

Applying Fanonian Lens to Examine Memory and Trauma in Selected Works from East Asia and South East Asia

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Abstract

This research adopts a Fanonian framework to analyze the cultural and communal effects of war and colonialism in selected texts from East and South East Asia. This paper argues that though Fanon's theories are framed based on the experiences of colonized African subjects (Fanon 1986), they resonate deeply with the turbulent histories of Vietnam, South Korea and Philippines. Narrated from the perspective of women's civilian experiences, the novels highlight how these nations faced intense cultural erasure, violence and collective trauma under various colonial powers.

In order to understand gendered perspectives of war, the article examines *The Mountains Sing* by When the Rainbow Goddess Wept (1994) by Cecilia Manguerra Brainard, *The Mountains Sing* (2021) by Nguyen Phan Que Mai and *The Island of Sea Women* (2020) by Lisa See. The analysis explains how colonialism forces the colonialized subject to abandon

their ethnic identity and mimic the colonizer for survival (Fanon 1963, p.58). Fanon's arguments claim that a reclamation of the culture and memory is possible through counter-narratives that resist colonial hegemony.

Finally, the article aims to conclude that the application of the Fanonian lens to these Asian contexts, in understanding the lasting effects of colonial violences perpetuated in the selected countries. The study concludes by depicting that gynocentric narrations form an essential part of the decolonialization process and helps in the reclamation of the fractured identity.

Keywords: Fanon, gynocentric narration, resistance, counter-narratives.

Introduction

Fanon's contribution towards the study of war and its after effects deeply resonates with not just the black man's issue but also towards the condition of many other colonized nations. The perspective that he gained working as a psychiatrist during the French Algerian war contributed towards the writing of the famous work *Black Skin, White Masks* (1986) where Fanon portrays the black colonized subjects as helpless victims of colonial regime. But later on, the next work he publishes, titled *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), presents the black colonial subjects as an empowered group. The main themes that Fanon discusses in his work are related to colonization, decolonization, violence, cultural identity, psychological effects of colonialism and many more (Fanon, 1963;1986).

Analyzing war and colonialism in East Asia and Southeast Asia through Fanon's frameworks, the research here aims to explore women's perspectives of war. By analyzing them through Fanon's framework, the paper aims to study East Asian and Southeast Asian fiction in relation to Fanon's theories. For this purpose, it is necessary to have a better understanding of the history of Southeast Asia during war and its impact on their societies, particularly on women. Vietnam, Philippines and Korea are countries belonging to Southeast and East Asia

with turbulent histories. These countries were victims of colonialism, civil strife, cultural erasure, colonial trauma, oppression, alienation and exploitation (Olson, 2012). In order to understand the community and its experiences, it is necessary first to understand the history of these countries.

Brief History

Colonialism in Vietnam first began with the French, but was gradually taken over by the Japanese during World War II. The famine followed the war in Vietnam in 1945 and the whole nation suffered the Great Hunger (Olson 2012, p.193). During this time many civilians died due to hunger, dropped to the level of beggars and became skin and bones (Mai 2021, p.81). This was followed by the coming of Communism in Vietnam during which time the World Wars were in motion. The Land Reforms introduced in 1955 ensued forceful takeover of land from the cruel and rich land owners (135). As a result, many innocent lives were lost, which consisted of both the common slaves and innocent land owners. Many were forced to flee their villages in order to survive. After the Japanese, the Americans took over South Vietnam and the communists took over the North resulting in a gruesome war, which was later on referred to as the Vietnam War. Vietnam became a battlefield for different colonial powers resulting in its destruction and exploitation (Eyerman et al. 33). This ended with the victory of the Communists and gradual withdrawal of the Americans, leaving the future of the country in the hands of the Communists (44). The aftermath of Vietnam War was followed by psychologically affected battlefield soldiers, half-breed children, afflicted victims of agent orange, and civilians affected by war (45). Agent orange created health deteriorations in affected soldiers and civilians leading to cancers, congenital disabilities in newborn children or severe reproductive harm (Bingle 2023, p.44). The psychologically affected soldiers and workers faced conditions like depression, panic disorders, insomnia, anxiety and hallucinations (Eyerman et al. 244). The innocent civilians were also affected by wars as they had to move to

the countryside to escape the bombings and violence inflicted by the colonial powers against each other. The soldiers also left behind biracial children who were neither accepted by the colonizers nor the natives (224).

