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ABDERRAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA
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Postcolonialism in Edward Zwick's Blood Diamond's Perspective (2006)

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**Submitted by
ZENATI YAHIA**

**Supervised by
MR. MEZIANI MOURAD**

**Members of the Jury
Chair: Dr. Professeur Kaci
Supervisor: MR. MEZIANI.M
Examiner: Mr. Yousfi**

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Abstract

The following dissertation is concerned with the analysis of diverse themes related to Africa's underdevelopment in Edward Zwick's movie *Blood Diamond* (2006). Alongside depicting the pillar aspects of Postcolonialism, the dishonesty and humanity featured in the movie performed by Leonardo DiCaprio, and how the Hollywood industry visualises the underdeveloped countries. It fundamentally explores the corruption happening within African countries, precisely Sierra Leone, where the movie illustrates the state's social image after civil war, and how the dark side of the diamond industry is shown. I have argued that *Blood Diamond* illustrates the problems that Africans encounter, whether internal conflicts, exploitation, or loss of identity. Hence, the American implications are significantly present, more so, the atrocious effects of Postcolonialism.

The movie delivers at the end a message to the audience about redemption, justice, and the misuse of the power of advanced nations, along with the values that can be found in hardship times.

Keywords: Justice, injustice, corruption, exploitation, Ideology, persecution, humanity, colonialism, marginalised groups, violence, *Blood Diamond* (2006)

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to all of:

- . All my family Zenati.
- . To all the teachers of English of department.
- . To all LLCE Master II students of all specialities.
- . To all friends.

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Résumé

La thèse suivante analyse divers thèmes liés au sous-développement de l'Afrique dans le film *Blood Diamond* (2006) d'Edward Zwick. Elle décrit les piliers du postcolonialisme, la malhonnêteté et l'humanité mises en avant dans le film interprété par Leonardo DiCaprio, ainsi que la manière dont l'industrie hollywoodienne perçoit les pays sous-développés. Elle explore en profondeur la corruption qui sévit dans les pays africains, notamment en Sierra Leone, où le film illustre l'image sociale de l'État après la guerre civile, et la manière dont le côté obscur de l'industrie du diamant est mis en évidence. J'ai soutenu que *Blood Diamond* illustre les problèmes rencontrés par les Africains, qu'il s'agisse de conflits internes, d'exploitation ou de perte d'identité. Par conséquent, les implications américaines sont clairement présentes, et plus encore, les effets atroces du postcolonialisme. Le film délivre au public un message final sur la rédemption, la justice et l'abus de pouvoir des nations avancées, ainsi que sur les valeurs que l'on retrouve dans les moments difficiles.

Generale Introduction

Introduction:

“The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart.”

Chinua Achebe. Things Fall Apart (1958)

Despite being among the largest continents of the world, Africa is known for inholding a significant portion of impoverished countries, whether socially or economically. However, some are wealthier in terms of natural sources like soil, salt, and precious stones.

Those countries of the likes of Sierra Leone have been known for owning diamond fields around its south-east and east of its location, with drainage areas of rivers in the Kono, Kenema and Bo districts.

Accordingly, most advanced countries seek those low tiers for their goods in order to seize their lands, conquer their proprieties and impose their ideologies and cultures, after extinguishing their belongings. Such conduct is also called Post-colonialism, which can be referred to the period where a country is still under colonial state.

Therefor, it is a maneuver planned for the purpose of disassociating a civilization from its fundamental criteria such as traditions, culture, and social identity. African novelists portrayed the true essence of this strategy utilized by the colonizers who generally are referred

as “White Men”; who are always depicted as civilized, prestigious, intellectual, and superior individuals that came to their home in order to bring forth improvements and prosperity, thus in the meantime, they entered their territory for the sole objective of reshaping the colonized to their will.

Moreover, a considerable number of African writers have described that movement as a vicious memory that would be engraved in the minds and bodies of persecuted African civilians; Frantz Fanon confirms in one of his quotes that experiencing a severe occurrence in life is what reforms the man, hence, creating a newself. However; after being exposed to fearsome phases through wars, the mindset changes completely to the point civilians could become hostile toward each other, especially when there are political implications. In Zwick’s movie *Blood Diamond* this aspect of postcolonialism is encapsulated by the sight of mercenaries coming to a small village killing and amputating civilians hands preventing them from voting, while abducting little children to convert them into young soldiers for a corrupted group pretending to serve their country. Additionally, among the pillar aspects forging Postcolonialism there is identity crises, which refers to the loss of whatever defines the person, culture, beliefs, and home, or more like the factors that originated the deprivation of those elements.

Edward Zwick captured the truest significance of identity crises during the sequence illustrating abducted children forced to kill innocent civilians, alongside other atrocities to the point they would barely recognize themselves, and even less their kinship. Therefore, converting the youngest in order to obtain benefits when they grow afterwards is what solidifies the dominance of ulterior powers even if not currently present, and so, guarantee an absolute obedience from their lands by possessing children, hence letting them without a future, and by that, having a civilization collapsed, with nothing more but a false hope and direction coming from whom they thought brought prosperity and charity to their home.

Accordingly, the black men are pushed to the extent of believing that there is no salvation outside of following the footsteps of white men, which is disgraceful, considering how ironic the opposite is truthful, and in reality, it is the white men who depend on the African inhabitants and their goods.

Consequently, this research of paper comes forth to bring about the evidence that Sierra Leone, as any other African country victim of postcolonialism is dissolved by falsehood and non-union of black citizens, and more significantly their loss of identity, as well as the Western's influence and its self-absorbed desire to possess wealth.

