the theme of the postcolonial transformative resistance perspective as the best captured concern of the African American point of view in Wright's fiction.

In terms of emancipation, African Americans are legally banned from higher education as in many states, barred all together from education. There were statutes made, ‘the teaching of reading and writing to slaves is a crime’. Accordingly, after emancipation, Black Americans were struggled to educate their children and themselves as well. Black colleges such as Howard, Lincoln, Shaw, Wilberforce, and Morehouse, were established in the years closely after the Civil War. In these institutions most of the black students were educated particularly in the 1960s (Allen, 2015, p. 27).

Huxley (1903) illustrates that education, which he permitted, could enhance only partially the natural deficits of these periods. He concludes that Emancipation can serve to reveal the inferiority of blacks and women; he advocates emancipation even though, in his opinion, women and blacks were unable of realizing its significance. This significant follows as social ethics that “The duty of man is to see that not a grain is piled upon that





load beyond what Nature imposes; that injustice is not added to inequality” (Provine, 1986, p. 26).

In the perceptions of scientific racism, Huxley (1903) presents a good example of the interrelationship of masculinist and racialist thought. For instance, blacks were essentially inferior to whites, so women are obviously inferior to men. To put it in another way, the social competition unrestricted by emancipation – “for blacks from slavery, and for women, from restricted participation in work employment and civil life” (Huxley, 1903) while white men would certainly determine their superiority to the detriment of both women and blacks. Hence, in maintaining the arguments in this study regarding the theorizations on issues of postcolonial transformative resistance perspective and black resistance against the white hegemony in contemporary literature, focus is given on the themes of resistance and themes of hegemony on the black American’s sense-of-self as the best captured concern in Wright’s fiction.

Based on the discussion above, the study of a particular historical periods is constantly a work in progress. In this concern, the black people who started to reiterate their experiences, which eventually turned out to be reconstructions of the history. Both oral and written literature are equally significant. The written literature should not be disregarded as it gives a sense of the culture and a new perception. This significance emphasizes the transition from oral to written literature for the African Americans, is the slave narratives. That is to say, both are important elements of the African American heritage and history. In this research, an attempt is made to show how Wright’s talent





represents his loyalty to the black resistance and the white hegemony through the lens of a postcolonial transformative resistance perspective.

2.4 The Selection of Texts

The black fictions were mostly historical and very limited until the *Native Son* by Wright was published. The first reason of the considered audience of the fictions was middle-class and modern section of society who have never experienced poverty. Meanwhile, both narrator and audience should be liberated in order to have better mutual understanding. The writing was largely limited at that time to a facade, a distortion of black life.



Wright started the interactions of anti-alienism with the publication of *Big Boy Leave Home*, a story about a Negro boy's distressing encounter with racism in the South. The racial suspicions imparted in *Big Boy* find a psychopathic passage in *Native Son*, however *The Outsider* appears to go beyond those ridiculous fears by raising logical and rational questions about human liberty. The growth of Wright's heroes from *Big Boy* to Cross Damon echoes severely the moral psychological dilemma of current African intellectuals, most of whom go through painful procedure of Westernization in order to recognize themselves (Nakamura, 2014).

In *Black Boy*, Wright states his deep attention in the various questions of power, authority, and freedom. Like the hero of *The Outsider* (1953), Wright himself had





existential desires. If one knows this novel as one section of Wright's logical autobiography, it is easier to recognize why and how he positioned himself in non-fiction literature and why he was so involved by modern psychology in *The Long Dream*. The stories of *Cross Damon* and *Bigger Thomas* allow an illusory similarity to several contemporary cases of violence and crime. There is similarly a visionary note in Wright's creation of the criminal cognizance as intelligent, thoughtful, and transformative.

Whether Wright was investigating the independence movement and African culture in *Black Power* (1954), writing at which African nations discussed what should be their future in the worldwide in *The Color Curtain* (1956), or investigating the political and religious details of Catholic nation in *Pagan Spain* (1957), Wright was continuously the involved writer, the brother in distress. It is the philosophy of Wright's opinion, his capability to be both victim and asserter that protects his power and is the most continuing value of his literary consequence.

