After Gaza

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Big Thinkers of Our Time

Frantz Fanon and His Acolytes

Sir John Jenkins KCMG LVO

Foreword by Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP

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Cover Image: Scene from the film "The Battle of Algiers" by Gillo Pontecorvo

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Foreword

by Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP, Leader of HM Opposition

Frantz Fanon is too often treated as an untouchable icon of liberation. His writing on colonialism, has a place in many academic canons. But the uncritical way in which his most dangerous arguments, particularly his justification of political violence, are repeated and celebrated is deeply troubling. Often, readers are told to admire his vision of violence as "cleansing," as though history has not shown us the horrendous consequences of such thinking.

This celebration of Fanon has real effects. When intellectuals and activists romanticise violence, they give licence to those who see bloodshed not as tragedy, but as a political tool. Two years ago, it was this ethos that underlay Hamas' attacks on Israel: the worst slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust.

We have also repeatedly seen the deadly results of this mindset here in Britain, most recently in the appalling terrorist attack in Manchester on Yom Kippur. This was not an isolated act of hatred: it flows from a wider culture that legitimises violence in the name of "justice", cloaking it in the language of resistance. To pretend that there is no connection between the way in which Fanon is venerated by some and these acts of violence is to ignore the ways ideas shape actions.

As this important report demonstrates, many of the contemporary advocates for "decolonisation" are only too aware of this. The truth was made clear by the shocking reaction of some to the October 2023 attacks. As one young American activist quoted put it, "What did y'all think decolonization meant? vibes? papers? essays? losers".

The slogan "Globalise the Intifada" is another example. This is often dressed up as solidarity with the oppressed. Yet at its core, it channels the same Fanonian logic: that violent uprising is not just inevitable, but virtuous. After the Yom Kippur attack in Manchester, we should throw the question back at those shouting such slogans on our streets: "What did you think globalise the Intifada meant?" Events in Manchester have given us an answer that is as plain as it is terrible.

When this kind of rhetoric is repeated uncritically, it creates a permissive environment for extremism. It normalises the notion that violence against civilians, even against places of worship, can be rationalised as part of some larger struggle.

I speak with some personal knowledge of where this path can lead.

Growing up in Nigeria, I witnessed how extremist ideologies, later exemplified in groups like Boko Haram, devastated communities by preaching the false promise of liberation through violence. They too claimed to be fighting injustice. The result was indiscriminate slaughter, the silencing of women, and the destruction of lives and futures. There is nothing "cleansing" about such violence.

We cannot allow our universities to remain blind to all this. Universities should, of course, be spaces where ideas can be tested and examined openly. Nothing should be off limits and free speech is a critical to their proper functioning. But intellectual rigour demands we examine Fanon not as a prophet, but as a flawed and dangerous thinker whose ideas, if transplanted uncritically into today's context, risk fuelling division and bloodshed.

The path to justice lies not through the glorification of violence, but through the hard work of building peace, sustaining dialogue, and protecting the dignity of all. That is the lesson we must insist upon today.

Introduction

Frantz Fanon is one of the most consequential theorists of armed struggle and postcolonial identity, or perhaps more accurately of their psychopathologies, in modern times. Yet his life was short, his published works few and his thinking often confused.[1] He is perhaps best-known today for his advocacy for the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN), the armed group that emerged as the principal combatant against the French in early 1950s Algeria. For any dispassionate reader, it is difficult to approach his three major works - *Black Skin/White Masks*, *Year V of the Algerian Revolution* and *the Wretched of the Earth*[2] (plus a variety of sometimes ephemeral writings on identity, psychiatry and revolution now gathered together into a separate collection in both English and French[3]) - except through the portal of that brutal conflict.[4]

But his writings have over the years acquired a valency in certain quarters beyond the immediate circumstances of their composition. And in the context of the Gaza conflict, his powerful but deeply flawed justification of redemptive anti-colonial violence has found new resonance with both Islamists and progressive western activists.

There is a paradox here. At least partly because of Fanon's advocacy, the Algerian war from the 1960s onwards became an iconic symbol of anti-imperialist struggle for insurgent movements in the region and for the New Left in Europe and the US.[5] It also became a template for other wars of liberation in the Middle East and N Africa: "*Within a few years of its publication, The Wretched of the Earth would be read in Spanish by Latin American guerrillas in a Cuban translation commissioned by Che Guevara; in English by ANC rebels in South Africa; in Portuguese, by anti-colonial fighters in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique; in Farsi, by Iranian Marxist and Islamic revolutionaries; and, not least, in Arabic, by Palestinian fedayeen in training camps in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.*"[6] This remains the case today. Indeed, interest in Fanon's influence on the Palestinian struggle (and on Palestinian avatars of Fanon such as the novelist and revolutionary theorist, Ghassan Kanafani, a key figure in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – PFLP – until his assassination in 1972) has only grown as a result of the war in Gaza.[7]

But neither the war in Algeria nor any subsequent conflict in the region produced the hopeful future that Fanon predicted.[8] As a result, what he published in his lifetime can seem like reportage from a vanished world.[9] Yet while the brutal immediacy and visceral *ressentiments* of that world have faded, its memory continues to haunt the western radical imagination. And Fanon's writings remain a powerful stimulus for anticolonial, postcolonial and subaltern studies throughout the western academy, as a brief glance

at the extensive bibliographies in Fanon's two most recent biographies in English shows.[10]

It speaks volumes that "*in the recent television series, The White Lotus, a woke young woman of color reads the Wretched of the Earth at a Hawaiian resort where she's plotting against the superrich parents of her white best friend*".[11] Fanon's writings are now as integral a part of the fractious western debate over meaning and identity[12] as they are a matter of historical record.[13]

Of still greater significance is the fact that they are also taken to justify extreme violence in the service of essentialist struggles. This cognitive dissonance has helped many in the West to see the violence of Hamas and Hezbollah (for example) as not simply justified but in some sense sanctified. Hamas, in its 2017 *Document of General Principles and Policies*, sought to reframe its campaign of violence against Israel in classic Fanonist terms as anti-colonial, anti-settler and anti-Zionist rather than Islamist and anti-Jewish, as their 1988 Charter had done. As some of the statements by senior Hamas representatives in the immediate aftermath of the 2023 attack confirmed,[14] this was largely a tactical manoeuvre.[15] It found - and still finds - a sympathetic reception in some quarters. But what it also showed was that some Hamas leaders at least had paid attention to progressive western discourse and to the legacy of Fanon in particular.[16]

Fanon, in other words, stands as a key figure in the development of the fractured ethics of liberation that prevails in many so-called progressive circles in the West.

In contrast, in Algeria and other parts of the Islamic world, his direct impact - beyond the secondary effects of a reimported and vulgarised postcolonialism - has been limited.[17] Islam offers a culturally more resonant way of expressing discontent: and since the late 1960s the modernist social movements that we know collectively as Islamism have been its political vehicle. That points up Fanon's own naiveté in believing that Algeria represented a universal struggle for human liberation, rather than a revanchist and socially reactionary ethno-nationalist insurgency. It also illustrates the hold that theory divorced from its historical context has on a postmodernist West.

This paper is not a reworking of the existing – ample and often highly impressive - scholarship on Fanon.[18] That would be absurd. Instead, in the aftermath of Gaza, it seeks to reflect on this scholarship as a driver of damaging political contestation in the West, situating it within the wider trajectory of decolonial, anticolonial and postcolonial studies.[19] It also considers Fanon's place in the progressive canon and the often perverse ways in which those who are committed to what they see as human liberation have come to use him to interpret the contemporary world – and to celebrate what they see as salutary emancipatory violence.[20]

Life

Frantz Fanon was born in 1925 in Fort-de-France, the capital of Martinique, in the Lesser Antilles, an island claimed by France in the C17th and subsequently integrated as a major sugar producer into the Atlantic slave economy. Slavery was finally abolished in all French territories in 1848 but Martinique continued to have a highly racially segmented society. In 1925 the island was still a French colony – becoming a *département français d'outre-mer* only in 1946. Fanon's family was well off by local standards and he had a good - and highly Francocentric - education.