Similar to Vietnam, South Korea was also under colonial powers. Initially it was the Japanese who took control of Korea in 1910 which was then followed by the Americans. Similar to Vietnam, South Korea also witnessed the coming of communism and the subsequent clash between the communists and the Americans (47). The Japanese colonialism of Korea led to the imposition of the Japanese culture over the Korean citizens resulting in cultural imposition, cultural alienation and exploitation (Lie 2008, p.8). Under the Japanese rule Korea experienced violence, exploitation and subjugation. Korea faced issues like forced sexual slavery (comfort women), compulsory enlistment for cheap labor (zainichis in Japan), the Korean war, Jeju massacre and bifurcation as the after effects of colonialism. The creation of the comfort women system and the Zainichi minority in Japan were based on racial exploitation because they were taken away to work as slaves for the Japanese (5). On the other hand, the Korean War and the resultant bifurcation was a culmination of the communal strife and a national instability that arose due to cold war tensions between Americans and the communists within Korea.

Philippines as a country and as a community underwent drastic changes under Spanish colonialism. The imposition of the colonizer's culture resulted in the mimicking as well as the appropriation of the coloniser's culture leading to a community erased of its cultural identity. The Spanish colonialism was followed by the American colonialism, which was later on challenged by Japanese (Olson 2012, p.194). Philippines was another country which became a battlefield between two colonial powers. The battlefield perspectives and the civilian perspectives provide insights into different perspectives of war. The generations lost to the different periods of colonialism are proof enough for the gruesome encounters. Philippines is

yet to be freed from the aftermath of World Wars and the resultant civil strife that wreaked havoc in the country.

Studying colonialism and its effects on the colonised state it can be understood that the gains were always in the favour of the colonial powers. The colonised state on the other hand was looted, plundered and driven to the extent of poverty. Forced to contribute to the welfare of the colonial masters and their country, the colonised nation sacrificed its people and resources. The colonisers justified their actions by pointing towards the glory and superiority of their culture, which they argued were very superior to the culture of the colonised state. Fighting their wars, contributing to its wealth and working as slaves to serve the colonial nation, the colonised state never received anything in return except poverty, psychological issues and violence.

Fanon's Theories

Fanon's deployment to Algeria during the French-Algerian war resulted in his encounter with the black rebels of Algeria. After being in contact with them and hearing their stories, he felt that he resonated with its cause. All the theories and arguments that he formulated was based on his exposure with the blacks of Africa. He understood the conditions of the Malagasy, people from Congo, the Algerian, the Senegalese and many more, which was vital in the formulation of his theories and ideologies which later contributed to the publication of some of his most famous works. Compiled on the basis of the circumstances and conditions of the black people under colonial rule, it resonates with the issues of colonized nations and their communities.

Fanon takes into consideration a wide array of problems and issues that the colonised citizens face under colonial rule in *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin, White Masks*. He discusses issues like colonialism, colonial imposition, dependency complex, the issue of blackness, mask-wearing, dual consciousness and identity and many more (Fanon, 1986). The

things that he deducted from his analysis is not just relevant for the black colonised nations, but also for other colonies as well. Fanon argues about the violence that is evident in colonialism, that completely tries to erase the culture of the colonised nations by inflicting the culture of the home country upon them (Fanon 1963, p.36). It has drastic effects on the psyche of the colonised because the colonised citizen faces alienation, cultural erasure, identity crisis and cultural trauma (Fanon 1986, p.34). The imposition of the colonial nation's history, language, culture and religion on the colonized happens in a violent form by pointing out their inferiority (18). Fanon points out that, people develop double consciousness, wherein they mimic the coloniser and wears a mask to blend in the colonised society (51). They get reduced to the status of an object which creates a sense of inferiority among the colonised, leading to feelings of doubt and low self-esteem. Colonisation results in collective trauma leading to deep rooted psychological effects in the mind of the colonised (144).

The colonised citizens are forced to yield in front of the colonial powers by accepting as well as following their dictates. The native subject starts internalising the culture and practices of the coloniser because of the manipulative strategies used by them (Fanon 1963, p.15). According to Fanon, the coloniser makes the colonized feel inferior about the colour of their skin, the practises of their community, and manipulates them to believe in the salvation that comes through the acceptance of the colonizer's culture (15). Blackness gets associated to something dark and sinister, that is at the same time evil (Fanon 1986, p.189-190). The Black colonised subject feels uncomfortable in his own skin because now he is aware of the binary that exists, that is white (51). Fetishized and villainized by the white coloniser, the black colonised subject is dissected under the colonial gaze and a return to normalcy is far away. Fanon says that, for them replacing the white, becoming white or removing them completely becomes the only solution (51).

