

## **The Study of Cultural Consequences of Colonialism in Driss Chraïbi's Works in Light of Aimé Césaire's Ideas**

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Driss Chraïbi is one of the most famous Francophone Moroccan writers, who grew up in the former French colonies, and consequently, he pays particular attention to cultural consequences of colonialism in the colonial societies. In most of his literary works, he made reference, implicitly or explicitly, to the relations between the colonizer and the colonized, and described military force's actions or cultural plans in colonized countries. Aimé Césaire was a Martinican politician and author who is considered in Francophone academic environments as a pattern in anti-colonial studies and struggles. This paper tries to explain and analyze Aimé Césaire ideas as presented in *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950) and *Culture and Colonialism* (1963). Then, different internal and external colonial influences are examined in four of Driss Chraïbi's novels: *Simple Past* (1954), *Goats* (1955), *Civilization, My Mother* (1972), *Seen, Read, Heard* (1998).

After the rise of economic and political competition between the two colonial powers, France and the United Kingdom, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the French government colonized considerable parts of North African

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territories. This phenomenon had a deep and incontestable impact on the colonized countries' culture and civilization, which is reflected in their literature. These influences are especially reflected in Maghreb's literary works, of which the majority is written in French language.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, with the expansion of the process of decolonization, independence struggles in North Africa intensified. These flights became the common subject of an important part of literary production in Maghreb, which show challenges and emotions of colonized people, and also demonstrate another aspect of political and historical reality. In other words, North African literature became an efficient arm into the assets of writers who know very well how to use it in order to defend their peoples.

One of these most famous writers is Driss Chraïbi, who was born in 1926 in Morocco, and died at the age of 80 in 2007, in France. Chraïbi studied in French schools of Casablanca, but always he asked himself why he had never heard anything about national heroes whose bravery his mother told him of. On the other hand, his teachers would repeat to all the indigenous pupils that the Moroccan culture had to be refereed by the western civilization, and that the French colonial power was the executer of this process in Morocco (Chraïbi, 1994). This way, he started to understand the discrimination and injustice against the native Moroccans in their own country. In 1946, Chraïbi went to Paris to continue his studies in Chemistry, and his first novel, entitled *Past Simple*, was edited in France, in 1954. The subject of this novel was the collision of civilizations treated through the story of a protagonist called Driss, who is searching for his lost identity in confusion. One year later, Chraïbi published another novel entitled *Goats*, about the Maghrebin immigrant's life in France. *Civilization, My mother* is a book that he wrote in 1972, to draw attention to women's conditions and mothers' role within the framework of bicultural and bi-identity's phenomenon. In 1998, Chraïbi wrote an autobiographic novel entitled *Seen, Read, Heard*, to tell his childhood memories, including all he had seen, read, and heard about. In a lot of passages of these four novels, Chraïbi talks about relations between the colonizer and the colonized, and paints clear picture of the presence of military forces and political brokers of colonial power in colonized territories

Aimé Fernand David Césaire can be perceived as a key figure in colonial studies, whose books constitute a creditable reference to develop a right idea of legacies of

colonialism. Aimé Césaire, (1913-2008) was a francophone author and an anti-colonialist politician from Martinique. He spent his childhood and adolescence in Martinique, a former French colony. After completing his studies in École normale supérieure of Saint-Cloud, he started working as the first black teacher in Saint-Pierre high School. He founded a concept known as “the négritude”, with the poet Léopold Sédar Senghor, to introduce and develop black people’s literature. He composed valuable literary works, including eight poetry collections and four plays. He also had critical essays and articles about describing and analyzing colonial legacies of colonized people’s culture and civilization. He started to disclose goals and objectives hidden behind the curtain of colonialism, with his first article published in 1935, in the literary review *L’Étudiant Noir* (The Black Student). He pursued the same aim in others reviews like *Tropiques* (Tropics) and *Présence Africaine* (African Presence). He presented speeches on the same subject in two official congresses of Black authors and artists, which took place first in Paris, in 1956, and the second in Rome, in 1956. In this article, based on his book, *Discourse on Colonialism*, and his article, *Culture and Colonialism*, an attempt was made to deduce and explain his main ideas and reflections, which would constitute a theoretical framework for a critical literary analysis.

The examination of Driss Chraïbi’s literary works, which clearly reflects cultural legacies of colonialism, shows how the colonial powers succeed, using tools like the establishment of an educational system based on the language in service of their interests and the ideology in line with their objectives, in changing the culture and distorting the history of colonized nations. The examples from these four novels by Chraïbi prove, exactly as Aimé Césaire explained in his essays, that the colonizer modifies ethic patterns in the society and reverses values in the dominated people’s vision, especially young generation’s point of view, toward the national identity, and to create in them a sort of lack of self-esteem and alienation. Then, the colonial system comes to abuse the inferiority complex to replace the indigenous civilization by some aspects from the Western culture.

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Colonizer, Colonized, Culture, Civilization, History, Identity.