

HUMAN BEINGS AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN FRANTZ FANON’S PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT

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Abstrak

*Untuk mengatasi gagasan humanisme kolonial yang diskriminatif dan eksklusif, Frantz Fanon, seorang pemikir poskolonial berdarah Algeria, mengusulkan bahwa suatu gagasan humanisme haruslah inklusif. Untuk mengatasi jebakan konsep humanisme essentialistik, Fanon berpendapat bahwa pemahaman kita tentang manusia harus selalu dikaitkan dengan struktur sosial yang ada. Dengan menggunakan teori Poskolonial sebagai lensa analisis, studi ini hendak mengeksplorasi pemikiran Fanon tentang humanisme eksistensial dan menginvestigasi pemikiran-pemikirannya tentang filsafat politik. Kajian ini digerakkan oleh beberapa pertanyaan berikut: bagaimana pemahaman baru Frantz Fanon tentang humanisme eksistensial, yang ia yakini sebagai konsep yang inklusif? Bagaimana Fanon mengaitkan hubungan manusia dan struktur sosial? Apakah arti penting dan kontribusi pemikiran-pemikiran Fanon, untuk mengkaji secara kritis struktur sosial dan politik era poskolonial di Indonesia? Studi kritis kami berfokus utamanya pada beberapa karya Frantz Fanon seperti, *The Wretched of the Earth*, *Toward the African Revolution*, dan *Black Skin White Masks*. Sementara karya-karya dia yang lain tentu akan mendapat perhatian seperlunya. Kami akan menggunakan pendekatan analisis kritis literer untuk membedah karya-karya Fanon tersebut. Kami berpendapat bahwa konsep humanisme baru ini menyuguhkan sebuah kerangka teoretis dan memberi arah kepada kita dalam mengembangkan secara eksistensial pemikiran humanisme Indonesia yang inklusif.*

Kata kunci: *Kolonialisme Rasis, Humanisme Esensialis, Struktur Sosial, Humanisme Eksistensial.*

Abstract

*In response to the Colonial discriminative and exclusive concept of humanism, Frantz Fanon, an Algerian postcolonial thinker, proposes that the idea of humanism needs to be inclusive. To avoid the trap of the essentialist concept of humanism, Fanon argues that our understanding of human beings needs always to be connected with the existing social structure. By utilizing a postcolonial theory as a lens of analysis, this study will explore Frantz Fanon's existential concept of human existence and investigate his philosophical-political thoughts. This exploration is driven by these critical questions: how is Fanon's new understanding of the existential concept of human existence, which he proposes as a more inclusive concept? How does Fanon draw the correlation between human existence and social structure? What is the significance of his thoughts to critically investigate the socio-political structure in the postcolonial Indonesia? Our critical research will focus mainly on several of Fanon's works: *The Wretched of the Earth*, *Toward the African Revolution*, and *Black Skin White Masks*. His other works will certainly be considered. We will utilize a litterer critical analysis method in approaching these works of Fanon. This new concept of Fanonian humanism, we argue, gives a theoretical frame and direction to develop existentially our understanding of an inclusive Indonesian humanism.*

Keywords: *Racist Colonialism, Essentialist Humanism, Social Structure, Existential Humanism.*

INTRODUCTION

For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set a foot a new man (Fanon, 1963: 316).

In the very end of his work, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon articulates that humanity needs to create a new man, or, more concisely, a new concept of man, which Europe could not create. "Let us decide," Fanon elsewhere states, "not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction. Let us try to create the whole man, whom Europe has been incapable of

bringing to triumphant birth.” (Fanon, 1963: 313). Without giving a systematic account, Fanon seems to propose that this new humanism should not be an essentialist concept, to be universal and racist, as what the Europeans produced. In many parts of his works, especially in *The Wretched of the Earth* and *Toward the African Revolution*, Fanon critiqued that the European essentialist and racist concept of humanity had been utilized to ‘scientifically’ legitimize dehumanization and disguise any form of domination and oppression. The creation of this new concept of humanism, on our reading of Fanon, cannot be separated from the consideration of its social and cultural structure, since the social and cultural structure, according to Fanon, is a means of human existing.