Hence the colonised citizens resort to mask-wearing and enacting multiple identities as a response to the power dynamics of the colonial structure. For the colonised, decolonization and resistance manifests in the form of violence because it helps them reclaim their identity (Fanon 1963, p.35). Fanon points out that memory becomes a form of resistance against colonialism and racism because it challenges dominant narratives and history as imposed by the colonisers. The collective memory of the community results in the shaping of a national and cultural identity that is essential for the colonised citizen's liberation (240).

The trauma that is accumulated by the colonised, shapes their identity and their experiences which is then passed down through generations which are included into the collective memory of the community. The different ways by which the black colonised community according to Fanon, reclaims their identity and their culture is through Negritude movements, challenging dominant narratives, redefining their culture, creating a national consciousness and by connecting to diasporic communities (222-223). Here culture becomes a tool for resistance and liberation, as it helps in overthrowing colonial oppression.

East Asian and Southeast Asian Fiction on War

In order to study the Southeast Asian War memories of women, this article makes use of three texts which are *When the Rainbow Goddess Wept* (1994) by Cecilia Manguerra Brainard, *The Mountains Sing* (2021) by Nguyen Phan Que Mai and *The Island of Sea Women* (2020) by Lisa See. Situated in the countries of Vietnam, Philippines and South Korea these three novels provide women's perspectives of war. The main themes that are dealt in these novels are with regard to trauma, memory, gendered perspective of war, resistance and survival.

The communities undergo collective trauma, cultural trauma and intergenerational trauma that makes it impossible for the rebuilding of the country. But these countries come back stronger and learn to move on even after all the violence that they have suffered. In *When the Rainbow Goddess Wept* during the generation of grandfather Lolo Peping, the Philippines

saw not just the overthrow of the Spanish Empire but also the coming of the Americans (Brainard 1994, p.19). Out of the violence, bloodshed and killings that they witnessed as well as committed very few returned alive. During the second generation of Lourdes and Angeling, the country sees a time of wealth and prosperity under the American rule. But the collective trauma that is witnessed by the generation of Lolo pepping is transferred to the unheeding ears of Angeling, Lourdes and others. The second-generation revels in the glory of the American rule unaware that the Americans are themselves looting the country (11,14). It is only when the Japanese invasion happens that the people of Philippines finally open their eyes and witness the hypocrisy of the American colonial powers. The trauma that is suffered by Angeling, Lourdes, Nida and Layden are passed onto Yvonne, who is then affected by the memories that is witnessed and transferred on to her. All the individual experiences of the community get transformed into collective trauma because it is the experiences of a community as a whole. Philippines experienced cultural suppression and violence, first under Spanish colonialism followed by the American colonialism and lastly the Japanese invasion. The onset of Spanish colonialism resulted in the cultural imposition of the colonised power which is clear as the novel progresses, because it portrays how the colonised subjects have accepted the colonizer's language, culture, religion, cuisine and identity. They do not remember or believe in the superstitions, myths, folklore or the stories that have been passed on for generations in their community because they have internalised the culture of the coloniser.

The women in the novel are strong, independent and display fortitude during periods of crisis. They're not afraid to sacrifice themselves in order to protect their family or other members of their community. A good example is Nida, who left with no other choice provides sexual favour to a Japanese officer in order to protect Angeling and Yvonne (102). Angeling was pregnant during the family's escape to a Guerilla hideout, but due to her disturbed and anguished state gives birth to a stillbirth. She is forced to bury her stillborn son in the forest

without proper burial and move on to the hideout as the Japanese were lurking around (56). Similarly, when faced with a Japanese soldier who demands for supplies from Angelina, she negotiates and stands her ground in order to protect the people within the resting place (72). Lourdes who stayed in Ubec with her daughter and Lolo Peping, also gets affected by the gruesome effects of war where she loses her ancestral home and father to the bombings, and is forced to survive in poverty (212). For Layden the only hope during this instability of war is the memory of her village and Inuk. The stories, songs, myths and superstitions become gateways to her past which she passes on to Yvonne in order to maintain its continuity (97).