Even so, it is worth noting that one of Fanon's teachers was Aimé Césaire, a distinguished poet, of whom the surrealist, André Breton was an early champion. Césaire was also one of the great theorists of what was to become Négritude[21] (along with his wife, Suzanne, Léopold Senghor, later President of Senegal, and his compatriot, Aboulaye Sadji).

With the outbreak of the second world war and the Fall of France, Martinique became notionally a part of Vichy, though under a tacit agreement with the Allies that it would not be used for offensive operations against them. In 1944, the Free French claimed the island and Fanon was one of many who volunteered to join their forces, under General Leclerc, in Algeria. The experience seems to have been formative for Fanon. He had come to think of himself as entirely French but soon realised that there was a profound difference between him and *les français de souche* – those French who could contemplate without irony, as Fanon could not, "*nos pères, les gaulois*"[22] - with a further precise racial taxonomy distinguishing, for example, French West Indians from Francophone Black Africans (to the advantage of the former). Fanon was also struck by the dismissive and often brutal way in which the French – both the military and French Algerians – treated Arab Algerians.

After D-Day Fanon saw action around Toulon and Lyon. He was wounded and awarded the Croix de Guerre, remarkably with a citation written by Colonel Raoul Salan, who would later brutally crush the FLN in the battle of Algiers and play a major part in the attempted putsch by the Army of Algeria against President Charles de Gaulle in 1961.[23]

Once the war was over, Fanon took advantage of government grants for demobilised soldiers and – after much hesitation – was accepted by the University of Lyon to study medicine. It was there that he claimed to have had one of the key experiences of his life, recounted in *Black Skin, White Masks*.[24] It was in effect a moment when Fanon felt the full force of the malign power of the White Gaze ("*le regard blanc*"), which had surveilled him since his departure from the almost wholly black society of

the French Caribbean. On a train in Lyon, a child saw him and exclaimed to its mother, "*Tiens, un nègre. Maman, regarde le nègre, j'ai peur!*" ("*Oh! A black man. Look at the black man, mummy – I'm afraid!*). This grim epiphany seems to have revealed with startling clarity to Fanon how a subaltern black identity is constructed by its encounter with an overmastering and oppressive white world. Fanon saw in this the outworking of a dialectical process he based on Hegel's famous passage in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*[25] elucidating the *Herr/Knecht* (*Master/Servant*) relationship. This passage became a major locus for the Existentialist exploration of identity formation in general (and was central to Simone de Beauvoir's analysis of the construction of the feminine, for example).[26] Fanon claimed he responded to the mother's attempts to palliate her son's offence by replying, "*Le beau nègre vous emmerde, madame!*" (translated by David Macey as "*Screw you, madame!*"): he became the hero of the story after all.[27]

Fanon's growing resentment of white society did not stop him from forming a relationship with a young fellow medical student from a respectable Lyonnais family. He had a daughter with her. But the relationship did not last – not because of pressure from her family, it seems, but from Fanon's own reluctance to commit. Instead, he took up with another young French woman (who was 18 when they met), Marie-Josephe ("Josie") Dublé, who was later to become his wife and passionate advocate (and committed suicide in Algiers in 1989).

After qualifying as a doctor, and a brief return to Martinique (for what turned out to be the last time), Fanon decided to specialise in psychiatry. He had become interested in this during his medical studies – possibly because of his distaste for dissection and the other messier parts of general medicine. But he was perhaps simply reflecting a wider mood. This was a cultural moment for psychiatry and particularly psychoanalysis in Europe and the US, with the rise of neo-Freudian, anti-Freudian, post-Freudian, Adlerian, Jungian, Kleinian, Reichian and Lacanian therapeutic approaches.[28] In Britain DW Winnicott[29] was already an established practitioner (of whose work Fanon knew) and RD Laing[30] was beginning his career in Glasgow, drawing like Fanon (and indeed Karl Jaspers) on existentialism and phenomenology.

In France a radical new approach had been pioneered by François - originally Francesc - Tosquelles, a Catalan refugee from Franco's Spain. During the Civil War there, Tosquelles had set up POUM's psychiatric services in Barcelona in the face of Soviet opposition; he was subsequently an active member of the resistance under Vichy, operating out of the Saint-Alban psychiatric hospital just north of Montpellier. It was to this institution that Fanon turned to complete his residency, after qualifying as a psychiatrist in 1951. Already, he had become interested in alienation and the dissociative disorders exhibited by many of the Algerian patients he saw in Lyon. Now, his time at Saint-Alban seems to have convinced him of the social origins of many psychiatric disorders.[31]

Moreover, it was during his time there that Fanon began to formulate his ideas and write for publication. He had already drafted *Black Skin,*

White Masks – which he considered submitting as his final dissertation for qualification as a doctor. He drew on certain of its chapters in his initial essays for *L'Ésprit*, a journal of the French Catholic Left, with close links to Éditions de Seuil, which then published the full text as Fanon's first book in 1952. It attracted little attention, doubtless at least partly because of its rebarbative style – a magpie-like free association or *bricolage*, as David Macey has suggested. It was here that Fanon introduced the term "*expérience vecue*" or "*lived experience*" – a translation of the phenomenological *Erlebnis* of Husserl and Heidegger. The phrase has had a long and unhelpful afterlife.

After gaining the necessary postgraduate qualification, Fanon applied for transfer to Algeria and was appointed in 1954 to a new position at the psychiatric hospital at Blida-Joinville, a small town to the South-West of Algiers. The French had initially occupied Algiers in 1830,[32] but resistance to colonial expansion had continued for years under the famous Abdul Qadir al Jaza'iri (who was subsequently exiled to Damascus). The experience of WW2, when many Algerians fought, like Fanon, for a France they came to regard as racist radicalised a new generation. What has become known as the Algerian War of Independence had in effect started in 1945, with a massacre of demonstrators by French troops - followed by a brutal Algerian pogrom against Europeans and further reprisals by the French - at Sétif. There had been an effort by constitutionalists under Messali Hajj and Ferhat Abbas to resolve matters by negotiation.[33] But they had run into the insurmountable opposition of both French Algerians (often dismissively called *pieds-noirs*[34]) and successive governments in Paris. The latter regarded the retention of French Algeria as a matter of national honour, especially after the humiliating experience of defeat by Germany and more recently in Indochina. Unable to make political headway, the constitutionalists were eventually outflanked by more radical activists.

Fanon had already shared with Algerians in Lyon the experience – as he saw it – of rejection and pathologisation by French society. His time at Blida would only confirm his views. He became increasingly sympathetic to the aims of Algerian nationalists, even after the turn to violence in 1955. That year saw the infamous massacre of French civilians at Philippeville (now Skikda) by the emergent Front de Libération Nationale (FLN).[35] Fanon had already begun to believe that only violence could reconstitute the colonised or racially subaltern personality as a whole human being.[36] The FLN agreed. Fanon developed links with the group and increasingly used his position at Blida to provide medical treatment to wounded fighters and support to their operations. He also began to think of himself not as Martiniquais or French but as Algerian, despite not knowing Arabic and having only a sketchy knowledge of Islam and indeed Algeria's own history.[37]

By 1956 Fanon had become irrevocably committed to the armed struggle. He resigned his position at Blida and moved to Tunis, where the external leadership of the FLN, under severe French pressure within Algeria, had taken up residence. He became one of the FLN's chief publicists, writing extensively for their newspaper, *Al Moudjahid*. He

travelled through much of Francophone Africa and was appointed the ambassador of the Provisional Algerian Government to Ghana. There he attended conferences, bizarrely thought Roberto Holden was the future of Angola; came to know – and influence - Kwame Nkrumah and Patrice Lumumba; and sought to mobilise the whole of Africa behind the Algerian revolution in the quixotic belief that the pan-African quest for liberation - regardless of ethnic, tribal, religious, linguistic and social divisions - was as one.[38]

Fanon was diagnosed with leukaemia in 1960. He underwent treatment in Moscow, without success. In a final irony the CIA facilitated his transfer to Bethesda Hospital in Maryland, where he died on 6 December 1961.[39]