Wright's last novel, *The Long Dream* was published in 1958. He passed away on 1960, after publishing the *Long Dream* of a heart attack in Paris. Whereas there was no evidence of his heart trouble it can be hypothesized he had been murdered. Wright was himself worried about the risk of being murdered as being inspected by Joseph McCarthy in 1953. Merely before his death Wright had received some mysterious phone calls from persons with fake names.



Native Son in 1940, *Black Boy* in 1945 and then *The Long Dream*. These three novels together, demonstrate the tragic portrayal of the blacks' cause of hate and fearing relation to the white man of the Deep South. *Native Son's* Bigger, murdered a white man; Wright, narrates himself in *Black Boy* through a story of a boy growing up in the South and fleeing to false revelations of security in Chicago. And here is the story of Fishbelly, who was with fear and fed hate, found out his father's two-faced flattery behavior when he comes across the white overlords, juggle behind them, as he worked and persuaded his way into riches based on 'houses' maintained by the contributions to the police. He had to cheat and lie; he even had to attend two years' prison judgement, deprived of trial, previously he skipped. And in all that period of time, he could trust only one white man. He runs away to France and *The Long Dream* of fairness his friend Zeke held out to him. It is an influential accusation, terrible and constant, without any hope. It is harsh, violent and unpleasant. It offers no explanations and no attempt for pity. It just positions the case. Whether the people will read, it is left to be seen. Wright states what he has to talk about, with no fear or courtesy.

Black authors, on the other hand, initiate in the imaginary story of Bigger Thomas an instant reality. He became the character that would control their effort for a long time to come. In his, and Wright's, monumental figure, black authors found a reality they could address themselves to. Blacks would realize themselves as the ethical integrity of America after *Native Son*, though none would have such a single-minded attitude to its purpose as Wright. Wright is definitely an American writer who wrote of urban violence with an ease typically found in allegory only.



Naturalism is a writing style that served writers and artists well during the post-Depression America. Certain documents of evidences, the use of authorized language to gather the social attitudes, and the lack of emotional values makes the writing of that time well-known. For a black novelist, it elaborates an idea of race conflict in America, in which all blacks are true and all whites are wrong. The simplicity of this decision took an absolutely documentary form and was consequently all the more disgusting. It does not matter how the blacks are immoral in their personal activities or white people are innocent; they are continuously right. They might be substances of reasonable revenge. His black characters, regularly through a revelatory involvement of racist violence, are made aware of their position as outsiders. There is no passionate shading and one must understand the burdened blacks and despise the unkindness of the whites. While Wright familiarizes sympathetic white Communists in two books, they are not authentic and the ideal of multi-ethnic support is challenged by his graphical representations of racist violence committed by whites.

Richard Wright has written five texts in which the first one was *Native Son* (1940), while the other four are *Black Boy* (1945), *The Outsider* (1953), *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938) and *the Long Dream* (1958) tell of the black Africans' experiences in contemporary America from various perspectives. This research will examine five of Wright's texts of which the description for each is presented in the following subsections.





2.4.1 *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938)

Richard Wright's has begun his writing career with the publication of a collection of short stories, *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938). *Uncle Tom's Children* is a work made up of six different parts that contain a non-fiction opening story followed by five fictional ones. *The Ethics of Jim Crow* defines Wright's personal experiences in growing up. The story starts with racism, once his effort to play a war game with white children turns unpleasant, and follows his experiences with the difficulties of being black in the South over his youth and adulthood. It defines his encounter with discrimination at his first job. He was beaten up by his colleagues because he wanted to learn the job skills, while he was working in an optic shop. They didn't want him to improve and develop his skills. Wright was also attacked by white youths and discovered the many pretences of white prejudice against blacks. These actions controlled black men from being permitted to work around naked white prostitutes and pretending to not see anything.

Whites have unequal sex with black servants, and yet any sexual relations between a white woman and black man, even a whore, causes death or castration to the black man. Wright similarly explores into the more delicate humiliation characteristics in the *Jim Crow* law, like not able to say thank you to a white man, in case he takes it as a statement of equality.

Richard's movement to the South in *Black Boy* is an allegory of the turning point in the history of black literature and his own life. Much of the subjects of his life history is





gathered in the *Ethics of Living Jim Crow*, the essay that defines with terrible honesty the special effects of the social order on black people. No one had earlier written of this theme as he did, and, so, the theme had a revolutionary value. Wright described in what way it is needed for people living in a society created on free originality and individualism to have education in one's own individual values and free right of entry to the surrounding people. Lacking those potentials, and history of free choice, black Americans are enforced to continue in close-knit, pre-individualistic sets. There, the opportunity of survival is even better than it would be if every person is frustrated to make it on his own.