Tracing the history of Vietnam through three generations of the Tran family, *The Mountains Sing* (2021) presents the story through the perspective of Tran Dieu Lan and Huong. The novel mainly consists the experiences of three characters prominently, they are Dieu Lan, Ngoc and Huong. Dieu Lan was the youngest in a family of four and compared to others in her village she was educated, smart and beautiful. She belonged to one of the richest families of her village, because of which she lived a protected and happy life with her family and even gets to marry the love of her life, Hung. Tragedy strikes her family when the World Wars start happening and Vietnam becomes a battleground for the colonial powers. She initially loses her husband and father to Japanese invasion, after which a famine follows. She doesn't have enough time to mourn them when tragedy strikes her again and again. During the famine, which they call as the "Great Hunger" the whole village along with the Tran family suffers due to poverty and hunger. While trying to search for food, they come across a field from where they try to get some food, but they are whipped mercilessly by the landowner Wicked Ghost and Dieu Lan's mother dies as a result (Mai 2021, p.89). While recovering from the famine and mourning their mother, Dieu Lan and her family are faced with Land Reforms introduced by the Communist propaganda. The slaves and workers band up together to start revolting against the landowners in order to kill or make them give up their land (140). Dieu Lan's brother and

eldest son get taken away as a result, whereas at their house she and her children were tied up to be killed. She escapes with her children, but is unable to provide for them or protect them during the journey, hence she is forced to give them up. She leaves them with different people along the way for their sustenance, and after finally reaching Saigon she finds means to reunite her family.

As years pass by, Ngoc (Dieu Lan's daughter), decides to become part of the Vietnam war in order to search for her husband who had joined the war as a soldier. She becomes a battlefield doctor in order to help the soldiers in need and provide them with medical assistance. But what she encounters is a gruesome war which is filled with violence, bloodshed and pure hatred. During the war the north part of Vietnam and the south part of Vietnam which are under the control of the communists and the Americans respectively, fought against each other. The colonial forces pit the people of their own country against each other. Trying to protect the soldiers and in order to remain hidden, Ngoc tries her very best but is captured by the Viet Cong soldiers. First, they attack her and then rape her in order to get information out of her, but they later leave her thinking she is dead (211). She survives the ordeal but finds that she is pregnant and she later aborts it. Ngoc, when she comes back after the war is mentally and physically affected. She is affected by guilt, shame and pain which leads to her having insomnia, depression, hallucinations and panic attacks (209-210). She is unable to bond with her mother, daughter or any other family members, instead she spent her time lying down, avoiding any contact and withering away (74). It takes a long time for her to come back to being normal again and discuss about her experiences to her mother and daughter.

Huong on the other hand is the recipient of the experiences of her grandmother and mother because she lives in close proximity to them. The experience that she accumulates is not just hers, but also consists of the experiences of the women around her. The women and the aftereffects of war, shape Huong into the person she grows up to be. This is especially clear

from the way she looks up to her grandmother and mother throughout her life. She gains inspiration, strength and love from them, which essentially motivates her to be the person she aspires to be.

The Island of Sea Women (2020) in contrast presents the experiences of women during the Japanese colonisation and resultant civil strife during the period of instability in Korea following colonisation. Presented through the stories of two women Young Sook and Mi-Ja, the story is situated in the background of Jeju, South Korea. The two girls form an unlikely friendship, even though they come from two different backgrounds. One grew up with the shame of being the daughter of a Japanese collaborator and the other grew up as the proud daughter of a Haenyeo. Initially introduced to each other as haenyeos working together in the same collective, their acquaintance gradually blooms into friendship. When one gets married to a Japanese collaborator who is abusive and rich, the other marries a school teacher who is loving and supportive (See 2020, p.108). Their lives take a turn for the worse, when one abandons the other during a time of need. Young Sook loses her sister-in-law, son and husband to the Bukchon massacre that eliminates a majority of their village (217). She is among the very few who survived the massacre, who had to bury her loved ones, along with many others in a mass grave (218). Young Sook is unable to forgive Mi-Ja, who abandoned her in a moment of need and forced her to choose between her children. Young Sook like many others is a victim of the cold war politics that prevailed over Jeju and the resultant rivalry between North Korea and South Korea.