In this critical study, having a specific attention to the correlation between human beings and social structure, we intend to explore the new concept of humanism which Fanon proposes. A series of questions come up in relation to this enquiry: besides underlining the historical character of human being, what does Fanon’s proposal for creation of an inclusive social structure imply, especially for the concept of new humanism? Does Fanon propose a social structure without class? Is it possible to architect a social reality without the social process that leads to social grouping and social stratification?

We are convinced that the philosophical exploration that Fanon arises in relation to the new understanding of human existence would become relevant to the enquiries of the peoples from the postcolonial countries, including Indonesia. As the Indonesian, who had been exposed to the western tradition of thinking, we are wondering of these questions: what does Fanon’s philosophical suggestion of the new understanding of human existence imply? Does it help to interrogate the existing social-political structure of our society in Indonesia, as the residue of colonialism can still be experienced?

Generally speaking, the situations of the society in many colonial countries was structured in the feudalistic social system. The advent of colonization in these colonized countries intensified

the existing feudalistic social system (Kahin, 2003: 2–4). The same case happens in Indonesia. Prior to the colonial system, the social system of the territory of the East Indies was feudalistic. In order to conquer and control the colonized peoples the representative colonial government built a coalition with the indigenous bourgeoisie (*priyayi*). This mutualistic coalition ends up in the intensification of the feudalistic system. The social stratification between the ordinary people/the peasants and the “*priyayi*” (with the colonial support behind them) became more and more serious. Even at the period after Indonesian independence until now days, the residue of this exclusive social segregation and feudalistic social stratification can still be found (Cf. Hefner, 2000: 215). And this condition certainly causes a serious challenge to the modern Indonesia that embraces and builds a modern democratic political system since the democratic political system presupposes an egalitarian and open social system. The feudalistic social system hence will not support the democratic political system. Again, given these conditions, what then is the significance of Fanon philosophical thoughts? What is the relevance of his new understanding of human existence?

In order to address those questions, we will focus our study mainly on Frantz Fanon’s important works, such as *The Wretched of the Earth*, *Toward the African Revolution*, and *Black Skin White Masks*. His other works will certainly be considered. I will utilize a litterer critical analysis as a method in approaching those texts. We will investigate every relevant and important idea in each writings and compare it with other ideas of the other texts of Fanon. As a perspective that gives direction to this study we will utilize postcolonial critical thinking as a theory. We believe that this postcolonial theory can serve as a good instrument that can help us investigating power-knowledge relations that operate behind the colonial/postcolonial production of knowledge (Gandhi: 25; Wijanarko: 127; Young: 10-11; Hiddleston: 5; Pilario: 51). And we will organize this study into the following steps: first, we shall investigate the notion of the dehumanizing racist colonialism which,

as Robert J. Young claims, is deemed to be the foundation Fanon's philosophical anthropology. Second, we shall illustrate Fanon's accounts of the correlation between human beings and structure that give direction to his new concept of humanism. Furthermore, finally we will elaborate the significance of Fanon's ideas of on humanism for the reflection of our postcolonial situation and the understanding of humanism in Indonesia today.

DISCUSSION

1. Dehumanizing Racist Systematic Colonialism

In the preface to Sartre's *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* Robert Young states that Fanon's humanism is founded on the colonial problematic, which is the dehumanizing racist colonialism. This claim seems to be essential to inquire into the anthropological background of Fanon's humanism and therefore needs to be explored. Young, putting Fanon alongside with Guevara, Castro, and Althusser, states:

The humanism of Fanon, Guevara, and Castro, and the anti-humanism of Althusser, were essentially founded on the same colonial problematic: that *the racism of colonialism was degrading colonial (or semi-colonized) subjects to the category of the subhuman* (our emphasis). What was required, therefore, was either to do away with the concept of humanism altogether, or, more positively, to articulate a new anti-racist humanism, which would be inclusive rather than exclusive, and which would be the product of those who formed the majority of its new totality (Sartre, 2001: xiv).