Wright's improved his writing style by reading so many books. He wrote after reading the books. However, his white employer said to him that you never can be a writer when he was only fourteen. The fact that Wright finally began to be a great writer regardless of such preventions is the best example of Wright's personal resistance of *Jim Crowism*. In the final discussion of this chapter, it will be said that *Uncle Tom's Children* can be counted as Post-Colonial because it defines African-American people's efforts to achieve self-liberation in spite of the forces accused against them. However, Wright's form in *Uncle Tom's Children* is similarly precious by his increasing persistence. Wright's direct narration highlights his message, and like other popular novelists, Wright breaks from the distrustful determinism of naturalism by idealizing some characters and associate their heroic resistance to repression with an essential hope for melioration. *Uncle Tom's Children* written by Richard Wright with novels (1938) and six novels (1940) when republished.





Uncle Toms' Children novels are:

- a. *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow*
- b. *Big Boy Leaves Home*
- c. *Down by the Riverside*
- d. *Long Black Song*
- e. *Fire and Cloud*
- f. *Bright and Morning Stars*

2.4.1.1 *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow*



The Ethics of Living Jim Crow is the opening story of the book. It is a non-fiction essay that defines Wright's personal experiences when he was growing up in his knockdown and extremely racist world in the South. Wright narrated that he couldn't play games with white children as a black child, however his peers enjoyed playing. Not only Jim Crow experience increased throughout his adolescence, but they continued all over his adulthood as well. When Jim started working, he experienced much resistance between co-workers and himself, those abused him physically because he was trying to learn skills that would support his job position. The unavailability of housing and jobs beside the poor living conditions caused feelings of disappointment and despair. The goal of escape the South in Wright's period is to escape the everyday embarrassment and loss of self-respect, the fear of illegal execution and the harsh Jim Crow laws.





In this story, like other fictional stories, Wright subjects the dissimulation in social models regarding the ethnic differences of black and white that are recognized to destroy the self-esteem of and enforce the difference against people of colour. The fundamental aim is to question the limitations of the black involvement as inflicted by the *Jim Crow laws*, and in the meantime to search what one is made of. In this story, Wright preface to *Uncle Tom Children*, his insistence on the position and role selected for black people. The social codes simulated many aspects of their lives from the rule of their language, gestures, eye contacts and to personal motivations as can be understood Wright's various narrations, what he calls his Jim Crow education.

A non-fictional genre is allocated into nine lessons that Wright developed based on his involvement and experiences in the Jim Crow South. He tried to change white America's racist manners by using these lessons. The lessons focus on different aspects of the dehumanizing consequence of Jim Crow duties on African Americans such as the punishment method that black women use to keep their children, the black peoples' compliant responses, the requirement of African Americans' following the harsh social behaviour in their dialogues with white Southerners, and the powerlessness of white regulations and the police to defend poor black women against rape. Wright's failure to do anything about the oppression that was happening in the hotel when he was employed as a bellman motivated him to decide to resist against deception, as did his aspiration to use the library services in the South. Additionally, he found that ingenious tactics were compulsory of blacks if they were to evade having to practice duties and compulsory behaviour like removing their hats in front of white Southerners in the lifts.





Wright's motivation of writing the Jim Crow Laws was making the white readers aware about the personal humiliations suffered by African-Americans as an effect through Jim Crow laws and customs and launch words in the novel in order to provoke whites to the fact that the Negroes are present in the world as humans. Wright's other 'lesson', as drawn in *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow: A Non-fictional Sketch*, clarifies more disclosure of how white's hegemony was sustained by the law enforcement agency while they resort to violence.

2.4.1.2 *Big Boy Leaves Home*



Big Boy is a teenage boy who is the main character in *Big Boy Leaves Home*. The story is about the unlucky incidence with whites that happened to him and his friends. They heard a white woman asking for help while they were swimming in a white property. At the same time the white lady's fiancé started shooting with his rifle and murdered two of his friends, Buck and Lester. In revenge Big Boy grabbed the gun and killed the white man and run with his friend, Bobo. He has to be hidden all night and his family planned to help him to escape. He spends the night in hillside, hidden in a kiln and then travels to Chicago with a black truck driver in the morning. While Big Boy was hiding in the kiln, he saw a mob tarring, feathering and burning alive his friend Bobo, who was coming to join him. There was a dog that caused him fear and he crouched all the night to avoid being sniffed by the dog. In the morning he met the driver and escaped, he was the only survivor of a group of friends of four.