Blood Diamond is a Hollywood movie adaptation showcasing the performance of well-recognized actors such as Leonardo DiCaprio in the role of Danny Archer. It takes the form of a long journey in which Danny helps Solomon who is a surviving mine worker that escaped, to rejoin with his family in exchange for a buried pink diamond with invaluable worth.

Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) is a foundational text in postcolonial studies, offering a profound analysis of the psychological and structural effects of colonialism. Its insights are highly relevant for analyzing films like *Blood Diamond* (2006), which dramatizes the enduring impacts of colonial exploitation in contemporary Africa.

Fanon argues that colonialism is inherently violent, and that decolonization is necessarily a violent, cathartic process for the colonized, as well as the colonial rule distortion of the psyche affecting both colonizer and colonized, leading to alienation, internalized inferiority, and "double consciousness". Fanon calls for the development of a national culture rooted in indigenous practices, as a means of resisting colonial assimilation and reclaiming agency. He warns that post-independence, new elites may perpetuate exploitation, mirroring colonial structures.

Therefore, my work takes into consideration the features of postcolonialism are represented in the movie, and how the characters displayed the archetype atmosphere of living in such period. This research paper will be discussing the major Postcolonial themes as portrayed in the movie under the sharp guidance of the following questions:

How are the superiority and inferiority complexes responsible for the deteriorated status most African countries live through?

How does the diverse set of characters portray the loss of identity?

How does the movie show a faithful assemble of footage featuring the circumstances of Postcolonial era?

I have divided this dissertation into two major chapters. The first one addresses the movie's social and historical backgrounds. I have the intention of delving on the roots of the main concepts and how are they demonstrated. It also announces the motives and reasons that led to go through postcolonialism. It provides a study that visually gathers a considerable amount of information regarding the movie and its plot.

The second chapter is entirely dedicated to the analysis of the movie's visual representation of Post-colonialism pillar themes such as loss of identity, exploitation and corruption. The subsequent is a righteous representation of the western's true colors and the real reasons that initiated their raids on African colonies, and later on, inserting a pivotal notion that will make the inhabitants live through a detestable aftermath.

Chapter I:

Historical Background of African

Postcolonialism and Sierra Leone's Conversion

Introduction:

As already announced in the general introduction, the coming chapter is concerned with the origins and historical depiction of Sierra Leone under poscolonial retrospective. The main center of the focus will be put on the sequences representing the results of this movement. This chapter reveals three major themes or pillars of postcolonialism which are: Othering, Racial Representation and Stereotyping, alongside Loss of Identity.

Some African writers and philosophers will be taken into account to consider more the later said themes, including Chinua Achebe, Frantz Fanon, and many more. Their thoughts on the main themes will be introduced. Furthermore, much importance will be given to Zwick and his views of the same elements.

Postcolonialism is generally described as a mark, scar from the past that had left an immeasurable impact on both people and their home. It is also called Post-colonial theory and it is the critical academic study of the cultural, political and economic consequences of colonialism and imperialism, focusing on the aftermaths of human control and exploitation of colonized people and their lands.

Postcolonialism marks caused by colonial practices are considerably intense to a degree that pushed most African writers to take them as a gimmick to create their works. Moreover, it is generally found that there are people subjugated, forced to accept the imposed ideology brought by the colonizers. Be it through language, culture, religion and even identity. They are forced to operate with every element that go to contradict their own at the price of converting for the sake of adapting to the current status of living.

Consequently, due to the effects of imperialism and as much as did postcolonialism, the colonized could not obtain self-sufficiency, and so, unable to develop themselves. Additionally, among the pillar concepts of colonialism consist of deforming the economy,

altering the civilization, and inserting Christianity, for the sole and pertinent motif, which is territory expansion, alongside perpetuating subordination and preserving the control over. Therefore, solidifying Zwick's perspective on the outcome of his movie by associating those elements with his characters, and the delivery of their performances. Therefore, most items generated by wars and conflicts are transformed into abstract concepts and demeanor that people ended up stuck with and stayed there so that consequently, the next generations will be affected as well, making them regret their ancestors past and be ashamed of being a descendent of them. The idea most colonizers try to apply is not only to take the goods and invade the lands for the prosperity, but also overwhelming people's minds and let them instore their self-proclaimed greatness and superiority in order to dismembering them from their origins and having corrupted mindsets that direct them into rejecting their kinds due to believing they are the inferior class and no utopia can be granted in their location without the help of the white man in their righteous place.

This chapter is important for it revolves around the major critical concepts of postcolonialism and the perpetual possession the white men have over Africian civilizations. The latter stand at the center of my analysis of the movie: Blood Diamond. Moreover, it would be helpful in understanding the protagonists 's ways of thinking as truthful Post-colonialism victims.

The movie does not only deal with postcolonialism features and how impactful they were. It is also noteworthy that Edward Zwick's movie also addresses personal problems that overwhelm humans in general. It demonstrates the flux of emotions that initiate commitments or disbeliefs according to the situation, and how people react at every given circumstances.

I. Othering

Othering refers to the social or psychological ways in which one group excludes or marginalizes another group. The term was highlighted by Gayatri Spivak for the process by which imperial discourse creates its “others.” Whereas the Other corresponds to the focus of desire or power in relation to which the subject is produced, the other is the excluded or “mastered” subject created by the discourse of power. Othering tends to exemplify the various ways in which the subordinate subjects are produced.

According to Spivak, othering is a process whereby individuals and groups are treated and marked as different and inferior from the dominant social group. It refers to the ways we define and marginalize groups as essentially different from a presumed “norm.” Othering acts as if difference is absolute and unbridgeable. It casts the Other as deviant, inferior or threatening. Othering justifies exclusion, discrimination or even violence against the marginalized group.