To comprehend the foundation of Fanon's philosophical anthropology, which Robert J.C. Young paraphrases as "the racism of colonialism which was degrading colonial subject to the category of the subhuman," (dehumanizing racist colonialism), means to investigate Fanon's thoughts of the Algerian colonialism in order to comprehend how Fanon interpreted and represented the colonial

experience and the Algerian revolution in which he participated as a member of the National Liberation Front (FLN).

Fanon, in tune with Hannah Arendt and Sartre, thinks that the origin of colonialism is in the political emancipation of the bourgeoisie or capitalist (Arendt, 1976: 135; Sartre, 2001: 33). His works strongly indicate that the origin of French colonization in Algeria is not merely a need for domination, but rather the need of French capitalism to survive. That is why the French bourgeoisie were always on the front line perpetuating French colonization and disrupting colonial resistance (Fanon, 1963: 44, 47). Since the reason for the expansion was obviously determined, the process of colonial domination was systematically implanted: overcome the resistance, smash the framework, subdue, terrorize, and only then will the economic system be put in place. Fanon says that in the initial phase the French establish their domination and massively affirms their superiority; then the social group is militarily and economically subjugated. "Exploitation, torture, raids, racism, collective liquidations, rational oppression," Fanon wrote, "take turns at different levels in order literally to make of the native an object in the hands of the occupying nation" (Fanon, 1964: 35). Thus colonial domination is well planned and is operated by a series of strategies. The domination of the colonized is systematically operated in every aspect of human life. French colonialism introduced individualism as a new social value to undermine the communal life of the Algerian. They strived to destroy the hidden strength of Algerian matrilineal society by provoking Algerian women to unveil in order to disrupt social cohesion. They also created demarcations (compartments) to separate the native from the settlers. And they used torture as the means to manifest an exemplary loyalty to the system they created. The colonialism is, therefore, a dehumanizing systematic domination since it introduces torture and repression as power control and destroys the social structure, values and ways of life as a means of human existing. Colonialism also denies the human rights of the native and subjugates them in a state of sub-humanity, and even prohibits the assimilation of the natives.

In addition, French colonialism in Algeria, according to Fanon, is not only systematic domination, but it is also a dehumanizing systematic violence “which has ruled over the ordering of the colonial world, which has ceaselessly drummed the rhythm for the destruction of native social forms and broken up without reserve the systems of reference of the economy, the customs of dress and external life” (Fanon, 1963: 40). This proposition implies that systematic oppression entails not only the creation of a social apparatus as a means of control, but also the replacement of the system of values and of representation, as well as the transformation of the ways of life. In other words, the systematic oppression created a new cosmos for the colonized. In this atmosphere, the colonized experienced torture as a way of life. Algerian colonization, therefore, is systematized de-humanization (Fanon, 1964: 53).

How could colonialism, as Young explicates, be a racist system? The fact that colonialism is system and systematic violence does not say that it is a racist system. What does Fanon mean by dehumanizing systematic racist colonialism as he states in *Toward the African Revolution*, “In reality the attitude of the French troops in Algeria fits into a pattern of police domination, of systematic racism, of dehumanization rationally pursued” (Fanon, 1964: 64)? To answer this question, we argue that we can depart from his Marxist analysis of the colonial realm. In *the Wretched of the Earth* he illustrates the fact of colonial world and analyzes:

This world divided into compartments, this world cut in two is inhabited two different species. The originality of the colonial context is that economic reality, inequality, and the immense difference of ways of life never come to mask the human realities. When you examine at close quarters the colonial context, it is evident that what parcels out the world is to begin with the fact of belonging to or not belonging to a given species. In the colonies the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich (Fanon, 1963: 40).

