ABSTRACT

ROBYN SWINSON LUNEY. Biopower and the Boomerang Effect in Richard Wright’s *Native Son* and Tayeb Salih’s *Season of Migration to the North*. (Under the direction of Professor Sheila Smith McKoy.)

Across time and space American novelist Richard Wright and Sudanese novelist Tayeb Salih both constructed similar anti-heroes in their novels *Native Son* and *Season of Migration to the North*. These authors are from different cultures and different eras yet there are blatant similarities between their constructed anti-heroes. Wright and Salih both construct heroes who depict the biopower of Western imperialism and they boomerang this biopower back on their oppressors. In 1955, the Martinique poet and critic Aimé Césaire enumerated in his 1955 work *Discourse on Colonialism* that a particular consequence of colonization is the “boomerang effect.” He declares that colonization is a disease because colonialists dehumanize their subjects to maintain control and force their cultural values on the colonized population. Césaire points out that a mirror effect occurs within the colonized population, and in essence, they become the colonizer. This boomerang effect is the result of the biopower that operates on bodies. In *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* Michel Foucault coins the term biopower. Biopower refers to how power organizes the body into efficient systems for economic controls, and administers the body’s biological rights. Both Salih and Wright depict the biopower that weighs on their anti-protagonists black bodies and both authors boomerang this biopower back onto their anti-protagonists’ oppressors.