Fanon Canonised: The Satre Factor

The history of the last two centuries is littered with revolutionaries who seemed failures in their lifetimes – like Marx - only for their influence to live on among those who reinterpreted, overinterpreted or misinterpreted their teachings. Antonio Gramsci, for example, died in a fascist hospital clinic in 1937, his teeth having fallen out and his digestion collapsed. But his *Prison Notebooks* quickly become an essential guide for any respectable European Leftist who wished to undermine capitalism and the ideological state institutions that supported it. Walter Benjamin, who with his admirers in the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, thought capitalism doomed and a new era of socialist liberty achievable with enough effort, committed suicide in a small hotel in the French Pyrenees in 1940, despairing of ever obtaining a visa for Spain. The visa arrived the next day. Nevertheless, Benjamin's influence only grew. The same was true of his Frankfurt associates, often mediated through those lucky enough to gain tenure at US universities. Among the latter were the former Spartacist, Herbert Marcuse,[40] and "*the great vulgariser of Marxist humanism*",[41] Erich Fromm. Among their admirers elsewhere were the theorists of the *New Left Review* in Britain.[42]

Fanon is perhaps of this company.[43] It is curious that although he professed a deep devotion to the cause of Algerian freedom - and indeed proclaimed that he was, in fact Algerian,[44] rather than Martiniquais or French (identities which he publicly renounced) – the FLN never saw him as one of their own. They simply found him useful as an interlocutor with other liberation movements within Africa and as an international advocate of the revolution.

Of course, the FLN received – and welcomed Arab support: this was after all the time of Nasser, before his own revolution turned to dust. And after the Bandung Conference in 1955 they could count on reflex Third World support at the United Nations. But they never placed any great weight on pan-African unity or indeed international solidarity as a fundamental principle. They were committed to a violent ethno-nationalist struggle for Algeria, not for the Gold Coast, Angola or the Belgian Congo. Their struggle had a specific context: the century-long French occupation. They saw it as an Algerian, Arab and Islamic cause – in that order. Fanon, for all his pretensions, was none of these things. He was an outsider to the end, who from time to time encountered Arab racism himself.[45] And he never seems quite to have grasped that he was as much an instrument – a

reified object, as Marxists or phenomenologists might say[46] – for the FLN as he believed he was by virtue of his race for white Europeans.

When he died, his body was brought back to Tunis, smuggled across the border into Algeria and given a clandestine burial. But the FLN did little to keep the flame of his memory alight. In the end he was too marginal to their success, which was gained ultimately by persuading de Gaulle not that reification was a problem, but that maintaining French rule in Algeria by force of arms was simply not worth the candle.

By the late 1950s the French army had won militarily: they had gained dominance in the domains of military intelligence and logistics, locked down the cities and decimated the FLN's forces of the interior. But it was simply too expensive to maintain an army of occupation – and too damaging to the social fabric at home.

For its part, the FLN won simply by surviving. It was able to maintain a substantial Army of the Frontiers[47] in relative safety in Tunisia and Morocco, where French forces could not normally reach. It was the same dilemma that eventually faced the US in Vietnam, where there were plenty of would-be Fanons among the liberal elite, but the Vietcong won by using Cambodian and Laotian territory, collapsing morale in the south, making continued military operations too expensive, and persuading Walter Cronkite and Henry Kissinger – not Jane Fonda – that it was time to go. Given the marginality of Fanon to all this, we might then ask: why does Fanon continue to command attention in the West, particularly within universities – and most notably among postcolonial and subaltern studies scholars?

Fanon was certainly not the first to use point-of-view autoethnography or phenomenology – that is, lived experience – as the epistemological basis for a critique of the colonial gaze and therefore of western colonialism. Nor was he unique in denouncing racially inflected structures of power and domination. Such thoughts were in the air. W E B Du Bois – the pan-Africanist and co-founder of the NAACP born in the age of reconstruction and Jim Crow - had already explored the possibility of a distinctive and oppositional Black identity.[48] In 1930s New York, the Harlem Renaissance was in full swing. In Jerusalem, George Antonius had written his influential account of an equally distinctive Palestinian national and anti-colonial consciousness in his widely influential book, *The Arab Awakening*. Aimé Cesaire in his extended poetic meditation, *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* [*Notebook of a Return to my Native Land*], published in 1939, had theorised Négritude as a counterpoint to White colonialism. And at about the same time in the anglophone Caribbean, the Trinidadian Marxists, George Padmore and C L R James had done much to foreground subaltern agency. The former was a significant influence upon Kwame Nkrumah; the latter had explicitly hoped to contribute to the liberation of Africa and the Caribbean through his innovative 1938 study, *Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*.[49]

In a different way in Paris, Richard Wright, the emigré American author of the novel, *Native Son*, and other works (which Fanon at first admired and

then criticised[50]), and of course Simone de Beauvoir, through her socially constructivist analysis of the feminine and the discursive subordination of women, were exploring similar themes. Sartre's existentialism – in the long run perhaps the greatest influence on Fanon – sought relief from the Nietzschean death of God in the sovereign and authentic self. Meanwhile, the radical psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan,[51] integrated the master-slave dialectic into his own practice (notably in his theory of the 'mirror-stage' of human development), before disappearing into the impenetrable word-salads of his later years.[52] And there were many others, all drawing on the same sources in the philosophy of Husserl and Heidegger - and ultimately Hegel – in the quest for "authenticity".[53]

But what Fanon perhaps exemplified for his admirers was the engaged intellectual, a thinker who was also a man of action and could point to his own involvement with a violent liberation struggle as a mark of genuine commitment – and authenticity. The problem with Sartre was that though his intellectual reputation might be high, and he could certainly write powerfully, he remained a man of letters not action. After military service as a meteorologist before the Fall of France and several months as a POW afterwards, he returned to his Lycée teaching post, was allowed to publish his books freely and seemed to prefer to theorise resistance with kindred spirits at the Hotel Mistral in Paris or on a sun-kissed terrace in the south of France.[54]

It was perhaps the seductive combination of theory and action that attracted Sartre to Fanon in the first place. Or it may simply have been the perverse appeal that violence holds for many intellectuals, dissatisfied with the messy compromises of real life but squeamish about the consequences for themselves.[55]

Such an appeal seems certainly to be reflected in his preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*, written at a dying Fanon's own request. The two had met for the first time in 1961 in Rome[56] after Fanon had been impressed with Sartre's *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*, a totalising and utopian attempt to explain the virtues of Marxian revolution.[57]

Sartre's help turned out in the long run to be a mixed blessing. After he signed a collective letter – organised by Claude Lanzmann[58] – supporting Israel at the beginning of the June 1967 war, Josie Fanon asked the publishers to remove the preface and his books were burned in Algiers. Even when Sartre later described the 1972 Munich massacre as "*terrible*" but "*necessary*", his reputation in the Arab world never recovered.

Nevertheless, it was still Sartre's interpretation of the book - with its constant emphasis on the redemptive and purgative value of revolutionary violence[59] - that dominated its reception and has continued to shape discussion to this day. Of course, this is not to say that Fanon himself had changed his mind and come to believe that revolutionary violence was tactically wrong or immoral. Both in *Black Skin/White Masks* and again, at greater length, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon quoted approvingly a passage from Césaire where the insurrectionary subaltern slaughters his white colonial master and thus achieves authentic freedom and selfhood.

At least at the theoretical level, Fanon seemed clear on the necessity of such violence – a point underlined by the famous chapter "*Concerning Violence*" in *The Wretched of the Earth*. There he also notoriously wrote, "*In its bare reality, decolonization reeks of red-hot cannonballs and bloody knives. For the last can be the first only after a murderous and decisive confrontation between the two protagonists*'.[60] These were not emollient words.

Yet as early as the mid-1950s, Fanon's clinical practice in Blida had shown him that violence produced psychological trauma and personal derangement[61] of a kind that could only lead to more violence and trauma.[62] In the last chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth* he cited further case studies demonstrating that the practice of violence is damaging to its practitioners. And Beauvoir, who was as usual with Sartre throughout their discussions, reported that Fanon seemed to have "*a personal horror of violence*" when inflicted by the Belgians in Congo, the Portuguese in Angola, or indeed by and within the FLN itself. This may have been the result of his first-hand experience of the FLN's brutal internecine conflicts.[63] In December 1957, these had cost the life of his friend, Abane Ramdane, [64] the effective leader of the FLN's forces within Algeria itself, who had argued for the primacy of the internal struggle and the desirability of maximum violence.[65] Fanon had also come to find the increasing paranoia of the FLN leadership on his periodic returns to Tunis highly oppressive.