After the tragedy that she experienced she returns to her village to recuperate and convey the bad news to her family members. Young Sook is unable to let go of her guilt, helplessness, anger and pain which she experienced witnessing the death of her loved ones on top of the betrayal of her friend. She is unable to forgive Mi-Ja till her deathbed, because she not only betrayed her but also separated her youngest daughter Joon Lee from her. Young Sook

had a special place for her youngest child whom she gave birth to after the massacre, for it is through her that she learnt to survive and move on. But this daughter even though very intelligent, bright and smart betrays her mother, by marrying Mi-Ja's son Yo-Chan. Joon Lee says that she has no memory of her father, hence it is nothing of her concern if she were to marry Mi-Ja's son (316). Young Sook cuts ties with her daughter and doesn't even know that her daughter died in America, until she hears about it from her granddaughter Clara. The pain and suffering Young Sook undergoes is not the result of her friend's actions but rather the effects of colonialism, which she takes a long time to accept. Young Sook realizes pretty late that her friend was also a victim of physical abuse from her husband Sang-Mun and it was not entirely her fault.

During the Japanese colonialism there were times when the soldiers would come to Young Sook's fields to forcefully take away the resources for their own use. The haenyeos were also forced to sell their produce directly to the Japanese at a cheaper rate. The women were forced to suppress their ethnic identity and accept the Japanese culture. Hence, they had to practise shamanism, speak Hangul, conduct rituals, pass on stories, myths and superstitions to the next generations in secret. Boys and men were forcefully conscripted into the army in order to fight for the Japanese in the World wars (104). People were taken away to work as slaves for the Japanese, where women became sex slaves or factory workers and men became slaves of the Imperial nation.

The justification that Japan used to colonise countries in the East was on the pretext of unifying the East and make it superior like Japan. All the colonial powers boasted and circulated the idea of superiority of their civilisation in their colonies in order to impose it in the colonies. The countries in the East were colonised by European colonial powers as well as the Japanese, as a consequence the ruin and destruction these countries suffered is

immeasurable. The colonial powers destroy the psyche of the nation and its citizens, alongside its resources which leads to a complete breakdown of the society.

Application of Fanon's Theories

Fanon's study of the colonised nations of Africa through a study of the colonial structures bring out groundbreaking discoveries which has contributed a lot to the field of postcolonial studies. His theories though presented from the perspective of Black colonised nations, resonates with the conditions of other colonised nations as well (Fanon 1963, p.10). This is so because the actions of the colonial powers inherently remain the same across its colonies. The problems and conditions faced may vary, but the nature of imposition, suppression and exploitation remains the same. He argues about the various concepts, facts and details that he gained by analysing the effect of power structures on the natives. Fanon claims that colonialism has a deep impact on the mind, body and society of the colonised which can be removed only through radical decolonization and liberation of the colonized (Fanon 1963, p.35).

Implementing Fanon's theories to Southeast Asian women's experiences in the selected novels, the research aims to study the effects of colonialism as explained by Fanon. A good example of how the manipulative strategies used by the colonial powers affect the psyche of the colonised individual is Nando. The character Nando in *When the Rainbow Goddess Wept*, believes in the American colonial forces as he studied in America and has blind faith in them. He believes like many others that the Americans will save Philippines and that they can be trusted (Brainard 1994, p.198). Angelina's family represents many other families in Philippines that has accepted and incorporated Spanish culture into their lives. They follow the culture, cuisine, language and religion of the Spanish, who colonised them in the first place. The natives of Jeju in *The Island of Sea Women*, have two faces, one to showcase in front of the Japanese soldiers and the other which they practise in secret. The war that happens between Communist

occupied Vietnam and the American occupied Vietnam points to how the citizens become mere objects stuck between the power play of powerful nations. This is a similar situation that occurs in Korea which gradually led to its bifurcation into North Korea and South Korea (Eyerman et al. 47). The colonisers also justify their actions because of a sense of superiority they develop due to their continuous exploitation. The colonized citizens like Sang-Mun and his father start performing roles in order to satisfy the colonial masters in order to gain whatever they can as a means of survival.

Fanon argues that, a reversion or reclamation of the country comes through the process of decolonization (Fanon 1963, p.35). The colonised survived and held on through various methods like holding on to the memories of the lost past, yielding, hiding and running away. They held on to the past like Young Sook, Dieu Lan and Lolo Peping even when it is filled with pain in order to help in the preservation and transfer of their communal memory. In many cases they yielded in front of the colonial forces like Mi-Ja to avoid trouble or for survival, which was not a sign of their submission but rather of persistence. Many had to resort to hiding or exile in order to help their families survive. Nando takes his family away from Ubec in order to protect them from the Japanese and works alongside the guerrillas in order to liberate their country. As Fanon's theories proclaim, they used violence in order to fight for liberation against the colonial powers (35). Mi-Ja's husband and many others believed in the same ideology of reclaiming their country by fighting back which eventually ends in a massacre. But sacrifice becomes an essential part for liberation as per Fanon (145). Dat, Thuan and Sang also fought for the same cause because they believed that a war could solve the problems in their country and liberate them from colonial influence. Many ran away into the countryside or remote villages in order to escape the bombings or killings as the soldiers targeted the most populous places.