Fanon argues that the origin of the division of the colonial realm is the ownership of property. Since what parcels out the world is the ownership of property, which eventually divides human beings into different compartments and species, the colonizer needs to maintain his status and demarcate the boundary to both preserve his privileges and absolve himself from his oppressive and dehumanizing colonization. This analysis is in accordance with his claim in *Black Skin White Mask* (BSWM) that the economic reason is prior to the racist attitude that results in the pathologic attitude (inferiority complex) of the oppressed (Fanon, 1967: 10-11). Since dehumanizing fellow human beings for the purpose of the promotion of his or her own dignity is illogical, due to the logical scheme that the dehumanization of fellow human beings implies the dehumanization of his or her own being, it is a strategy of the colonizer to keep the colonized in the status of subhuman species. This strategy does not de-legitimize their claim of the universal concept of humanism, since what they consider as human only applies to the French, while the native, presented as a subhuman species with its attributions, is in the state of nonhuman. Therefore, the colonizer creates the stigma of labeling the colonized as the sub-human species. Fanon describes:

Native society is not simply described as a society lacking in values. It is not enough for the colonialist to affirm that those values have disappeared from, or still better never existed in, the colonial world. The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. At time this Manicheism goes to its logical conclusion and dehumanized the native, or to speak plainly, it turns him into an animal. In fact, the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are zoological terms. He speaks of the yellow man's reptilian motion, of the stink of the native quarter, of the breeding swarms, of foulness, of spawn, of gesticulations. When the settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms, he constantly refers to the bestiary." (Fanon, 1963: 42).

Racism, therefore, is hybridized in the colonial system. It is inscribed in the events and colonial social structure to maintain the demarcation of the compartments. It is inserted in the nature of the exchanges and production to demarcate the ownership of property (the colonizer and the native). Moreover, the French, who claimed to have the universal concept of human beings, were able to construct the metaphysical frame that gives a rational or scientific legitimacy for the colonization that put the colonized into sub-human species, so that as if it is not a form of dehumanization. This means that systematic racist colonization went hand in hand with their claim of the universal concept of humanity. That is to say, western humanism, which was claimed to be universal concept, was used to cement the dehumanizing colonial system not only at the socio-economic and cultural level, but also at the metaphysical level which eventually was systematically implanted in the consciousness and values system of both the native and the settler.

2. Transformation of Dehumanizing Social Structure

Without pretending to identify him as a structuralist supporter, we argue that Fanon saw the issue of colonial humanism in view of a systematic structural problem of the colonial world. When Fanon articulates that “the cultural mummification of the colonial world leads to a mummification of individual thinking” (to make the culture of colonial world dies), he, without being trapped into being a structuralist, performs his structuralistic perspective, in the sense that the external condition of the individual influences how individual thinking inscribes or produces his or her identity (Fanon, 1964: 34). And from this proposition the following can be derived: just as cultural mummification leads to a mummification of individual thinking, so the mummification of a colonial social structure, under rigid control and oppression, leads to the mummification of colonial individual thinking. Moreover, when Fanon states that the colonized can free themselves from subjugation and oppression and start creating their identity by way

of decolonization and continuous structural transformation, he underlines his belief that the problem of colonial human beings is structural. That is to say, as the colonial power and apparatus are systematically and structurally imposed, so is the liberation from colonialism. For Fanon, therefore, taking into consideration the structural context in which men live, for the purpose of the exploration of the concept of human beings, becomes indispensable. Human beings are historical beings, who exist and produce their identity in the given social structure.

In addition, it is important to note that, as Fanon claims, not only does the colonial structure systematically dehumanize the colonized peoples but also the colonizing people or country, since the colonizer can never succeed in placing the colonized in the status of in/subhuman. The colonized always had the power of resistance and found the spaces, in their own culture and means of existing, to escape from total dehumanization (Fanon, 1965). That is why the dehumanizing and racist colonial structure causes a double systematic dehumanization, which is, the dehumanization of the colonizer and the colonized. Consequently, Fanon claims, the liberation of human beings from the dehumanizing colonial system needs to be taken as a radical and continuous transformation of the colonial system, and such a revolution involves and liberates both sides. This theme is repeatedly articulated in the first chapter of *the Wretched of the Earth*. Indeed, we argue, that, by reading closely this Fanonian structural liberation model, that the readers can encapsulate Fanon's account of the new concept of humanism. This is the next step we are going to take.