He refused to make these reservations public, of course. That would have been to betray the revolution, which Fanon was still convinced would herald a new era of freedom, tolerance and true humanity – not just in Algeria but throughout Africa.[66] Why he continued to believe, in the face of both his personal experience and his written testimony, that violence could still be therapeutic and produce by sublation a well-ordered society if committed by the right people for the right reasons at the right time remains a mystery, particularly as he never gave any evidence for this view (and much for its opposite).[67] Sartre - who unsurprisingly admired Mao Tse Tung[68] - for his part chose to make this the central feature of his preface and ignored any doubts that Fanon might have had – or any evidence in the text that (as Lukács, Lacan or Derrida[69] might have said) Fanon's own commitment to its meaning was fractured, provisional and both present and absent. Perhaps in the end Fanon simply saw the intoxicating effect of violence and could never quite reconcile the twin effects of such a drug: necessary sometimes and potentially purifying - but always dangerous.[70]

Fanon Contested: Camus and Memmi

Fanon's posthumous reputation has become so hallowed – and perhaps the influence of Sartre so powerful – that it is now hard to remember that his account of the Algerian war and the therapeutic urgency of violence were contested even at the time. Two figures in particular stand as intellectual counterweights. The first is Sartre's great contemporary, friend and ultimately opponent, Albert Camus, born in Oran in 1913 to a deaf and illiterate mother and to a father killed in action in 1914. In the 1940s and 50s Camus had been - and remained until his death in a car crash in 1961 - a powerful advocate for Arab rights. As a native-born Algerian, he was also emotionally conflicted, condemning the brutality of French counter-insurgency tactics and arguing consistently for an entwined Franco-Algerian historiography and for national – rather than nationalist – reconciliation,[71] much to the disgust of many of his former comrades on the French Left, including Sartre (who knew him well) and indeed Fanon (who did not).[72] When challenged on this at a press conference in 1957, Camus famously said, "*People are planting bombs in the tramways of Algiers. My mother might be on one of those tramways. If that is justice, then I prefer my mother.*" It was a spontaneous reaction which alienated those who wanted unambiguous commitment from a man who had, after all, proclaimed his own virtue – and rejected revolutionary violence.[73] Others probably sympathised – and still do. Flawed or not, it was a deeply human response when humanism had become unfashionable.[74]

The second great critic of Fanon's absolutism was his Tunisian Jewish counterpart, Albert Memmi. Memmi was born in 1920 in Tunis. His mother was Berber (and also illiterate, like Camus's mother) and his father a Tunisian-Italian harness-maker. He spoke Judaeo-Arabic at home, Hebrew at his religious school, classical Arabic when necessary and French to foreigners. He experienced the same sort of alienation as Fanon, an outsider at the intersection of three distinct cultures. He had no illusions about cultural universality: "*The Jew is the oppressed of that society* (sc colonial Tunisia), *including its other oppressed members. Even the most underprivileged feels in a position to despise and insult the Jew.*"[75] But he was active in Tunisia's own struggle for independence from France. And – unlike Fanon – he genuinely was North African, spoke the languages of the region fluently and wrote from within its culture and society. He continued to do so up until his death in Paris in 2020 – outliving Fanon by 60 years.[76]

Memmi's best-known work, written while Fanon was still highly active,

is perhaps *The Coloniser and the Colonised*,[77] to which Sartre again contributed a preface. It contains an analysis, very similar to Fanon's own. Memmi too examined the ways in which colonial subordination creates the figure of both colonised and coloniser. The inevitable power imbalances, Memmi believed, came to be construed discursively as reflecting essential differences between the two.

In 2004 Memmi published a companion piece, *Decolonisation and the Decolonised*.[78] Those who admired the earlier work were taken aback by its successor. *Decolonisation and the Decolonised* offered a bleak critique not of the principle but the *practice* of decolonisation. Memmi illuminated its attendant violence, corruptions and oppressions - and queried whether any transition between colonial and postcolonial rule, morally necessary as it might be, could ever lead to a more humane future.[79]

It is not clear whether Fanon ever met Memmi. But they were aware of each other's work. And in 1971 Memmi published some pointed reflections on Fanon's life and work,[80] locating Fanon's difficulties not so much in the external reality of a racist world which he sought to change but rather in his own internal conflicts about identity – a product of the former undoubtedly but also a prison from which theory could not help him break free. In Memmi's view, in trying to escape into an idea of universal humanity, he hid the inevitable particularity of any revolution. Finally, Memmi suggested that Fanon had come to despise his origins in Martinique – unlike Aimé Césaire – and therefore found it impossible to return there to engage in the productive if inevitably compromising work of practical postcolonial politics.[81]

Fanon and The Rise of Postcolonialism

On 7 October 2023, in the wake of the murderous Hamas attacks on Israeli villages, kibbutzes, military posts and a music festival (an assault that – as Gilles Kepel has pointed out[82] - uncannily mirrored the FLN's massacre at Philippeville 78 years earlier), Najma Sharif Alawi, a writer for *Soho House* magazine and *Teen Vogue* tweeted, "*What did y'all think decolonization meant? vibes? papers? essays? losers*".[83] In doing so, she was perhaps channelling not so much Fanon[84] as a certain idea of Fanon.[85] The post was liked by hundreds of thousands and retweeted thousands of times – including by Karen Attiah, the former Global Opinions Editor of *The Washington Post*.[86]

The sentiment was reflected in countless other posts and commentaries. Russell Rickford, a professor at Cornell University, echoed Fanon when he claimed that many Palestinians were at last "*able to breathe – for the first time in years. It was exhilarating. It was energizing*".[87] The doyenne of gender studies Judith Butler, while claiming to be anguished by Hamas' assault, denied that it was either terrorism, or anti-Semitic, preferring instead to call it an act of "armed resistance" against a "violent State apparatus".[88] Elsewhere, the CUNY Jewish Law Students Association quoted Fanon directly in their open letter proclaiming solidarity with Palestinian self-determination.[89] A teacher at the Brooklyn Institute for Social Research posted, "*Shabbat Shalom and may every coloniser fall everywhere*". A Lebanese-American journalist wrote, "*Watching armed indigenous people take their land back from their colonizers is something else*". And an assistant professor at Texas Tech declared, "*Decolonization is about dreaming and fighting for a present and future free of occupied Indigenous territories*".[90] More recently, in a commentary on events at Columbia University, the distinguished historian of Palestine, Rashid Khalidi, specifically quoted Fanon in support of his claims about the attitude of Israelis towards Palestinians.[91]

Some of these reactions came from Palestinian activists and other Arabs and Muslims – many of whom were perhaps intellectually and emotionally invested in the Palestinian cause and the conflict more broadly.[92] But many others issued from those committed only to the imperatives of critical theory[93] – particularly postcolonial and subaltern studies, connected fields of academic activity of which Fanon is one of the founding figures.[94]

The field has boomed since the 1970s.[95] Apart from Fanon's writings,[96] its key foundational texts are Edward Said's *Orientalism*,[97] Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak's famous essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*[98] and perhaps Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.[99] To this one can add works by various second or

third wave scholars such as Homi Bhabha.[100] Postcolonialism has spread across university departments in the West, particularly but not exclusively within the Anglosphere. And it has given rise to impassioned if often not particularly enlightening public debates about civilisational guilt, reparations,[101] the role of museums[102] and so-called cultural appropriation more generally, focusing almost exclusively on taxonomies of western imperialism rather than (for example) analogous Arab, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Mughal, Ottoman or indeed African practices.[103]

Theorists typically draw a distinction between Fanonism and Saidism, the former construed as a clarion call to often violent activism, and the latter as scholarly engagement with forms of representation produced by both the coloniser and the colonised.[104] It is hard entirely to separate the two. Fanon exercised a powerful influence on Said, as Timothy Brennan's recent biography[105] makes abundantly clear. And Said returned to Fanon frequently in his published works.[106] Even so, Said seems to have disliked the way postcolonial studies had developed in the western academy:[107] like Theodor Adorno (and indeed CLR James), he was perhaps too steeped in European high culture to be fully comfortable disowning, provincializing[108] or otherwise problematising it.[109]

