ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the research examines African American writing in the selected novels of Richard Wright. The thesis highlights fragmentation and identity that prevailed and shaped the black personality in the first half of the twentieth century. Wright offered a universal view in his novels, resulting from his experiences of being a Black, a Negro and growing as American citizen.

This study is to convey the demolished effects of racial division, crime, politic and socioeconomic forces upon the blacks; and how fragmentation is became a part of blacks literature. Wright's Works convey blacks' experiences in the American society, emphasizing the manhood empowerment. Black Boy, Native Son, Uncle Son Tom's Children, Savage Holiday, The Outsider and Pagan Spain are selected to investigate this phenomenon.

The dissertation divides into four chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter provides review of African American Literature. It gives details about Richard Wright's biography and novels. This chapter deals with African American Literature in General, highlighting the Fragmentation and Identity as a real and a big dilemma for the African Americans. This chapter gives such examples of many Afro-American writers as contemporaries of Richard Wright in the first half of the twentieth century.

The Second Chapter deals with the novels: Uncle Tom's Children and The Black Boy. These novels explore the dynamic of racism and provides a brief historical survey as well as examines the sociological, psychological and economic effects of racism on the blacks as well as on the whites.
Chapter Three deals with crime and criminal behaviors through analyzing Native Son and Savage Holiday. It exposes crime at some levels of abstraction all crime, or at least a great deal of it. The novels in this chapter are regarded as an indicative evolution of Wright as an artist. Native Son and Savage Holiday are an attempt to grapple with the fallout from his celebrity. This chapter explores the criminal behaviors through the socio-and psychological motivation as a kind of revolt, rebellion and resistance against the white criminal system. The selected novels in this chapter explain and portray the doctrine that prevailed a new lease on life the modern era especially in the first half of the twentieth century. The focusing of Wright’s novels trace modernity as an environmental determinism.

Chapter Four deals with identity crisis in the two selected novels; The Outsider and Pagan Spain. Wright highlights identity crisis through the period from (1910-1960) in African American Negro novels. This chapter exposes the protest mood of Wright's writing that gave way to the mood of untranquility and reflected the consciousness of his personality. The Outsider and Pagan Spain explore that Identity could emerge out of the author's universal experience. This chapter shows that Richard Wright's works and writings gave pride and meaningfulness to the African American people at the same time. Moreover, chapter four presents the western technology and ideals as an alternative of indigenous culture of African Americans.

Chapter Five (the Conclusion) summarizes Wright's themes in his selected novels in this thesis within an era composed of historical and literary changes: in the Reconstruction era through pre-renaissance, period during World War I and World War II. Wright as African American writer voices the various political, economic, social and cultural aspects in the American Society.