According to Mariam Webster, the “other” is defined as “Being the one remaining or not included”. (Webster,2020,p.1) The other is defined as the person” opposing to us, the self and them”. The “Other” is maintained stigmatized and excluded from society. They are stigmatized and segregated from the majority. The “Other” is the “Identity” [...] is defined by faults, devalued and susceptible to discrimination” (Staszak, 2008, p.1). The term “Other” has several different definitions depending on which type of the “Othering” a person is using to discriminate against the significant other. The “Other” could be defined as the unknown significant other. It could be the categorized or the narrow categorizations created about groups in society(Ahmed,2012).

The idea of “Othering” exists because of the existence of others in the society, where the people exist together. The other is not someone that is not part of us but is someone or a group

of people that are intentionally being situated outside the society. The 'Other, Otherness, and Othering' are all different interdisciplinary concepts that indicate a negative effect on the subject being. Othering is a concept that is related to the idea of identity. The identity of an individual is usually the reason a person is being Othered (Dervin, 2016). "Otherness is a result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group ("Us," the self) constructs one or many dominate out-groups ("Them," Other) by stigmatizing a difference; real or imagined, presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination" (Staszak, 2008, p. 2). As a person identifies themselves as a male, they are othering themselves from being a female, as a person identifies themselves as white, they are denying the fact of being a person of color. The idea of otherness is not always targeted towards a group it could also be targeted towards oneself for itself. The identification given could oust or include the self in a specific group (Staszak, 2008).

The concept of "Masculinity at the margins", which was the center of studies occupying hegemonic ideals that explores how young marginalized ethnic minority men experience othering, marginality, and resistance in forming their masculine identities. These men are often positioned as "the other" through intersectional othering, which includes exoticist fascination and racialized stereotypes, leading to social exclusion and challenges in accessing dominant masculine ideals. Young marginalized ethnic minority men respond to othering in two main ways: Capitalizing on their "other" status, sometimes embracing hypermasculine performances as a form of resistance and identity assertion. Disidentifying with imposed stereotypes, claiming normality and rejecting marginalization to assert agency. In digital and social contexts, such as among ethno-religious minority youths in Flanders, these men perform masculinities that negotiate racialized discourses and hegemonic norms, often adopting hypermasculine traits to reclaim agency within constrained socio-cultural environments. For Black men in marginalized rural areas, masculinity ideology is shaped by

childhood adversity and socioeconomic instability, influencing whether they endorse reputation-based (aggressive, protective) or respect-based (responsible, equitable) masculinities. These forms of masculinity can serve as coping mechanisms but may also create tensions in mainstream social contexts like education or work. Overall, masculinity at the margins is deeply intertwined with power structures, racialization, and socioeconomic factors, where young men navigate and resist marginalization by performing complex, context-dependent masculine identities.

Edward Said's concept of "The Other" primarily refers to how the West (the Self) constructs the East or the Orient (the Other) as fundamentally different, inferior, and exotic. This binary opposition—Self versus Other—is central to Said's critique of Orientalism, where the West defines itself as rational, superior, and familiar, while portraying the Orient as strange, irrational, and subordinate. Said argues that this Othering process is a deliberate Western construct that lumps diverse Eastern cultures into a single, simplified category called "the Orient," which serves to justify Western domination and colonialism by portraying the East as needing Western control and guidance. The Other is depicted as less than fully human often feminized, weak, or savage, while the West claims the role of the "proper self" or superior civilization. This dynamic of Othering legitimizes Western supremacy by emphasizing differences that exclude the colonized peoples from normative humanity and self-representation, reinforcing their subjugation and silencing their voices. Said's work reveals how these representations are not natural but constructed through cultural, political, and intellectual domination. In summary, according to Edward Said, "The Other" is the constructed image of the East as alien, inferior, and exotic, created by the West to assert power and justify colonial rule. This Othering denies the complexity and humanity of Eastern peoples, framing them as objects of Western knowledge and control rather than autonomous subjects.

II. White Supremacy

White Supremacy is a self-righteous idea brought by the whites themselves during pre-colonial era, and continued through the current days, but most likely post-colonial period. Basically, it is the belief that white people are superior to those of other races, thus should dominate them. The belief favors the maintenance and defense of any power and privilege held by whites. (Internet Wikipidia)

White Supremacy is also a form of racism that was brought forth to maintain cultural, social, political, and historical fields, preserving like that the advantage for white people. (In other terms, it is an ideology that exists only to bring about glory and greatness to white men)

It can have many definitions, and interpretations over the significance of this ideology, but there is one certitude; it is a beneficial contribution and helpful upper hand that white people possess. Consequently, any resistance or contradiction by non-whites against this self-proclaimed belief will not be permitted, and there will be severe retaliations. White supremacy in postcolonialism is understood as a central and enduring structure that shapes global and local power relations long after formal colonial rule has ended. It is rooted in a colonial worldview where white colonizers considered themselves superior to colonized peoples, constructing racial hierarchies that persist in contemporary societies.

It is not just a fringe ideology but the organizing logic of Western modernity, embedded in political, social, and cultural institutions worldwide. This system perpetuates racial inequalities through violence, cultural conditioning, and exclusion. Scholars argue that whiteness must be theorized as a pervasive power structure established through colonial violence, which continues to shape race, class, gender, and knowledge hierarchies in postcolonial societies. Postcolonial literature and theory explore how white supremacy affects identity formation and racial desire, often destabilizing white privilege and exposing the

colonial legacy's psychological effects. White supremacy reacts to globalization by fostering emotional insecurities and fantasies about racial and civilizational threats, fueling nationalist and far-right movements that seek to restore an idealized white past. Efforts to dismantle white supremacy require not only redistributing resources but also challenging the very identity and privileges associated with whiteness and colonial power, including questioning national belonging and social mobility. In sum, white supremacy in postcolonialism is a multifaceted, persistent system that continues to influence global power dynamics, identity, and social structures, necessitating critical engagement and decolonial strategies to address its legacies.