And there is a more basic difference in the approach of the two men. Said discussed Fanon's theory of colonial counter-violence[110] in the context both of Michel Foucault's work on socially coercive methods of discipline and punishment[111] and of Palestinian, Irish and other forms of what have come to be called terrorism. Said almost certainly aimed to problematise the use of that term. But, like the great French scholar of the Arab world, Maxime Rodinson (both Jewish and Marxist)[112], who also supported the Palestinian cause, he clearly preferred "*a decent measure of intellectual refusal, negation and scepticism*" (his phrase) to an AK-47 and coexistence to mutually assured destruction. And in terms of physical force, he restricted himself to throwing a symbolic stone at the Israeli border fence with Lebanon in 2000.[113] He would probably have thrived no more in Algeria before or after independence than he did as an expatriate adviser to Yasser Arafat within the PLO.[114]

As we have seen, Fanon may also have been conflicted on the question.[115] But it is hard to read *The Wretched of the Earth* in particular without being struck – or shocked – by the tone of certain passages. Sartre may have overstated Fanon's tolerance for violence. But it is certainly there.[116] There is nothing remotely comparable in Said's writings.

And this introduces the question of the efficacy of such violence in the real world rather than the realm of theory. The Palestinian turn in the 1960s to counter-violence/terrorism (whatever your preferred term: a bomb is still a bomb) was in practical terms a disaster for the cause of Palestinian nationhood. Every single insurgency in the Middle East and North Africa has resulted in disaster, either through the mobilisation of the full repressive apparatus of the state or through its catastrophic aftermath. That was the case in Algeria. French rule there was followed by the creation of an intensely repressive militarised single party state which squandered

the proceeds of Algeria's energy resources through corruption, waste, vanity projects and the enrichment of a permanent and self-reproducing military caste (*Le Pouvoir*, as it is popularly known, in an interesting mash-up of Kafka and Foucault[117]). An attempt to remove the FLN from office democratically in the early 1990s led to a civil war distinguished by the extreme brutality practised by the State and the Islamist-led opposition alike. All the misery which the war of independence had caused – on all sides – produced not the tolerant oasis of shared humanity which Fanon imagined but a puritanical state of fear where non-Muslims, non-Arabs and Jews in particular were unwelcome. Indeed, it is a curious reality that the French have come to terms with their defeat in Algeria rather better than the Algerians have done with their victory.[118]

Still, the dream has lived on. When Michel Foucault was sent to Tehran in 1978 by *Corriere della Sera* to report on the Iranian revolution, he prophesied the return of a "political spirituality", a rebuttal of Max Weber's claim that the world had become forever unenchanted.[119] Foucault was, of course, entirely wrong.[120] So, too was Fanon. And so in the end were Gramsci, Benjamin, Lukács, Lacan, Sartre and all those other intellectuals shaped at a distance by the naïve and sometimes self-interested utopianism of the European Left, who seem to have believed that revolutions, whether of the street or of the mind, by the gun or by the word, would abolish injustice and inaugurate a new era of human freedom.[121]

In the case of Fanon, you could argue for the primacy of the context in which he found himself. He had been brought up in a largely black or mixed-race milieu to believe in the universality of French culture. Yet when he journeyed to the overwhelmingly white metropole, he found that culture sadly flawed. Scarred by war, he discovered and tried to treat psychiatric conditions which had at least some of their roots in the profound alienation he was himself beginning to feel. As a result, he came to believe he had discovered both a cause and a home – at a time of global decolonisation – in a liberation struggle which was at the same time Francophone and non-Francophone, French and not-French, the image and its reflection.

But that time has gone. Understanding Fanon in context is one thing.[122] Both of his recent anglophone biographers make a heroic effort to do so – and largely succeed.[123] That is a triumph of the historical method. Taking Fanon's own prophetic metaphysics as a guide to the present moment is the opposite, a deliberate decontextualization and dehistoricisation characteristic of postmodern thought.[124] And like Foucault's despatches from Tehran, this perhaps tells us more about the failures of theory – or its practitioners[125] - than it tells us about the world in which we live.

The belief that violence produces salutary progress is not, of course, unique to certain varieties of postcolonial thought. In its modern forms it can perhaps trace its origins to the French Revolution and the rise of revolutionary movements in Russia and elsewhere in Europe during the C19th. You can find it dramatized in Kleist and Dostoyevsky. And it was advocated (in a different context, that of class conflict) by the French

political theorist, Georges Sorel, in the early C20th.[126] It was, of course, also a distinctive feature of Leninism, Stalinism, Maoism and the Khmer Rouge.[127]

Fanon and Sayyid Qutb

If one looks at the world today for the Fanonist idea that violence is therapeutic and can deliver salvation, the closest – and most potent -- analogue is the idea promoted by radical Islamists that God has commanded Muslims either to convert or eliminate all unbelievers in order to usher in the reign of the righteous. This belief informed - at least in principle - the jurisprudence of jihad before the modern era.[128] It is now associated in particular with the thought of the radical Egyptian ideologue, Sayyid Qutb, and his successors. Transitioning in the late 1940s from writing imaginative literature to alignment on social justice with the Muslim Brotherhood, Qutb had become the latter's ideological standard bearer and most effective publicist just as they were suppressed by Nasser in 1954.[129] He was imprisoned, tortured, released, rearrested and finally executed in 1966 for a quixotic attempt to organise a coup against Nasser, whose rule he regarded as unislamic and therefore illegitimate. But Qutb's writings – notably *In the Shades of the Quran* ("*fi dhilal al Quran*") and *Milestones* ("*ma'alim fil tariq*") – are fundamental to all subsequent Islamist movements. And the ideological thread runs from the inchoate beginnings of vanguardist Salafist or takfiri movements in the late 1960s[130] through to Al Qaeda, the Islamic State and their numerous offshoots. Qutb's ideas also crossed the Sunni-Shia divide, becoming a reference point for the creation of the radical Shia Islamist movement, Da'wa, in Iraq after 1958 and, translated into Persian by the future Ayatollah Khamenei, shaping the thinking of those revolutionaries who seized power in Tehran in 1979.[131]

Like Fanon, Qutb's ideological influence has been widespread and protean. There are other parallels. Both men claimed to have experienced epiphanic moments, which revealed in a discursive fracture the identity of the real enemy.

Fanon's occurred in that train in Lyon, under the white gaze, with the child shrinking in fear from the unknown and frightening black man.[132] A subsidiary epiphany came when he discovered that no respectable French woman would dance with him – or other black French soldiers.

Qutb experienced his own moment on the ship carrying him to the US in 1948, when he claimed that a '*beautiful, tall, semi-naked*" woman tried to seduce him; and then again in Colorado at a church social when he observed what he considered the animal passions of young men and women dancing together - to what he described as jazz.[133] In such episodes, Qutb claimed to divine the true degeneracy of western society: sex apparently free from social sanction and women flaunting their bodies. He had a further – confirmatory - epiphany in hospital in New York when

he claimed to witness the celebrations on the wards when news of the death of Hassan al Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, was broadcast.[134]

It would not be unreasonable to wonder whether any of these events happened in quite the way their authors described them, or were experienced in the manner claimed.[135] After all, Fanon had a child with one white Frenchwoman and married another. [136] The account he gives of his encounter on the Lyon train has an impressionistic, almost Joycean flavour – and it is not at all clear whether the exchanges he reports were real or at least partly in his head. As for Qutb, it is highly unlikely that staff at a New York hospital in the late 1940s would have known who Hassan al Banna was, let alone celebrated his death. Greeley – the place where Qutb saw degeneracy in action – was small-town America writ large. And a dry church social[137] was an unlikely den of iniquity.

