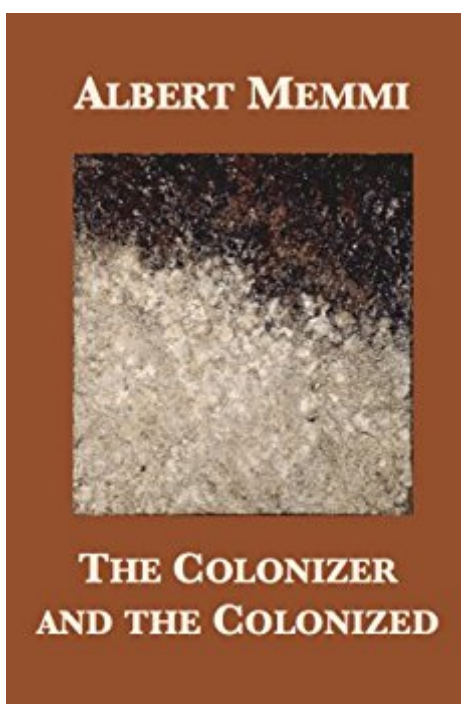


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The Colonizer And The Colonized



Synopsis

Written in 1956 when Morocco and Tunisia gained independence from France and soon after the Algerian war had started, this book describes the inescapable bonds between colonizer and colonized. Born in Tunis, Memmi is one of the colonized, but as a Jew, he identified culturally with the colonizer. He moved to France in 1956 and draws on his experience to analyze vividly how colonizer and colonized are mutually dependent, and ultimately both victims of colonialism. "The Colonizer and the Colonized [is] now regarded as a classic description of the inner dynamics of racism and colonialism, a work that in its economic and political sophistication, its sober perceptions of the interdependence of colonizer and colonized, rivals Franz Fanon's more famous but more romantic Black Skin, White Masks and The Wretched of the Earth." "Richard Locke, The New York Times" "The subject of colonialism has rarely been treated more lucidly and devastatingly than in this book." "Library Journal" "Widely influential." "New Yorker" "Confiscated by colonial police throughout the world since its 1957 publication, The Colonizer and the Colonized is an important document of our times, an invaluable warning for all future generations." "Los Angeles Times" "Albert Memmi's characterology of master and servant has a personal as well as a social dimension. The pecking order he describes has its accurate analogues in the lives of middle-class Americans." "Emile Capouya, Saturday Review

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Albert Memmi wrote many yeras ago this study of the relationship and dynamics between the colonizer and the colonized, but the lessons he imparts unto the reader are of great value to this day. Be it in racist, sexist or politically oppressive conditions, Memmi manages to pinpoint the psychological and social impact upon the individual. Trully a valuable piece of literature.

Memmi captures the contradictions and destructive forces of colonialism from an individual perspective, but more importantly he provides us with a work that transends his subject matter and allows for greater understanding of the manner in which structural and institutional forces of other forms of oppression and inequality affect us today. A classic statement pertaining to the human condition and the potential for liberation.

Where Hegel discussed the psycho-social relations between the 'master' and the 'slave,' Memmi turns toward the relations between Colonizer and Colonized. Like Aime Cesaire, Malcolm X, Franz Fanon, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and so many others of the mid 20th century anti-colonial movements, Memmi is interested in exposing the crippling psychological effects of the colonial relationship for all involved. His standpoint as a Jew in the middle of French North Africa allows him an inside/outside perspective which helps him to interpret the worlds of both colonizer and colonized. An exceptional work of anti-colonial theory, this book can open even stubbornly shut eyes.

Memmi's text, written in the midst of the colonial war in Algeria, is a powerfully useful text for examining later colonial insurrections (unlike the previous reader's claim), including the present Israel-Palestine conflict in which a clear line divides the homeland and the colony. Just as the war in Algeria drained France's economy, divided its society, and destroyed its moral fabric (and merely delayed the inevitable!) so too have the last two rounds of Intifadas (large numbers of both Israelis and Palestinians live in poverty for the sake of elite and unnecessary settlements). Memmi's words still resonate.

A must-read for everyone who wants to understand how power works, between cultures, social levels, and people in general. The colonization situation can be translated into almost every other human interaction where there is an unequal power.

Why is this book ignored? It's a classic. It deals with the psychology of colonialism from the perspective of the colonizer and the colonized. This book is unforgettable and I love that the introduction was written by Jean-Paul Sartre who I remember for also writing the introduction of Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, among others. He wrote his own book on colonialism called *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, which is also very good. For those who are interested, these are all highly recommended. There's also *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* by Octave Mannoni, which is highly recommended.

Classic book, polemic at the time of publication, about who the colonizer is, vis-à-vis the colonized, in a symbiotic relation to one another. Great for a further understanding of the psychological and sociological consequences of colonization.

The only reason I had this book was for school. We didn't really use it as much but I still read it when I needed to. It's not bad but I can't see myself picking this book unless it's for academic reasons.

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