At the beginning of *The Wretched of the Earth* Fanon provides an extensive discussion, proposing that the only way to liberate the oppressed is decolonization. It is only by decolonization that the oppressed repossess the most fundamental and concrete values of their existence, specifically the land, which is then the most essential property to create their own identity. Decolonization is also the initial instrument to transform the colonial structure which the colonizer had undermined and it, as Fanon says, brings a natural

rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and new humanity (Fanon, 1963: 36). Decolonization is the veritable creation of new man because (1) it assumes a holistic transformation of the colonial system, which (2) involves all elements of both the oppressed and the oppressor to transform the dehumanizing colonial social structures. It is true that decolonization, as a revolutionary, complex, complete, and total transformation, is always violent since it is about replacing a certain species of men with another species of men. It seems to be the path of liberalization of human beings who are locked into two reciprocally exclusive zones (the zone where the native lives are not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers). These two reciprocally exclusive zones, according to Fanon, are opposed, not in the service of a higher unity. In his powerful rhetorical language, Fanon invokes:

Comrades, let us flee from this motionless movement where gradually dialectic is changing into the logic of equilibrium. Let us consider the question of mankind. Let us consider the question of cerebral reality and of the cerebral mass of all humanity, whose connections must be increased, whose channels must be diversified and whose messages must be re-humanized (Fanon, 1963: 314).

It becomes obvious that, for Fanon, the transform of colonial structure, which is systematically and racially dehumanizing, needs to be systematic and holistic in a radical sense, and involves all elements of the social structures. It is to be radical in the sense that this transformation comprises the reformation of the existing (material) social structure and the reclamation of the memory of the past. That is why Fanon emphasizes the importance of the role of the national culture for the transformation of social structure. "The claim to a national culture in the past," Fanon wrote, "does not only rehabilitate the nation and serve as a justification for the hope of a future national culture. In the sphere of psycho-affective

equilibrium it is responsible for an important change in the native.” (Fanon, 1963: 210).

3. Social Structure and New Humanism

Not only does Fanon view the colonial problem through a structural lens, but he also proposes the solution for the colonial problem in a structural and systematic prescription. When he claims that decolonization and continuous transformation is the struggle which the Algerian needed to take, Fanon is obviously saying that a radical, holistic, systematic, and structural revolution is the only way for the colonized to liberate themselves and start creating their human life.

How do we in such a structural scheme of revolution trace or identify his thoughts of a new humanism? How does this prescription give direction to his new concept of humanism? What kind of humanism does Fanon want to propose? At first, we need to emphasize that Fanon’s proposal for the revolutionary transformation of social structure is comprised of two important matters, namely: (1) the transformation of existential ground and a means of existing for the concrete man, (2) which next transcends the dialectic scheme into the logic of equilibrium by means of the reconciliation of the two reciprocally exclusive zones of the colonized and of the colonizer, or what we could call an inclusive social structure. These two matters contained in Fanon’s proposal will be the guidelines for our reflection on the *Fanonian* humanism.

It seems that, instead of creating a new metaphysical system to serve as a new philosophical frame for the concept of human being, Fanon, in his works, often sees human being more as a concrete living being, who lives, acts, moves, and struggles based on his or her means of existing, namely, social structure. That is why his concern, among other things, is to transform the social structure of concrete men in the colonial world. For Fanon human being “without means of existing, without a *raison d’être*, is broken in the very depth of his substance” (Fanon, 1964: 35). This proposition, I

argue, underlines Fanon's view that human being is a historical living being that can never be separated from his or her social structure, since this social structure, as a means of existing, is substantial for his or her existence. It is substantial since it gives her or him the very condition of his/her existence and identity and provides the trajectory to preserve and flourish his/her existence. When Fanon emphasizes that the land is the most concrete value for a human being, he seems to underline this very historical dimension of human being. Social structure, therefore, is not merely a *conditio sine qua non* for human existence rather it is a *conditio per quam* for human being, in the sense that it is very substantial and a constitutive element for human existence. Due to its substantial role for historical human being, social structure needs always to be continuously transformed for human being to be able to grow and flourish. The continuous transformation of social structure, therefore, reflects the dynamic of human beings and, reservedly, the mummification of social structure indicates the mummification of human beings. That is why in his positive response to the Algerian revolution Fanon states "the thesis that men change at the same time that they change the world has never been so manifest as it is now in Algeria" (Fanon, 1965: 30). The need for the continuous transformation of social structure, therefore, implies that human beings need always to flourish and preserve their being to always be "*being human.*" For Fanon social structure is always meant to serve human being so that he cannot be considered a structuralist thinker.