2.4.1.3 *Down by The Riverside*

A farmer named Mann is the main character of *Down by the Riverside* who must get his family to safety in the hills, but he did not have a boat to protect them from the danger of a major flood. His wife named Lulu, was pregnant and however it was the time for baby to be born but she couldn't deliver for several days. He had to get his wife to hospital. Mann asked his cousin Bob to sell the donkey to get money and buy a boat. Bob came back with fifteen dollars of sold donkey and a stolen boat. He must pass the town with the boat to reach to the hospital and the boat was very noticeable. He took his family with him in the white boat and he asked for help at the first house he reach. By chance, it was the Heartfield's house, the white man who was the main owner of the boat. Heartfield started shooting immediately once he saw them. In front of the Heartfield's eyes, whom witnesses from the window, Mann turned on his gun and killed him.

Mann reached the hospital when his wife had a miscarriage and the baby died. Armed forces took away Peewee and Grannie in the hills to be secured. Mann had to work on the failing levee. But the levee broke down, and Mann must go back to the hospital, where he made a hole in the ceiling bravely allowing the hospital to be empty. Mann and another black man, Brinkley, were asked to turn at the edge of town, to rescue a family who were the Hartfield's. The boy inside the house recognized Mann. He wanted to kill him but was stopped as the house was full of water with rising floodwaters. Mann took him and his mother and sister to dry land. He couldn't find his family there and the white boy





recognized Mann as the murderer of his father. Soldiers guided Mann towards their camp. Mann found himself doomed, he runs, and the military shot him dead beside the river.

2.4.1.4 *Long Black Song*

Long Black Song narrates the story of a black lady named Sarah and her husband Silas, a black man. The story begins while she was waiting for her husband to go back home from selling his crops harvested from their solitary farm. Sarah also had to take care of her baby, Ruth. Sarah had dreamt about another man, Tom. She was not sure that she loved Silas. Tom is a white salesman who was trying to sell a record player to Sarah. Tom tried to seduce Sarah through their conversation and finally their meeting ended in sex. Tom left the record player with Sarah and told her he would try to come back in the morning and assured her husband to purchase it.

Silas came back, saw the record player and accused Sarah of being unfaithful. He expelled her from the house in anger, beating her as she went off. Silas hated white persons and tried hard for ten years to buy a farm and being self-employed. Silas shot the white man when he returned to sell the record player as he had slept with Sarah. As Silas demonstrated that he didn't want him to die, but necessity for the reason that he couldn't be free in a white man's world. Sarah took Ruth and escaped into the hills, where she noticed that Silas had a gunfight with the white population that came to get him. He died





when they burnt the house and the area around him but he did not make a sound as it fell on him.

2.4.1.5 Fire and Cloud

Taylor is a preacher that tried to save the people from discrimination and starvation. He is the major character in the *Fire and Cloud* story. The white authority refused to provide food and Taylor goes back to church emptyhanded. Taylor was talking with communities about a demonstration. He also had been talking with police and mayor. He had a history with the mayor who helped him in exchange for his obtaining peace and order between the black communities. But if the mayor followed the communists, Taylor would face the problem. Foremost Taylor discussed with the communists, who tried to persuade him to join them. Taylor didn't give them clear answers. Then he talked to the police chief and mayor. They tried to influence him not to march with the communists. For a second time, Taylor was unclear on what he wanted to do. He effectively got both groups out of the church without their paths crossing.

Taylor went out of the church and there was a car, he tried to see who was in the car and then he faced with some white men. Those men beat him and threw him in the back, taking him to a forest. There, they beat him hard and made him perform the Lord's Prayer, in a move planned to keep him from marching. Taylor must walk back over a white area, where a cop stopped him but did not catch him. Once he was home, Taylor understood





that this whipping connected him rightly to the pain of his people, and he said to his son that it was necessary for the march to go on. The allegory of beating and whipping described the pain of black people's lives and their starvation. Taylor found that many of his audience had been beaten through the night. He guided them in the march over the town. He understood that together, the pain of his being whipped and the power of the gathered marchers, white and black people in one mob, are a symbol from God. The whipping was the fire, and the mob was the cloud of the fire and the cloud God used to lead the Hebrews to the Promised Land.