Influential thinkers like Frantz Fanon analyzed white supremacy as a power structure where white people consider themselves superior, and black people are socially constructed as inferior, fueling ongoing racial tensions and identity struggles in postcolonial contexts.

Fanon argues that white supremacy is not just a set of beliefs but a systemic structure that violently enforces racial hierarchies by annihilating the body, psyche, and culture of the colonized. This violence manifests in the colonizer's domination and the colonized's struggle for dignity and selfhood. The book traces how racist stereotypes—such as portraying Black people as physically crude, oversexualized, and intellectually inferior—are internalized by Black subjects, causing psychological damage and a desire to emulate whiteness in what Fanon calls "lactification," a futile attempt to become European in thought and behavior. Fanon's work also highlights the dialectical relationship between colonizer and colonized, showing how white supremacy shapes both groups' identities in a "perverse embrace" of mutual constitution under political power. His critique extends to the cultural and linguistic impositions that reinforce white supremacy, emphasizing the need for a revolutionary break from these imposed identities to achieve true liberation and a new humanism beyond racial categories. In summary, Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* exposes white supremacy as a

violent, embodied, and systemic force that dehumanizes Black people by imposing racialized identities, psychological inferiority, and cultural domination. His analysis remains influential in critical race theory and postcolonial studies for its profound insight into the lived experience of racism and the struggle against colonial and racial oppression.

III. Identity Crises

In a facilitated way of comprehending, identity crisis, or the loss of identity is a period of uncertainty and confusion in which a person's sense of identity becomes insecure, typically due to a change in their expected aims or role in society.(Dictionary)

In psychology, identity crisis is a stage in Erik Erikson's theory of personality development. This stage happens during adolescence. It is a period of deep reflection and examination of various perspectives on oneself.

The stage of psychosocial development in which identity crisis may occur is called "Identity cohesion vs. role confusion". During this stage, adolescents are faced with physical growth, sexual maturity, and integrating ideas of themselves and about what others think of them. They therefore form their self-image and endure the task of resolving the crisis of their ego identity. Successful resolution of the crisis depends on one's progress through previous developmental stages, centering on issues such as trust, autonomy, and initiative.

Erikson's interest in identity began in childhood. Born Ashkenazi Jewish, he felt that he was an outsider. His later studies of cultural life among the Yurok of northern California and the Sioux of South Dakota helped formalize his ideas about identity development and identity crisis. Erikson described those going through an identity crisis as exhibiting confusion. Moreover, based on these precedent terms, Identity crisis can be both originated from a personal experience, or an emergence from environment norms. It also refers to a state of

confusion and uncertainty experienced by an individual who is unable to establish a clear and stable sense of self. It can be caused by a disruption of self-continuity and is often associated with severe psychiatric identity disorders that are characterized by feelings of emptiness, meaninglessness, and fragmented perceptions of self and others.(From: Self-Identity after Brain Injury.[2014]

Identity crises are significant moments of self-reflection and exploration that individuals encounter throughout their lives, as outlined by Erik H. Erikson's psychosocial development theory. According to Erikson, identity development unfolds across eight stages, each characterized by a specific conflict or crisis that must be resolved to facilitate personal growth. These crises emerge from the interplay between an individual's desire for individuality and their need for social belonging, making them essential to the formation of a coherent identity.

The most notable periods for identity crises occur during adolescence and middle adulthood. In adolescence, individuals grapple with the transition from childhood to adulthood, exploring various roles and social affiliations, which can lead to confusion if not successfully navigated. Similarly, midlife crises often arise as individuals confront changes associated with aging and reflect on their life choices, sometimes leading to psychological distress.

Beyond these stages, research suggests that identity crises can also occur in emerging adulthood, a distinct phase characterized by ongoing exploration of identity and life goals. Overall, identity crises are a normative aspect of human development, influenced by cultural and social contexts, and they play a crucial role in the ongoing process of self-discovery and personal integration throughout life. Identity crises are significant moments of self-reflection and exploration that individuals encounter throughout their lives, as outlined by Erik H. Erikson's psychosocial development theory. According to Erikson, identity development unfolds across eight stages, each characterized by a specific conflict or crisis that must be

resolved to facilitate personal growth. These crises emerge from the interplay between an individual's desire for individuality and their need for social belonging, making them essential to the formation of a coherent identity.

Conclusion

Sierra Leone went through numerous factors that contributed to the disability of its citizens, whether through terrorism or social restrictions. It prevented any kind of positive demeanor that could have led the country to a prosperous outcome, which exposes an accurate depiction of postcolonial state.

From the colonized point of view, the country was emphasized through a radical change in social and governmental status. The internal conflict which was prior to the current position was also a major takeaway that affected most civilians.

Like most African countries, Sierra Leone was perfectly portrayed through Hollywood movies as an underdeveloped civilization.

Blood Diamond is a concise representation of Postcolonialism. I will try to analyze the major postcolonial themes residing in it through the views of multiple experts in postcolonial studies.

Chapter 2 :

Postcolonialism in Blood Diamond



Introduction :

This chapter explores the recurring themes of postcolonialism present in Edward Zwick's movie "Blood Diamond" (2006). It initially deals with how Americans interpret the aftermath of Postcolonialism through Hollywood movie industry, represent and articulate the image of a reshaped country and civilization. Moreover, it aims at shedding light on the three main concepts, in the previous chapter: White supremacy, othering, and Loss of identity.

In this chapter, I will put emphasis on the different factors that brought the alteration of Sierra Leone's civilization in the movie, followed by the contributions of the characters synthesizing the complexities and hardships faced throughout the entirety of the movie.