Furthermore, when Fanon articulates the need for the continuous transformation of the social structure, he indicates as well that his structural concept of human existence includes the notion of human freedom. According to Fanon, although always influenced by a given social structure, human being is still a free being. Freedom in this perspective is not a metaphysical attribute or quality derived from the metaphysical concept of human being. It is not, as well, an essentialist and universal quality of a human being. It is instead a capability of human being to exist, produce and

reproduce his or her identity, while he or she remains and stands in his or her social structure, by means of continuously transforming the social structure in which he or she lives. In order to maintain human freedom, the social structure needs to be transformative. The notion of transformative social structure, therefore, refers to both the fact that the existing social structure is subject to change and that, by transformation of the social structure, the human being will also transform. Consequently, a human being can be free so long as he or she remains and stands in his or her social structure. Freedom is also transformative and always interconnected with the conditions of social structure. In other words, human freedom is always contextual and embodied in the given social structure or circumstances.

The next aspect of the Fanonian concept of human being can be taken from his proposal on the construction of the inclusive social structure. Fanon proposes that the revolutionary transformation of the social structure is designated to transcend the dialectic scheme of colonial reality, which is the two reciprocally exclusive zones of the colonized and of the colonizers, into the logic of equilibrium. Fanon means that the aim of the struggle of the colonized is not merely to destroy and to radically (and violently) change the ruling power and colonial structure that had been imposed, and by this way to demolish the existence of the colonizer. It also aims to transform a colonial structure that can embrace and include anyone in the colonial realm who wants to have that access for their human promotion. In other words, the end of the struggle is not to dialectically oppress the oppressors or to take a turn subjugating the colonizer, but to build the bridge that can unite two opposing groups into one inclusive social construction. The proposal to articulate the logic of equilibrium implies that neither the Marxian class struggle dialectic nor the Hegelian scheme that history works based on the thesis-antithesis scheme (of the different zones of human being) is able to bring humanity into a more human social condition. Instead, as he observed in the colonial social fragmentation, such kinds of dialectic will result in continuous

violence and dehumanization. Thus, the only way to redeem humanity from the dehumanizing dialectic social structure is by creating an inclusive social structure that embraces any group or parts of the society to build a more inclusive human relation and structure. This could occur when every block of compartment, wall of separation, and form of segregation are demolished so that every web of connection can be rebuilt and interconnected. For Fanon, this structural transformation starts from the historical process of decolonization, and through this process, not only social structure is transformed but also the subjectivity of human being. When Fanon emphasizes decolonization as an historical process, he signifies that the possible social transformation cannot start from nothing or from supernatural power; it is instead done by the hands of human beings.

These thoughts of Fanon imply that for him any social structure needs to be constructed in such a way so that every member of social structure gains equal access for his/her growth and humanization. Instead of emphasizing the abstract notion of the equal rights of human being, which used to be grounded in abstract or essentialist anthropology, Fanon rather argues that any social system needs to be constructed and continually transformed so that it can serve equally the need of every member of the social system. This means that any unjust and perpetually oppressive social structure should be transformed. The fact that a social grouping that produces a certain social construction can create an exclusive social system that gives a benefit for a limited group, therefore, means that just such a social grouping always needs to be challenged and transformed. The struggle for human rights and social equality is none other than the effort to create a social structure that can provide equal access for everybody to build identity and to be more human. The task of human existence, hence, is not to observe and actualize the prescribed concept of human being, but to create and inscribe their identity.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the existential and structural framework, which Fanon utilizes both in viewing the colonial realm and proposing prescription, offers several features of the new concept of human being he is proposing: first, human being is concrete living being, who exists, moves, and grows in a given social structure. Human being can never be separated from his/her social structure. Social structure is a *conditio per quam* for humanization. Second, although always conditioned by his or her social structure, human being is a free being since he or she has capacity to transform social structure. The freedom of human being can be exercised as long as he or she stands in the social structure and exercises his or her capacity to refresh the given social structure. Third, "being" human being carries the task to produce or inscribe his or her humanity. This task can be exercised also in the social structure. The ethical implication then is that every human being needs to participate in creating a social structure that can accommodate the needs and aspirations of its members and provide access to its members to grow and become more human. The creation of such an inclusive social structure points to a universal character of human task, which is creating an inclusive structure in the concrete reality where he or she lives. Such a concept of human existence can never exclude or sacrifice the other human being for the sake of his or her own humanization (civilization).