Both Fanon and Qutb seem to have been hypersensitive to what they saw as slights or cultural humiliations. The former was described by both his fellow Martiniquais, the writer and poet, Edouard Glissant, and Francis Jeanson, the book editor at both Esprit and Seuil (and founder of the clandestine Jeanson network which worked to support FLN operations within France), "*as an 'écorché vif', an ultransensitive soul, someone who has been 'flayed alive'.*"[138] That is not to say that Fanon's claim that racism both arose from colonialism and constituted it were entirely baseless. They clearly were not. But the way he framed his experiences and then generalised them into claims about the world as a whole does not make them canonical. Indeed, he was often contradictory.[139] He claimed that France had rejected him and that he had therefore decided – in a very existentialist way – simply to become Algerian by a fiat act of will. Yet in *Peau noire, masques blancs*, he could write, "*Je suis français. Je suis intéressé à la culture française, à la civilisation française, au peuple français*" ("*I am French. I am interested in French culture, its civilisation and people*"). He supported the reflexively antisemitic FLN, yet thought antisemitism was a manifestation of the same racism that so troubled him: "*L'antisémitisme me touche en pleine chair, je m'émeus, une contestation effroyable m'anémie, on me refuse la possibilité d'être un homme*» ("*Antisemitism touches me deeply, I am troubled by it, a terrifying challenge makes me faint, I am denied the chance to be a man*").[140]

This perhaps simply illustrates Fanon's mistake in supposing that the Algerian conflict would enable a more general freeing of the human spirit. Indeed, many of those who supported him publicly or helped him and the FLN materially during those years were Jews[141] or devout Catholics.[142] Yet when independence came in 1962, not only did true freedom *not* come to Algeria – or to Africa in general – but Jews in particular found themselves unwelcome.[143] Outside Algeria this happened even in places like Tunisia and Morocco where there were large and long-standing Jewish communities. Similarly, French Catholics – like anyone of French or *pied-noir* origin in Algeria – found themselves treated as aliens. Most emigrated or were forced out as the new government defined the country as Arab and Islamic, suppressed the Berber language (*Tamazight*) made

Ramadan observance compulsory and restricted Algerian citizenship to Muslims. Even those naive European radicals who flocked to Algeria after independence - the so-called *pieds-rouges* – found themselves unwelcome. They were lucky. The many Algerians who had fought for the French - the *harkis* – were simply tortured, killed or expelled.[144]

Shatz writes that it is precisely because of Fanon's "*defiance of identity's claims, his nomadic commitment to other people's causes and to a radical anti-colonial form of universalism*"[145] that he could move readers far beyond Martinique, France and Algeria. And it is true that he did move them – and continues to do so. He was a major influence upon - for example - Che Guevara,[146] Ali Shariati,[147] Amílcar Cabral, Walter Rodney, Malcolm X, the Black Panthers,[148] Angela Davis,[149] the Weathermen,[150] Steve Biko, Yoweri Museveni, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o,[151] the ANC, the PLO,[152] Kurdish militants in Turkey[153] and a raft of postcolonial artists, activists, theorists and academics in western universities.[154]

But Fanon – like Qutb - seems to have wanted something different. It was not his enrolment in the canon of radical anti-western, anti-enlightenment and anti-colonial thought that mattered to him. It was the liberation of a common humanity. And in the 63 years since his death, that has not gone well.[155] For the proof of this, as described, one need look only at *Le Pouvoir*, the inheritors of the FLN's struggle in Algeria; or the dessicated leaders of the PLO and Fatah; or the murderous Islamists of Hamas, AQ and the Islamic State; or the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his equally murderous acolytes in Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen; or the armed radicals of India, Latin America or Europe.[156] None have succeeded in making the armed struggle into a thing of beauty. Neither have they liberated the human spirit from the chains of racial or religious difference, late capitalism, or (as they might claim) neocolonialism and the sham of liberal democracy. Quite the reverse. Even if you narrow your eyes, it is hard to see China, Venezuela, Iran, India, Liberia or South Africa as exemplary. Of course, one can always argue - as intellectuals have done from Marx to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari - that the revolution is only postponed and when it happens it will be a thing of glory. But, as we continue to wait, that claim has diminishing credit.

One might also quite reasonably argue that the academic study of the evils of western colonialism and empire (two distinct things, of course) constitutes an essential piece of moral accounting. But – like contemporary Fanonism – this work tends to flourish within an academic ecosystem that is sustained almost exclusively by the very cultures which activists stigmatise as irredeemably culpable.[157] There is little if any such accounting in China, in Russia, in Turkey,

in the multiple Arab states that are the heirs of Ummayad, Abbasid, Fatimid, Mamluk, Seljuk and Ottoman imperialism,[158] in Iran, India, Japan, Mongolia and so forth. Fanon, who thought that a revolution in thinking would produce a real-world utopia, has become a palimpsest on which contemporary theorists can inscribe their radicalism.[159] And activists who have read Fanon at university – or know people who have

done so - and fancy themselves defenders of liberty on the barricades of lived experience, can rejoice in the brutal murder of young Israelis, sing songs after football matches celebrating PIRA's savagery[160] or interpret ethnic unrest in the UK as evidence of anti-colonial resistance[161] in the cause not of a universal humanism but a particularist and metaphysical war of identity.[162] And meanwhile the essentialist campaign to associate everything in western culture with slavery or colonialism,[163] without regard for historical or ethical rigour,[164] goes on in the institutions of that same culture, deploying expensive resources in an endlessly frustrated effort to escape into a new and decolonised frame of being.[165]

The Futility of Violence: Fanon after Gaza

The brutal attacks by Hamas on Israeli targets in October 2023 and the subsequent conflicts in Gaza and Lebanon have given new urgency to the question of supposedly redemptive anticolonial violence, not least because those who advocate it as an answer to the Palestinian problem are ultimately drawing on Fanon and his Islamist analogue, Qutb.

Earlier this year I came across these two pieces of graffiti in Venice: "*Il fascismo è stato sconfitto coi fucili non con il voto*" ("*fascism was defeated by guns not the vote*") and "*liberare Palestina per liberare tutte*" ("*liberate Palestine to liberate all*").

They reflect a mindset among some members of the political Left in Europe and the US shaped by Fanon among others. And they show its dangers. They appeal to a set of unexamined and unevidenced propositions - simply because they have become associated with the authority of certain founding figures. They represent, that is, a form of charismatic credentialism. Don't look at the content of the claim: look at the revolutionary charisma of the claimant.

This is deeply problematic for a number of reasons. The first is the refusal to define terms. What exactly does "*liberate*" mean here: and to what end is it invoked? A second is the claim that by doing one desirable thing, you inevitably secure another, larger aim, which is also desirable - though on what grounds is not specified. Associated with this is a tacit denial of consequentialism. For in reality any conceivable "liberation" of Palestine would involve significant violence and the loss of huge numbers of lives, principally Jewish Israelis but also many Arabs, Muslim and Christian. Others would also be deprived of homes, livelihoods and status. Manifestly, not everyone would indeed be "liberated", quite the reverse. In this sense, support for such a project - like Fanon's for the FLN - can only ever be intellectually self-deluding; worse, it risks elevating personal vanities and psychopathologies into universal moral rules.[166]

The history of all so-called liberation struggles in the modern Middle East and North Africa is one of vast suffering, oppression, repression and harm.[167] Yet here we are again, being asked by some to believe that violence is the answer. That's what Fanon thought: in a well-known passage in *The Wretched of the Earth* he dismissed political parties seeking the right to vote as '*pacifists and legalists*'.[168] But Algerians themselves[169] recognise that Algeria ended up a mess.[170] There is little evidence that a Palestine liberated by revolutionary violence would be any better.