2.4.1.6 *Bright and Morning Star*



Bright and Morning Star distresses an old lady, Sue, whose sons Johnny and Sug were communist party coordinators. Sug, one of them, had previously been confined for this and did not act in the story. Sue waited for the other son, to reach home after the story began. However, she was not a Christian, had faith in a communist visualization of the human matters, Sue was singing an old song as she waited. A white associated communist, Reva, the daughter of a chief coordinator, Lem, stopped by to tell Sue that the sheriff had revealed strategies for a gathering at Lem's and that the friends must be told or they would be arrested. Somebody in the group had become a spy. Reva left, and Johnny-Boy came home and they talked over her suspicion of white fellow-communists. At that time, she sent him out to inform the buddies not to go to Lem's for the meeting. The sheriff showed up at Sue looking for Johnny. The sheriff threatened Johnny, speaking that if she did not





get him to conversation, she must take a sheet to get his body. Sue said disobediently to the sheriff, who smacked her about but started to leave. At that point Sue screamed to him from the door, and he returned, this time whipping her seriously. In her declining state, she told the buddies' names to Booker, a white communalist who was truly the sheriff's informer. Sue understood that she was the only one left who could be apart from the comrades, and she committed herself totally to this duty. Memorizing the sheriff's arguments, she wrapped a gun in a white sheet. She went into the forests till she found the sheriff, who had arrested Johnny-Boy. The sheriff tormented Johnny-Boy in front of her, but she did not sympathize or try to ask Johnny-Boy to give up. Then Booker showed up, and she shot him through the sheet. The sheriff's men shot first Johnny-Boy and then Sue passed on. As she lied on the ground, she understood she had done to her life and felt



05-4506832 satisfied with her determination.



2.4.2 *Black Boy* (1945)

Wright's *Black Boy* (1945) is a fiction of faith and willpower. It sets Wright's life raising up as an African-American in Jim Crow South, portraying the economic and social crisis that were stereotypical for African-Americans at the time. It tracks him over his adolescence, experiencing the deprivation and difficulties faced by him and his family. *Black Boy* is a story about the sufferings and difficulties faced by a poor family, and one boy's purpose to escape the jail created by these situations. Away from this, *Black Boy* is a story about a life-long struggle with deprivation. Wright hurt from hunger his whole life,





not only for food but also for love, personal recognition, and an accepting of the world around him; but most significantly, Wright had limitless hunger for knowledge. Wright's emotional crisis with hungers started inside his family. His family was never able to prepare everything that a family needed to have, like security, love and acceptance. In fact, most of their connections were the precise opposite of this. The adults in his family often debated with him, and wished to have as little interaction with him as possible.

The title of *Black Boy* gathers the whole pre-individualistic idea or the beliefs of living Jim Crow. Apparently, Wright did not think of himself by means of a black boy. The period of time, is a societal judgment, not only used by white society but took place by the blacks popular in Wright's life. Wright's family knew him bad by means of blackness like a white saw him, because he defined himself as an individual. At the same time, he was seen as a boy, who was standing by to obey orders before any action. The irony of this is that Wright reasonably and obviously never did have a childhood, and touched the life with no fears or responsibility. His compassion to knowledge made him a man virtually at birth. In the pre-individualistic Jim Crow culture, he grew up in Wright was reflected as evil and uncontrollable.





2.4.3 Native Son (1940)

Native Son expresses the life of Bigger Thomas, a young black guy living in Chicago in the 1930s. *Native Son* highlights the incidence of a superior effect in the texts than is seen before. The existence of colonial ideology is developed perceptible in the novels through the use of symbolism and gothic themes and, which represent the development of the scheme in terms of a strict binary of black-against-white and good-against-evil. Whereas this struggle is combined in other such divisions of self-development, it is particular in these texts as Bigger Thomas is given generally pre-defined characters. Instead of coming face to face what he was and recognizing it, they faced the role that culture demanded of them. In effect, the only imaginable consequence of this hard-place best was that his characteristic never expanded to more than a presentation of their strangeness. This consciousness left his ultimate demise deep and unfulfilling. In this way, the Bigger character plays an important role in his environments, which are fatefully accomplishing to everybody but himself.