The significance of Fanon's philosophical thoughts on the correlation of human existence and social structure to the project of social transformation in the postcolonial countries, therefore, can be drawn. As illustrated earlier, we identify that the advent of colonization in Indonesia intensified the existing feudalistic social system. In order to conquer and control the colonized peoples of Indonesia the representative colonial government built a coalition with the indigenous bourgeoisie (*priyayi*). At the period after Indonesian independence until now days, the residue of this exclusive social segregation and feudalistic social stratification can still be found. This condition certainly causes a serious challenge to

the modern Indonesia that embraces and builds a modern democratic political system, since the democratic political system presupposes an egalitarian and open social system. The feudalistic social system hence won't support the democratic political system.

Given those postcolonial conditions, we are convinced, Frantz Fanon' suggestion, that the social structure of the human existence needs to be transformative and inclusive, finds its significance in the postcolonial Indonesia. The new Indonesian government has to continuously design cultural strategy and political orchestration which enable them to build a transformative and inclusive social structure. This is, among others, the most important project that needs to be done by this postcolonial country in order to free themselves from the colonial residues. Otherwise, the Indonesian will only perpetuate the feudalistic and exclusive social structure that had been intensified by the experience of a long colonization. If this happens, the ideal of this postcolonial nation to build a strong democratic political system will never be accomplished. A true independence does not simply means to expel the colonizer from the Indonesia, but it is a continuous process of building freedom and constructing a transformative and inclusive social structure that can include every member of the nation to exercise their liberty and participate in process of national building.

The other phenomenon that increasingly occupies Indonesian political arena nowadays is the religious populism. As a symptom of the dysfunctional liberal democratic system of Indonesia, religious populism has exaggerated the inclination to employ a politics of religious identity in the Indonesian political arena. This kind of religious populism, which intensifies the politics of religious identity, continuously produces an exclusive collective identity based on their particular religious affiliation. And in the political arena, a particular political group needs—specially the one that is built based on foundation of exclusive identity, to subjugate other group in order to perform their domination. In such a political contestation the development of an exclusive collective identity takes place. Taking this growth of the exclusive collective identity

seriously into our consideration, Fanon's proposal for promoting an inclusive social-political structure seems to be very relevant. Fanon's suggestion gives us direction in developing our social-and political structure that gives a good foundation for just and equal political negotiation, contestation, and opportunity to every member of the political subject. The need for developing an open and inclusive collective identity, therefore, is implied.

Furthermore, the absence of a systematic and philosophical concept of Indonesian humanism, which could have provided a normative reference for the human action of the postcolonial Indonesian, invites us to reflect on the nature of Indonesian humanism based on the existential foundation of the human existence. The existential humanism of Fanon gives us direction of how to build the existential Indonesian understanding of human existence. In the absence of a normative reference, derived from certain metaphysical thoughts of human beings, the human action and practices are oriented rather to the common future, which every Indonesian needs to participate to accomplish it as a common project (nationalism). It is the continuous actions and practices that are oriented to the common dream that that will produce the identity of Indonesian human existence. What we deem as Indonesian identity, therefore, is always in the making. Indonesian identity is not a prescribed fixed concept; it is rather a process of continuous production, or, as in Edward Said's terms "an ongoing practice" (Said, 2003: 6). At the communal level, we are convinced that there is actually no prescribed communal identity that we can take as a reference. Our Indonesian identity is what we are inscribing by means of our actions and practices that we are making in our daily life in pursuing our common ideal as a nation.

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