According to Fanon, one of the first steps towards decolonization is reclamation of the culture by bringing back lost stories, myths, recipes, language, religion and practices. Which in turn leads to a creation of national consciousness that brings together people from all walks of life for the liberation of their country (233-234). The haenyeos kept preserving their culture by holding on to their songs, stories, superstitions and myths as haenyeos going for diving. Shamanism was also an important part of their culture which they practised in secret (See, 2020, p.30). Fanon shows that culture becomes a method of resistance because, the colonial cultural imposition happened because of the coloniser's view that the native's culture is redundant. So, when the native takes it back and restarts its practice again, it means that the colonised is rejecting the coloniser's culture and rebuilding their own (Fanon 1963, p.243). For Huong, it is through grandma Dieu Lan that she gets acquainted with her culture which is conveyed to her through stories, songs, myths and superstitions of her community. Dieu Lan teaches Huong how to cook, pray to the gods, light incense for the dead and many more. Laydan holds on to the memories and remembers the stories of her village that is lost to her forever. She passes them on to Yvonne and makes her promise to never forget them. Yvonne as a result of the promise she made to Laydan, keeps it within her and narrates it to people whenever she can so that they are passed on. The more restrictions and repression in imposed on the colonized, the feelings of national consciousness receive an urge which pushes them towards the path of liberation.

The citizens demanded for their rights and started actively participating in order to gain it back. They exercised their rights by demanding a platform to speak, express their needs and continue living as they know it. The cultural trauma, collective trauma and intergenerational trauma that is experienced by the citizens becomes a part of the collective memory which becomes an active tool in rebuilding the collective memory. Remembering therefore becomes an act of resistance and helps in reclaiming the identity of the community as explained by

Fanon (Fanon 1986, p.xxiii). The memories of Ngoc, Diue Lan and countless others act as the collective memory of the community which gets passed on to the next generations as accounts of war or history of Vietnam. Similarly, survivors like Young Sook remember the massacres and pass it on to the next generation as traumas suffered by their community. Years later, they build memorial halls with names of perished members in order to commemorate the massacre. Consequently, it becomes a concrete proof of the pain and suffering enduring by the community members which becomes an essential part of their history.

Creating counter- memory is another way of reclaiming the past and an important part of decolonisation as per Fanon's theories. The dominant and colonial narratives usually present a colourful and narcissistic perspective of history which glorifies their contributions to the colonised nations. The histories taught in the home country never include stories of violence, oppression, bloodshed, plunder and exploitation. By including the experiences of the community through the experiences of surviving members or soldiers, they write back to the centre questioning the legitimacy of their accounts. They even include the gruesome history into the curriculum of the future generations to remember the violence that their country has endured. They celebrate important days and commemorate important events in order to remind the community members of the tragedies that they lived through. As a result, creating a counter memory becomes essential in rebuilding the country from its ashes and to break out of the colonial perspective that the colonisers wish to paint with regard to its former colonies.

Conclusion

Studying the women's war memories from the perspective of Fanon provides insights on how wars impact societies, specifically women. It brings to light not just the experiences of women, but also how they become active contributors to the process of decolonisation. The stories of characters discussed here point out the various situations, hurdles and traumas they had to go through because of war. Even when they were going through something catastrophic,

they do not have time to mourn, rest or move on, because the war keeps on raging and it waits for no one. The selected novels portray the various experiences of women and how they get treated during war. The women encounter sexual exploitation, physical abuse, violence, suffering, segregation, stigma, oppression and psychological trauma during the process of war. Even though it is subjective, the memories and trauma that they encounter becomes a part of the collective memory and cannot be ignored. Inclusion of Fanon's theories point out the magnitude and gravity of the situations that the women have encountered during the war. It also shows the prominence and reusability of Fanon's theories in the perspective of Southeast Asian women's war memories. They add credibility and perspective to Fanon's theories in order to point out that his theories are not just restricted to black colonised citizen's conditions but also to the experiences of other colonised nations as well.

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