Bigger abused others since his circumstance was powerless to know them as characters. Bigger's problem from an absurdist perspective in which he challenged to enforce by means of a world that has nothing. By working for the Daltons, miserable fate came into Bigger's life. The Daltons were a rich, white family living on one side of the line of racism. Bigger's job of taking Mary Dalton to a meeting with her Communist lover, Jan Erlone, ended in Bigger carrying a drunken Mary gently to her room. The unexpected entry of Mrs. Dalton caused Bigger to suffocate and panic the daughter, unbeknown to her





blind mother. Bigger controlled the situation for a moment by playing dumb, but finally the bones of Mary's body were found in the basement's big furnace.

Before the police could catch him and took him to the court, Bigger escaped and finished up killing his girlfriend, Bessie, to avoid the justice in a courtroom which was affected by mob crime at his supposed rape of a white woman. Whereas his lawyer, Boris Max, attempted to explain Bigger's emotional cut off to the court, the novel finishes with the conspicuous irony that Max and Bigger themselves certainly did not quite accomplish to close this space. Just as Bigger started to comprehend that there was a common interest in maintaining the bond between man and the social order, he was required to settle the injustice of his judgement with his previous philosophy of 'blotting out' the whole thing in the world. Before his death, Bigger was determined that life can be important and meaningful, but unfortunately did not have sufficient time to understand for himself what this greater meaning is.

Native Son is most referred as an illustration of African-American literature that shows naturalism in an urban site. It is regularly criticized for its popular or agitprop plan, though and this is an important part that makes a novel as a social protest. There is a general failure of critics to recognize the worldwide quality of Bigger Thomas' dilemma, and that the novel is less of a cultural, anti-white invective than a psychological writing (Malaibari, 2008). Several critics have made an effort to illuminate Bigger's hostility as restricting from a change in the protagonist's worldview, rather than a direct struggle for expressed power.





2.4.4 *The Long Dream* (1958)

The Long Dream is a combination of the bildungsroman and realistic writing or novel of initiation, with focuses on the childhood and adolescence of Rex 'Fishbelly' Tucker. Fishbelly was born in a family of comparative decency and honour but found out that his father's collaboration with the white systems could not protect him from the reality of the Jim Crow, or segregated south. In a series of psychological disclosure and dramatic episodes, Wright demonstrates, through Tyree Tucker and Fishbelly, his idea that the life of a black man is a 'Long Dream'.

The novel starts with a number of experiences from Fishbelly's childhood, the most unforgettable of which was the lynching of his older friend and former mentor Chris Sims. Chris committed the crime of being caught in a hotel room with a white lady. After he was revealed, murdered, and harmed by a white mob, his body was taken to Tyree's memorial home for funeral. Instantly from inspiration for the young Fishbelly, his father took him to the memorial home to show to him the critically crushed face of Chris Sims, as a cautioning and a demonstration of the authority the white world had over the black.

Fishbelly's father, Tyree, was the undertaker for their community. But his increased financial advance suggested other sources of profits. Episodes of Fishbelly at school and with his friends showed the boy's developing consciousness of what Tyree did, with the man's easy disloyalties. The child's first arrest for aggressiveness with his friends on a white



man's belongings awoke him to the racial condition as well as to his father's puzzling standing in the white public.

Fishbelly was awoken from the fantasy of a young boy who told his mother to the truths of money, sex, race, subjugation and the essential dishonesty elaborated when a black man chose to remain above the level of oppressed indifference. Wright's last novel is an influential tale of weakness. In fact, power is the subject successively over all of his novels.

2.4.5 The Outsider (1953)

Cross Damon is a black, intelligent post-office worker in Chicago. Stifled by the middle-class limitations of his family tasks and his job, Damon, who had advanced his ideas by interpretation of existential idea, desired to create an absolute and more reliable life for himself. A tunnel accident in which he was thought to have died offered him with the chance to abandon his job, family and girlfriend. After killing an innocent man to keep his secret, Damon went to New York to get a new identity, and started a life marked by deception and violence. He killed Herndon and Gil Blount, the local leader of the Communist Party, representing his fight contrary to the also stultifying powers of capitalism and socialism. His concern with Blount's widow was ruined by the trickery that his situation forced on him. In the end, he was gunned down for his unfaithfulness by leaders of the Communist Party. Damon was a philosophical rebel who failed in his power



to live realistically; as a substitute, he created his survival based on lies, which led him to play god with other people's lives.