I have decided to divide this chapter into three major parts. I start first by giving some insights about the movie and the ideologies portrayed. Then I move to the main goal of this paper, the results and side effects of Postcolonialism, mainly through the protagonist's perspective, across his journey.

I. White Supremacy:

White supremacy, as examined in postcolonial studies, refers to the enduring structures, ideologies, and practices that privilege whiteness and perpetuate racial hierarchies established during colonialism. Postcolonial theory interrogates how these legacies continue to shape societies, knowledge production, and global power relations, even after the formal end of colonial rule.

White Supremacy is also a form of racism that was brought forth to maintain cultural, social, political, and historical fields, preserving like that the advantage for white people. (In other terms, it is an ideology that exists only to bring about glory and greatness to white men)

It can have many definitions, and interpretations over the significance of this ideology, but there is one certitude; it is a beneficial contribution and helpful upper hand that white people possess. Consequently, any resistance or contradiction by non-whites against this self-proclaimed belief will not be permitted, and there will be severe retaliations.

Likely, it is a common occurrence for white men to use violence in order to protect and supply their egocentric rights and prestige. It has been applied ever since it appeared during European Colonialism. A great number of writers and philosophers have discussed, enlightened the nature of this doctrine, among them; Frantz Fanon.

According to Frantz Fanon, violence is justified by whites because they are the righteous ones, elected to accomplish greater things in the world, thus every other opinion or contribution will not be considered, and to some degree, it will not be regarded on whichever concerns politics, religion, education.... Etc.

Frantz Fanon says:” The oppressed will always believe the worst about himself”. The oppressed would be represented by someone other than white men, so any affirmation coming from white people about the others would always be correct, hence others do not have the

right to take position and defend themselves because they are indoctrinated by the inferiority mindset that is overshadowed by the imposed superiority of white men.

In conclusion, even if black people could have morals or whatever means they could use to enrich themselves, due to their inferiority complex, they would not be able to challenge or go against the white men since they are the top class. Frantz Fanon puts it clear:” For the black man there is only one destiny, and it is white”. Even if black men succeed or achieve an accomplishment, the recognition would be brought on the name of white men, unless it is viewed on the negative sight, and by this meaning that blacks are seen as primitive and uncivilized without the white man’s support and assistance.

Consequently, white supremacy is more than an ideology or belief. It is a fundamental concept that came to exist for the sake of delivering prosperity and creating a world full of salvation in the name of white people, and so, making any other category of people like black men underappreciated by everyone, even themselves.

McDermott & Samson aptly state that “one cannot fully understand the existence of racism and racial inequality without paying close attention to the formation and maintenance of white racial identity” (2005: 246). Along these lines, it is essential to specifically analyze how whiteness is constituted to better comprehend the racial phenomena at work in ‘white savior’ narratives, which rely heavily on the centrality of a white protagonist.

Blood Diamond is a significant example of films that deals with white supremacy, as well as violence. Numerous Hollywood movies handle the same effigy. Since the film is an adaptation of real events, concerning a true story of Sierra Leone’s status, which was already known among Americans. The movie is a 2006 American political war thriller film directed and co-produced by Edward Zwick and starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Connelly, and

Djimon Hounsou. The title refers to diamonds mined in war zones and sold the finance conflicts, and thereby profit warlords and diamond companies around the world.



Figure 01: Peaceful daily life



Figure 02: Rebels attack

The beginning of the movie gives a portrayal of an ordinary life between a father and son returning from the later's school, Solomon and Dia Vendy. The two were enjoying their monotonous life, alongside talking about their country's current situation, and what the kid learns in his school about the future of their lives once the civil war is over. Those were moments of tranquility prior to the assault of their home by an armed group of rebels led by a man named Poison. The subsequent would capture civilians after killing many others. Solomon was taken after successfully saving his family, while forced seeing them flee without him.



Figure03: No hands, no future



Figure04: Diamond mines

As such sequence, it enhances one of the previous themes of Postcolonialism, in which the employment of restricted, marginal groups in order to keep them silent and not commit any sort of interferences threatening the existent imposed system. As shown in the following footage, the fate of the few inhabitants kept alive was revealed; they would be aligned in groups to be either amputated for political reasons mid-war, or directed to the to the diamond mines to extract as many precious stones as they can get. Solomon was about to receive the first treatment seconds before the leader changes his mind and decided to take him work in the mines, deemed to be more useful there due to his promising physique.



Figure05: Government Implication



Figure06: Diamond industry higher ups

As such sequence, it enhances one of the previous themes of Postcolonialism, in which the employment of restricted, marginal groups in order to keep them silent and not commit any sort of interferences threatening the existent imposed system.



Figure07: Subtle insubordination



Figure08: Betrayals execution

While the in first minutes of the movie shows the newest every day life of Sierra Leone's habitants, it is transitioned afterwards to a conference speaking about the origins and history of the use of valuable substances located in Africa, questioning the nature of the imports, as well as the fortune spent on weaponry in the diverse zones of conflicts. The next image represents the responsible of precious stones handlers in the name of Amercian company assigned of the diamon d industry; Mr. Van De Kaap and Mr. Simmons.

Around the same time, back to the events of the country's current status, the civilians are obliged to serve the rebels army by gathering diamonds from watered, muddy, and soiled spaces, alongside being told that the R.U.F (Revolutionary United Front) had delivered them and their home from the white masters robbing their lands. Therefore, any sign of opposition or contradictory advances would be punished, as seen in the late illustration where it shows one of the workers stealing one little found diamond and then getting killed by the leader of the rebels.