The ghost of Marcuse hovers here too. His account of repressive

tolerance suggests that it is right to suppress one's enemies with physical force. We have seen this syndrome at work again in the callous reactions of many on the Left to the murder of the American conservative activist, Charlie Kirk, at Utah Valley University on 10 September this year.[171] On this view, only one side is right - and that side believes in Marx and dialectical materialism, spiced with Frankfurt sauce.[172] The other side is capitalist, bourgeois, bad faith[173] and damnable. The former must therefore vanquish – and even kill[174] - the latter as a moral imperative, no matter the cost. That is religious dogma not reason. It might even be called Manichaeanism - another term often applied by and to Fanon.[175]

Beyond this, what Fanonism also does is to reify Whiteness as a psychosis born of domination and fear.[176] That Whiteness, which Fanon claimed personally to have experienced in both Algeria and France, is generalised to encompass all of Europe and the United States, places he had rarely if ever visited and of which he knew very little.[177] And even the thing he thought he saw is logically inaccessible to others because it is authenticated only by lived experience - and lessons he had culled from the even more speculative Lacan and ultimately the closed idealist system that is Hegel's phenomenology. The latter actually thought that the Master/Servant dialectic had the capacity to resolve itself into a mutual recognition of shared humanity; synthesis followed by sublation onto a higher and more truly human level of existence. Perhaps Fanon never read that far or simply found the idea unpersuasive.[178] Perhaps he was simply uninterested, in the middle of helping to prosecute a war *à outrance*. Whatever the reason, Fanon certainly did not explain how this process of sublation might occur.[179]

Yet it is this aborted essentialisation of Whiteness, accompanied by a refusal to essentialise its opposites, and its turning of this essentialism into a windowless and doorless space of ineluctable culpability that tracks through into contemporary debates about the eternal and heritable stains of racism, colonialism and imperialism.[180] To be White (in this particular way) is to exist in a metaphysical category construed as unique and exceptional by a kangaroo court of social constructivists, from whose judgement there is no appeal.[181]

This parallels the way in which antisemitism locks Jews into an identity strait jacket they never chose and from which antisemites then blame them for being unable to escape. It is perhaps no accident - as *The Morning Star* used to say - that in today's climate Jews are now stigmatised as being White themselves.[182] They are also accused of "settler-colonialism" on the European model, although probably a majority of Jewish Israelis can now claim *Mizrahi* or *Sephardi* origin, often from families expelled from Arab or other Muslim-majority states where they had lived for generations.[183] That's what might be called a triple whammy.[184] And it is operationalised in the repellent intimidation many Jews now face on western campuses.[185] Fanon may not have meant all this to happen. But in his rage at perceived abasement, he helped others make it so.[186] And the logical conclusion of all this is the type of claim made by someone like Julius Malema in South

Africa or Hamas leaders in Gaza – also drawing on Qutb - that killing the White Other (in the former case the Boers: in the latter, Zionists – in effect Jews) is a necessary revolutionary act, a precursor to liberation.[187]

The curious thing is that the whole structure of decoloniality is based on sources of critical theory which are now suspect.[188] Freud, for example, is now often regarded more as a habitual cocaine user, a manipulator of clinical data and a myth-maker of epic proportions than a serious scientist.[189] Lévi-Strauss, weaving webs of theory from his study in New York, is seen (as he saw James Frazier) as a historical curiosity rather than a scientific anthropologist, relying on speculative association rather than field work.[190] The theoretical constructs of Lacan, Derrida, Marcuse, Althusser, Barthes, Kristeva and others have all in different ways been overtaken by history – or by STEM. Some, like Sartre, suffer because of their perceived personal vanities and willingness to instrumentalise others in pursuit of their own desires – the very thing they condemned in capitalism. The practice of psychoanalysis has been challenged by therapeutic care and neuroscience[191] – a return to the empirical, the curative, the somatic, the biological and the pharmacological. Needless to say, all of this would have scandalised Lacan, who blamed Freud for never quite abandoning his training in clinical medicine.[192] The only place where such figures still have traction is within certain parts of the academy, typically those influenced by the more radical forms of postcolonialism,[193] whose practitioners insistently press their radical claims on the public sphere.[194]

This has been accompanied by an elaboration and expansion of the concept of "settler colonialism", which is now regularly invoked by activists not simply to deny Israel legitimacy as a state[195] but also in ritual "land acknowledgements" in the US, Canada, Australia[196], New Zealand and probably soon Europe too.[197] "Progressive" activists have begun to yoke the two questions together in the hope of forming a unified struggle to destroy colonialism and capitalism in general.[198]

The whole idea, of course, is ahistorical, given that population movements, displacements, replacements and settlement have been the motor of human development for millennia.[199] It arises from a particular view of the past as a site of penitence, a Canossa of the mind, where crimes that were committed need now to be expunged – though no one in North America has seriously suggested that New York, Los Angeles, Miami or Quebec should simply be handed over to the Native Americans who once occupied the sites – sometimes after themselves displacing previous occupants – several hundred years ago.[200] It is also anomalous that Israel should be singled out within the Middle East and North Africa, when there has been displacement, population exchange and ethnic cleansing everywhere else in the region for centuries. Such was the experience of the Greeks of Constantinople, Alexandria and Smyrna, the Armenians of Anatolia,[201] the Jews of Salonika, Baghdad, Basra, Damascus, Sana'a and Cairo, and the Kurds, Yezidis, Assyrians and other minorities of Iraq and Syria. Baghdad in 1916 was 40% Jewish. There are no Jews to speak of there today.[202] Until 2003 it was a majority Sunni city: today it is

overwhelmingly Shia.[203]

Still, the dream of liberation through salvific violence endures, nourished by its roots in Fanon's search for a nativist authenticity in Algeria and his binary and intellectually impoverished opposition of the white coloniser and the non-white colonised.[204] In contrast, Memmi, an Arabic-speaking Jew adrift in an Arab and Islamic ocean, saw the dangers of such Manichaeanism with exemplary clarity.[205] And Camus, recognising that ethical claims can often conflict, preferred his mother to abstraction and theory.[206] That might be offensive to absolutists. But to others it is simply a recognisable and admirably human response.[207]

Endnotes

1 As the impeccably progressive **Fred Halliday and Maxine Molyneux, Marxism, the Third World and the Middle East, MERIP, January/February 1984** at link observed 40 years ago.

2 **Peau Noire/Masques Blancs, Éditions du Seuil 1952/Black Skin/White Masks, tr Richard Philcox, New York 2008 ; L'An V de la révolution algérienne, Maspero, 1959; and Les Damnés de La Terre, Maspero 1961/ The Wretched of the Earth, tr Constance Farrington, Penguin 1967**.

3 **Frantz Fanon, Écrits sur l'aliénation et la liberté, textes réunis etc par Jean Khalfa et Robert JC Young, Éditions La Découverte, 2015 and Frantz Fanon, Alienation and Freedom, edited and compiled by Jean Khalfa and Robert JC Young, translated by Steven Corcoran, Bloomsbury 2018.**

4 Of which the classic account in English is ***Alastair Horne, A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-62, New York 2006. Yves Courrière, La Guerre d'Algérie, Fayard 2001***, is a two-volume reissue of what was originally a quartet: indispensable for scholars.

5 Helped enormously by Gillo Pontecorvo's influential 1966 film, *La Bataille d'Alger*. **Gilles Kepel, Holocaustes: Israël, Gaza et la guerre contre l'Occident, Paris 2024** is good on the history and symbolism of the « sacred raid" within Islamic culture.

6 Adam Shatz, The Rebel's Clinic: The Revolutionary Life of Frantz Fanon, Head of Zeus Ltd, 2024, 430f.

7 See the three part essay starting with Nick Rodrigo, Palestine through the Lens of Frantz Fanon, Middle East Monitor (MEMO), 19 October 2015 at link: "*The ongoing resistance in Palestine today is not a new phenomenon, but is rather the latest episode in a decades' long struggle for freedom and what Hegel and Fanon both agree on, recognition*"; and Ramona Wadi, The Destruction of Palestine is the Destruction of the Earth, MEMO, 6 January 2025 at link. For Kanafani in this context, see Marwan Abd el-'Al, Palestinians in Lebanon and the "Political Ghassan Kanafani": An Interview with Marwan bd el-'Al, PFLP, Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol 46, Issue 3-4, 26 September 2024 at link (*the whole issue is devoted to Kanafani*): "*As regards to the Palestinian national liberation struggle, the Arab movements, and for the international struggle, through all of his relationships, Ghassan's position resembled that of Franz Fanon in the Algerian revolution. To the Palestinian revolution, Ghassan was Franz Fanon.*" Jonathan Marc Gribetz, Reading Herzl in Beirut: The PLO Effort to Know the Enemy, Princeton 2024 *provides further useful background on Kanafani*.