Wright presents a persuasive story of a black man's effort to escape his past and start once again in Harlem. Cross Damon was a man at ease with people and with himself, a man who hungers for peace but who took terror and destruction anywhere he went. *The Outsider* is Wright's second section in a story of epic scopes, a compound master story considered to illustrate American racism in new and ugly positions. In fact, Wright's creative writing was following his opinions on the problems of racism. *The Outsider* is a 'novel of thoughts' in which he tried to explain, and possibly find a solution for, subjects that he saw as greater than racism. He was worried about the risk of identity, expressive action, and success in the modern world, in which judgments of evil and good cannot be made on the base of trust in the existence of excellent being or system concerning the value of humanity.

Wright addressed this matter by embracing the challenge, and offering his analysis of two new lines of thought with which he had newly been engaged: Marxism, as he had saw its repetition in the Communist Party of the United States, and existentialism, in which he had read regularly and which he had talk over in Paris with main existentialist philosophers and authors. Marxism highlights the purpose of history and human lives by economic pressures. Existentialism, though, highlights a person's liberty as a unique value. Both suggest that traditional structures of importance and value that explain the reality of a supreme creator are wrong and inadequate. There is no covenant between god and his





creatures, and no divine decision. Wright's plan for inspecting these philosophies, as they would be lived, was to create a hero who had found his whole life worthless and disgusting, but who has influenced the aptitude and knowledge to examine his dilemma and pursue an existential clarification. In one winter of this protagonist's displeasure, he learns lessons about Communism, existentialism, and his own character, and he also acquires an optimistic truth about civilization.

Cross Damon, by means of his name infers, is the picture of a difficult idea. Wright is considered as a man who has been martyred by his Christian pedagogy and by the institutionalization of values according Christian and other Western myths that have been extracted and abolished by industrialism, but also an existentialist man's effort to create a new and free identity just delivers his egoistic force to replace the obsolete Godhead with his own godlike use of power. He is both motivated and enthused to destroy the enemies of human liberty, only to find that the further he fractures them, the more like them he come to be. He was a disgracefully violent murderer who yet can claim to be guiltless of inspirational and so societal responsibility. Paradoxically, he remarked himself as a heroic outsider, only to find that every other considerate person, law enduring or not, is an outsider as well. As characters, these outsiders vary only in as much as the thoughts that they symbolize change. Houston, the area attorney, is an 'ethical criminal' like Cross, but any harshness that he promised was contained by the law. Though Houston positions outside society in his individual and ethical points of view, he indicated to conform to societal laws.





The main subject of *The Outsider* is Cross Damon's quest for liberty: "I wanted to be free to feel what I was worth." However, at the finale of the novel, he confessed that he had exposed 'nothing'. One issue is that Damon's strength to live for himself collided with his simple humanitarian moods.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter focuses on a review of Wright's works of fiction by concentrating on the depictions of the black resistance and white hegemony and the experience that takes place in the United States. Meanwhile, in the critical readings that have been discussed earlier, Wright's fictional voice as a black resistance writer and his unique awareness to the issues concerning Africa have been identified. He often recounts his personal colonial consciousness of African history which is a vital component in his fiction. Wright bears witness to the black resistance by highlighting the smallest details of African collective culture that he uses as a structure to portray the transformative perspective on black resistance against white hegemony in the United States.

In the analysis of his transformative consciousness in the selected corpus, Wright's correlation to his history will be examined by drawing the expansion using images of his transformative perspective on black resistance against white hegemony throughout his writings. Wright's talent will be shown by representing his attitudes towards black Africans through the lens of resistance that will be discoursed in detail in the next chapters.



All in all, this pronouncement of Wright's background detects the maturing of black resistance against white hegemony. Wright produces a new horizon for his sense of resistance by using fiction as a form of power. As a matter of fact, Wright is the first African American novelist who acknowledges the transformative perspective on black resistance against white hegemony in the United States through his work of fiction. This makes the gap wider for the current study which is focused on the ways in which Wright has engaged with white hegemony black resistance in his black resistance fiction from the transformative perspective point of view.