Furthermore, it reinforces the previous statements that deal with how a civilization can be altered after going through colonization outcomes. Chinua Achebe says:

“Those who mismanage our affairs would silence our criticism by pretending they have facts not available to the rest of us. Our best weapon against them is not to marshal facts, of which they are truly managers, but passion. Passion is our hope and strenght.”

Basically, if a country loses the boundaries of their own kinship, the detachment will be more easier, thus internal conflicts lead to the dissolve of the past civilization, and let place to a new one shaped with insecurities.



Figure09: The pink diamond



Figure10: Sneaky trick

The pivotal or pioneer moment of the movie was when Solomon found the unusual precious stone and hid it intelligently at once in a different way after seeing the mistake of his late comrade when he tried to outsmart their master. Hence, as seen in the following effigy, he placed the diamond between his toes and took pemission to leave the mines for a short period, while the rest was distracted by a technical issue regarding the pressure of water. The later would be followed and observed by the leader as he was not trusted, however fortunately, he did not get caught .



Figure11: White Involvement



Figure12: Goat Conspiracy

Meanwhile, around the same period of time, a man arrives through plane, and makes his debut in the following sequences of the movie. It was a former mercenary, Danny Archer who came to trade some precious stones with a fraction of the rebellion army in exchange of some goods. Furthermore, he would try later on to bypass the Libarian frontlines with the diamonds reclaimed from his business co-worker inserted inside the skin of the transported goats, as such, he would be arrested by the soldiers despite trying to bribe them.

A derivative thought from white supremacy. A sort of cliché delivered and practiced by the American movie industry. Throughout its history, there have been many adaptations and changes made to Western film genre to keep its relevance, but the white male figure of the hero has remained a constant presence in reflecting societal and cultural trends, this character has also been adapted as he continues to represent ideal masculinity.

The "White savior narrative" is also another reference that marks this phenomenon in American films. It is a cinematic trope in which a white central character rescues non-whites that can be as important as the white or less prominent from unfortunate circumstances. This recurs in an array of genres in American cinema, where the white protagonist is put into retrospective among non-whites interactions and dilemmas. The narrative trope of the white savior is one way the mass communication medium of cinema represents the sociology of race and ethnic relations, by presenting abstract concepts such as morality as characteristics

innate, racially and culturally, to white people, not to be found in non-white people. This white savior is often portrayed as a man who is out of place within his own society, until he assumes the burden of racial leadership to rescue non-white minorities and foreigners from their suffering. As such, white savior stories have been described as essentially grandiose, exhibitionistic, and narcissistic fantasies.



Figure13: Quick escape



Figure14: Mutual agreement

Later on, throughout some other events, after being set free from prison, Danny overheard the conversation between Solomon and Poison, in which he got the information of the existence of a buried diamond with incalculable worth, that only Solomon knows where it is located. Consequently, once Danny finds out the goal of his newfound acquaintance, they both made a deal to benefit each other; one would get the stone, the other would be rejoined with his son.

With the assistance of the previous illustrations, Zwick subtly implied the provenance of power dynamic between white men and black men. For instance, the parallelism present in the two character cloths, one wearing each other's distinctive colors, as well as the dominance of Danny over Solomon for his advanced knowledge of the perilous situation they both were, making him forced to follow his orders in order to escape. “. . . being on the wrong side of a pissing contest is never a good thing.” (Mark M. Bello, *Betrayal In Blue*)

In other words, both of them would be at a disadvantage if they started arguing or contradicting each other.



Figure15: Liberation of anger



Figure16: Rotten to the core colonel

After rescuing Dia, the son of Solomon. Danny is compelled to force the later to reveal the place where the diamond was buried, as he went shouting at his face, pushing and shaking him in all senses, otherwise they would all be killed by colonel Coetzee. Due to the obstinacy of the father, he had no choice but to use Dia as last-resort by threatening him to kill him unless he unearths the diamond.

Accordingly, Fanon justifies this conduct as a necessity, in which he says: "...Violence alone, violence committed by the people, violence organized and educated by its leaders, makes it possible for the masses to understand social truths and gives the key to them..." (Fanon, 118)

Once there, Solomon was still hesitant since he did not want to trust the colonel, so he was buying time by digging in another place, while Danny would shoot him and end his life alongside his other soldiers when they were distracted.



Figure 17: White Humanism

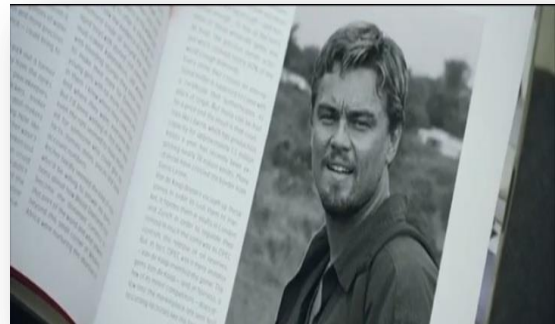


Figure 18: White Savior

In the illustrated images, the true colors of the American face were put on sight, hence representing the evilness and the greedy ambitions of the American government. Except, when Danny protected the father and son alike even though he was heavily injured during the battle. In that scene, Zwick illustrated the symbolism behind the pink diamond, since that color is the color of universal love of oneself and of others. It represents friendship, affection, harmony, inner peace, and compassion. Moreover, although he was no different than colonel Coetzee, arrogant, selfish, self-righteous, and egocentric at first, when he saw his last moments approaching, he was willing to hand back the diamond to its founder, and help them escaping the danger for good through his escort. Furthermore, the last image indicates that Danny Archer will be remembered by Solomon and his family as the one and only white man that was concerned with a third world country, as he died fighting other white men to protect Sierra Leone people.

II. Othering:

Othering in *Blood Diamond* (2006) consists of that reflects Western perceptions of Africa and Africans during the Sierra Leone civil war. The film portrays the conflict through the lens of Western characters and narratives, often reinforcing stereotypes and the notion that "the West must save Africa." For example, Danny Archer, a white Zimbabwean mercenary, tells Solomon Vandy, a Black African fisherman, "Without me, you are just another black man in Africa," which explicitly highlights the film's depiction of racial and cultural othering. The narrative juxtaposes Archer's cynical, self-interested worldview against Solomon's emotional and familial devotion, emphasizing a divide between Western individualism and African communal struggles. This contrast both humanizes Solomon but also frames the story through Archer's perspective, which can perpetuate a savior complex and orientalist tropes. Moreover, the film's portrayal of child soldiers, brutal warlords, and the chaotic violence of the diamond trade underscores a depiction of Africa as a place of suffering and moral decay, which is a common aspect of othering in Western media. While *Blood Diamond* raises awareness about the real horrors of conflict diamonds and the complicity of global consumerism, it also reproduces certain stereotypes by framing African characters primarily as victims or background to the white protagonist's journey. In summary, *Blood Diamond* uses othering by contrasting Western and African characters and perspectives, reinforcing stereotypes of Africa as a place needing Western intervention, despite its important message about conflict diamonds and human rights abuses.



Figure19:No Escape



Figure20: Sinister discovery

In these subsequent set of imagery, the eye level shot revealed that Poison is aware of Solomon's discovery, and intends of shoving him and psychologically torturing him so that he would tell him the location of the pink diamond. Going as far as threatening his family altogether in order to get what he seeks.

Solomon remained silent during the entirety of his abduction because he was aware that his survival depended on the stone he found, and once its position is determined, he would be of no use to whoever is striving to find it.

Consequently, in these sequences, Solomon was represented as an excluded member of his own tribe due to the insignificance of his existence that was overshadowed by the worthiness of what he had in his possession.



Figure21: Media's Involvement



Figure22: On the field

In these following images, the arrives to the introduction of another central character, aside from the due. Maddy Bowen a character portrayed by Jennifer Connelly; the journalist in charge of writing articles on the conflict wars across diamond mines. She is indicated as the relying intermediate figure who links the two others in their journey, indeed, at one point during the movie, Danny and Solomon needed her assistance to enter the refugee territory as both of them were sided away from those zones. Furthermore, she was aware of the true intentions of Danny all along, that he was using Solomon from the beginning, denying his willingness to help him rejoin with his family.

. As illustrated in the later scenes, the close-up shot showing Solomon would be the one standing on the back of the two others situated in the front lines, a metaphor to show that white men are always one step ahead from the blacks, and that they would always be their shadow in any depiction of American movies, meanwhile, the second one, represents how media is operating in western movies, by being witness of a disastrous situation.



Figure23: Shocking Reveal



Figure24: Displaced

Furthermore, it is shown later that Solomon is being used, and the journalist points that out to Danny who replies that he uses Solomon just as she does, alongside affirming this is the way the world goes.

III. Identity Crises

This concept present in the movie consists of the portrayal of individuals that played pioneer roles along the run of the journey they have been through. The theme of identity crises in the 2006 film *Blood Diamond* is deeply intertwined with the characters' struggles amid the Sierra Leone civil war and the brutal diamond trade. The film explores how war, violence, and exploitation distort personal and cultural identities. Key points about identity crises in *Blood Diamond* include: Danny Archer, a white South African mercenary and diamond smuggler, grapples with his traumatic past and a cynical worldview shaped by colonial and post-colonial violence. His identity is conflicted between survival-driven greed and a latent desire for redemption and connection, which evolves as he bonds with Solomon and Dia. Solomon Vandy, a Mende fisherman, undergoes an identity crisis as he is forcibly separated from his

family and coerced into labor in diamond mines. His struggle is to maintain his humanity, cultural roots, and paternal identity despite the dehumanizing conditions and the loss of his son to child soldier brainwashing. His refusal to submit to oppressive commands (“You are not the master”) highlights his resistance to losing his selfhood. Dia Vandy, Solomon’s son, represents the tragic loss of childhood and identity through forced conscription as a child soldier. Brainwashed by rebel forces, Dia initially rejects his father, symbolizing the fracturing of familial and cultural bonds caused by war. The film also reflects a broader post-colonial identity crisis in Sierra Leone and Africa, where colonial legacies, exploitation by Western and local actors, and ongoing conflict diamonds trade have fractured societies and individual identities. The characters’ personal crises mirror the continent’s struggle with the aftermath of colonialism, violence, and globalization. The interaction among characters—each with different agendas, mistrust, and dreams—illustrates how identity is contested and reshaped by survival, family bonds, greed, and moral awakening in a conflict zone.



Figure25: Endoctrinated children



Figure26: Father and son meet again

In the movie, there were some insights of loss identity case, when the rebels took over some citizens alive to work at the mines under surveillance, alongside gathering the children to forge them into future soldiers. Thus, as appearing in the first shot, the abducted kids are seen in complete unconsciousness, being brainwashed by their kidnaper, robbed from their land,

families, and their childhood, as of the moment they were with them, they had become unwilling to live for themselves, followed by a constant sentiment of emptiness.

In the later imagery, Dia meets his father once again after being separated for glimpse period of time. The young man refused to talk to him as he claimed to not recognize him and furthermore, endangering him among the group and not considering once about his safety.



Figure25: Crash out anger



Figure26: Abducted by another

The combined set of close-ups show how the conflict, arrived to the climax of the movie; had deliberately affected the black individuals, as of the ruthlessness and dangers of the wars, alongside, the torture they have been through ever since the first attack had gone on the nerves of Solomon Vendy. Believing his son was killed, and seeing the responsible on his sight, he could not contain his accumulated emotions no more, hence the second he saw colonel Poison, he immediately unalived him with a shovel. A savagery display of someone who had lost their common sense, and composure.

Later on, shortly after, it is revealed that Dia is alive, and was saved by Danny in the midst of the battle bombardments. Danny saved him in order to fulfill his promise, but also to ensure the father to cooperate even more.



Figure27: Enough is enough



Figure28: You are Dia Vendy, not a killer

After dealing with the various ordeals that the Vendy family faced throughout the movie, when Danny killed his former superior and subordinates, a gun was thrown towards Dia and the the later picked it willing to fire his father because he no longer recognizes him, nor himself. He was taken by a villainous group, forced to do atrocious acts, and ashamed of returning to his past life, hence, in disbelief, was willing to make the responsible pay for what he had endured. Consequently, as presented in the next shot, Solomon agreed on the fact that he was the only one to blame, he considered Dia's behavior as a justified response to the life he had been forced to undertake after being separated from his family, moreover, he would reassure the young man it is not him who had done the atrocities he was obliged to. He remembered him about his days at school, and how he used to play with his friends, as well as his goal of becoming a doctor and thus the reason he wanted to study hard and to make his father proud. Ultimately, making him remember his true self, his true identity, in which he says:"... You are Dia Vendy....." As the other was witnessing the family reunion, while being injured by the same men he used to serve.

Conclusion:

“Blood Diamond” tackles many important subjects and elements through narrating the newfound and imposed life of the two central characters. The representation of Postcolonialism aftermath is clearly shown through the life of Sierra Leone habitants. Alongside using various symbols, Zwick succeeded to present the portrayal of African countries under Post-colonial reign.

The pillar aspects of Postcolonialism are clearly shown in the behaviour of Solomon and his family, alongside the depiction of white men and their coexistence with blacks, which was portrayed by the other protagonist, Danny.

It does portray loss of identity through forced child soldiering and the fracturing of families and communities, illustrating how war and exploitation rob people of their humanity and selfhood.

Moreover, the movie’s heroes stand as the best illustration of Hollywood cinematographic industry. The movie mirrored the view of the American corrupted civilization.

General Conclusion

Conclusion :

Throughout this dissertation, I have argued the aspects of Postcolonialism represented in Edward Zwick's *Blood Diamond*. Aspect, in which are wrapped through the perspective shown in both main characters. My aim has been to show the significant differences of the dual, parallel dynamic of the superior and inferior sides of the major cast, whereas one, would gain the benefits of the aftermath, the other would get those benefits once the first one broke off.

Through Solomon's journey, Edward Zwick succeeds to reflect the image of a hopeless, desperate, and submerged Postcolonial status producted man from dire situations and harsh circumstances, supported by the American depiction of white man salvation in black men territory that was represented by Danny.

The movie shows a great variety of Postcolonial pillar themes, mainly othering. Othering or the simple term "Other", which was given some allusions through Solomon's struggle to live among his corrupted people, saving his son, and dealing with the white influence, solidifying his impotence and separation from all fronts, alongside relying his life to a little unit he randomly made a discovery of.

On one hand, it showed how little and insignificant the morals and norms of the so-called people of Sierra Leone have become due to the indecisive conflict of Post-colonial shapechanging the country faced. On the other hand, due to what the stone represents, the importance of the bond both Solomon and Danny shared throughout their adventure increased drastically, making the ending scenes impactful.

The postcolonial studies specialists and philosophers focused on delivering wording about the effects and side effects of the life people have gone, and have to go through on a daily basis within the society.

According to most of what was implied through the movie, the idea that is to be explored is the restriction of mobility imposed to a specific category of predetermined groups by the upper class to reduce the practicability. Those marginalized groups are forced to follow whatever is brought to their people in order to be considered civilized, or even more, being accepted. For instance, Spivak points out the arduous regulating system that proceeds to sustain and to develop on an already present settlement of rules from another account of the colonizer that subjugates following the section or different sections of the other superior groups, in which case is represented in the refugees of Sierra Leone remaining citizens that escaped from the rebels and were obliged to follow the governmental security alongside being excluded from the other margins.

Moreover, Fanon adds by exposing the legit measures to be taken for the sake of preserving the stability of the protocol in multiple fields supervised by the colonizers, mainly political, especially the political education, which consists on converting children into adults to be able to serve the betterment of the government. Something indicated through the acts of the U.R.F that stimulate unfollowing the status of the country and be unwilling to vote and shapeshifting the youngers into pre-soldiers to obey the malevolent group.

In many ways the movie stands as a support for the envisioned perspectives of postcolonial studies specialists. It stresses on the outcome of the colonized lives, and their forced hegemonical procedures. They first appeared as passive, regular, and normal people having ordinary lives until the political involvement started entering and deforming their norms by ruining their peaceful environment with the indoctrinated, self-righteous, and hypocrites groups opposing to the country's maintenance and improving trials to stabilize the governance and suppress the conflicts, internal and external alike. As well as demonstrating how affected by the Americans culture and traits, which altered the malicious people of the country to go

contrasting their own for a fake belief, and deranged conception of freedom and self-sufficiency.

Additionally, the integral perception of Postcolonialism belittlement of an African country illustrated through Solomon's placement in the movie, where his role was a central and a figurant at the same time due to the evident presence of Danny Archer. The other main character, but also, a personification of the colonizer's ideology that implies on carrying the prosperity and salvation of a civilization by white men.

Therefor, African countries have always been the ideal guinea pig for alteration related to the lands or people themselves by colonizers, however a destroyed civilization can be originated from personal, selfish desires that are relative to white men, but generally portrayed by black skinned people, or simply anyone from an underdeveloped environment.

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