8 For a variety of complex reasons, of course: see ***James McDougall,***

***A History of Algeria*, CUP 2017**.

9 With a historiography that looks cruder and cruder with the passage of time.

10 **David Macey, Frantz Fanon, *A Biography*, *Verso* 2000** and **Shatz 2024.** Shatz also devotes a final chapter to Fanon's *Nachleben*. The academy here includes those non-western universities which **Kwame Anthony Appiah, In My Father's House, OUP 1992, 149**, described as "*institution(s) whose intellectual life is overwhelmingly constituted as Western*". An example: a KCL academic, **Ingrid Harvold Kvangraven. Beyond Eurocentrism, *Aeon*, 15 April 2022** at link argues for attending to the allegedly non-Eurocentric ideas of a Sciences Po-educated Marxist, Samir Amin, applying neo-Marxist ideas to colonialism as defined by Marx. The article is commended as an antidote to Eurocentrism by an Oxbridge-educated postcolonial academic, Sarah Jilani, at link. Irony is dead.

11 **Shatz 427. Julia Yost, '*White Lotus* and the Failure of Prestige Drama", *Compact* 7 April 2025** at link goes further, "*Postcolonialism takes a hit, as POC co-ed Paula, beautiful and scornful and allergic to everything, reads Fanon by the pool and schemes up a reparations heist for her working-class Hawaiian lover. When he goes to jail, she goes back to college.*" Fanon is nominated posthumously as an ideal book reviewer by one painfully hip author in **Emmeline Clein, Five Debut Authors Weigh in on the State of the Literary It Girl, *Cultured*, 10 September 2025** link.

12 "*Hyper-liberal ideology plays a number of roles. It operates as a rationale for a failing variety of capitalism, and a vehicle through which surplus elites struggle to secure a position of power in society. Insofar as it expresses a coherent system of ideas, it is the anti-Western creed of an antinomian intelligentsia that is ineffably Western.*" **John Gray, The New Leviathans: Thoughts After Liberalism, Allen Lane 2023, 110. Doug Stokes, *Against Decolonisation*, Polity, 2023** is a brilliantly incisive critique of the creed.

13 "*It is hard to think of another mid-twentieth-century thinker with such enduring star power*", **Shatz, 427.**

14 See for example **Amos Harel, Captured Gaza Documents Reveal Hamas' Preparations for October 7 Attack, *Haaretz*, 17 March 2025** at link; link and **Israel removal from our land inevitable: Haniyeh on Nakba anniversary, *Ommat Press*, 16 May 2024** at link. Hamas' strategy to destroy Israel: from theory into practice, as seen in captured documents, **The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, 13 May 2025** at link; and **Operation Guardian of the Walls as a watershed moment in Hamas' strategy for the "destruction of Israel," as reflected in documents found by the IDF in the Gaza Strip, 27 April 2025** at link offer supporting evidence from captured Hamas documents.

15 Something clearly recognised – against the grain of much doubtless well-intentioned commentary elsewhere - by **Ihab Hassan, The End of Terror and the Establishment of Palestine, *Liberties Journal*, September 2025** at link.

16 In a more general sense, this framing may well have discouraged

properly funded and impartial research into Islamist violence: see **The national research environment for the study of extremism in the UK, Commission for Countering Extremism, December 2023** at link.

17 As an indication, according to **Shatz 2024,** there is a Frantz Fanon hospital in Blida-Joinville and some streets named after him. Iran is an exception. Even in France, Fanon is studied less than in the anglophone academy: « *Aujourd'hui, Fanon est bien plus connu dans le monde anglo-saxon que dans le monde francophone. Il y a un fort intérêt pour son œuvre dans les universités américaines – où il a joué un rôle important, et pas uniquement dans les études postcoloniales* » : **Séverine Kodjo-Grandvaux, Jean Khalfa : « Pour Fanon, la négritude est une mystification » : Jeune Afrique, 16 February 2016** at link.

18 The two most recent biographies of Fanon in English, **Macey 2000** and **Shatz 2024** are outstanding examples of the biographer's craft.

19 A field heavily influenced by the war in Algeria, which shaped discussion of decolonisation more widely: see **Stuart Ward, The European Provenance of Decolonization, Past and Present, No 230 (February 2016), pp 227 – 260** at link. Fanon's own use of the term evolved, first rejection on the grounds that the term was Eurocentric, then eager exploitation in **Fanon 1961.**

20 **Henry Louis Gates Jr, Critical Fanonism, Critical Inquiry, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Spring, 1991), pp. 457-470** at link is an excellent introduction**. Olúfémi Táíwò, Against Decolonisation: Taking African Agency Seriously, London 2022** seeks to reclaim agency for the colonised from the paternalist hermeneutics of decolonial studies. **Robert Woltering, Occidentalisms in the Arab World, I.B.Tauris 2017** is a critique of the reification of the West in anticolonial discourse. **Robert Irwin, For Lust of Knowing: Orientalists and their Enemies, Allen Lane 2006** is an equally bracing critique of Edward Said and Saidism from a distinguished Arabist and, I suppose, "Orientalist" himself. **Martin Kramer, Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America, The Washington Institute, 2001** at link is a sardonic critique of the self-indulgence of progressive American scholarship on the region since the Saidian turn. **Baer 2021, chapter 19** usefully discusses the Ottomans own orientalising tendencies.

21 A word coined by Césaire himself but used more widely – sometimes in different senses – to denote the distinctive and sometimes essentialist nature of Black identity and culture usually in opposition to dominant White identity and culture.

22 **Fanon 1952, 122** *and* **154**

23 The brutality is well described by both **Macey 2000** and **Shatz 2024**. It remains an issue in France today: **Sylvie Braibant, Guerre d'Algérie. Entre obéissance et révolte, le dédoublement permanent, L'Orient XXI, 24 January 2025** at link.

24 **Fanon 195, 88f**

25 ***G W F Hegel, Phänomenologie des Geistes, Gesammelte Werke, Hamburg 1968, Bd 9, 109-15.***

26 It was also highly significant for that avatar of Fanon, Malcolm X: **Manning Marable, Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention, Viking 2011, 198, 366, 398.** Fanon read widely – if selectively and sometimes randomly - in philosophy at around this time. He knew Sartre's writings. He also seems to have attended lectures by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the high priest of post-War French phenomenology: **Shatz 2024, 80f** and in general **Taylor Carman, Merleau-Ponty, Routledge 2020.** The passage was also formative for the thought of the radical French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, who helped influence Fanon, as we shall see.

27 And in that sense, achieves in one bound the freedom which Hegel ascribes to the *Knecht* who has gradually created a dependency in the *Herr*: that latter does not, however, achieve freedom because s/he continues to refuse equal recognition to the former – the *Ich*, as it were, fails to become *Wir*.

28 Fanon quotes Lacan in *Black Skin, White Masks* and his unpublished medical thesis, though it is not clear whether they ever met – or indeed how deeply Fanon came to grips with Lacan's later highly opaque style. He did not see madness as a reasonable response to a world gone mad – as Lacan and Laing did: he saw it as a disordered response under intense social pressure to a disordered world: **Susan Neiman, Fanon the Universalist, NYRB, June 2024** at link. To set this in context, of course, "*According to Robert P Knight, there were only 485 members of the American Psychoanalytic Association in 1952, the overwhelming majority of which practised in New York – so hardly a mass force*": **Christian Gelder, Self Unhelped: Christian R Gelder on Psychoanalysis and Therapeutic Culture, The Sydney Review of Books, 4 December 2024** at link. Lacan, who based a career on emulating and contradicting Freud, set up his own École Freudienne in Paris in 1964. Reich ended up in a federal penitentiary.

29 See **Adam Philips, Winnicott, Penguin, 2007** and **Frank Kermode, Clutching at Insanity, LRB, Vol 26, No 5, 4 March 2004.**

30 On whom Roger Scruton's chapter in his **Thinkers of the New Left, Longman 1985** is still worth reading.

31 See **Camille Robcis, François Tosquelles and the Psychiatric Revolution in Postwar France, Constellations, Volume 23, No 2, 2016. 29 June 2016** at link and **Phineas Rueckert, The Radical Roots of Frantz Fanon's Psychiatry, New Lines, 11 July 2025** at link.

32 Well described in **Andrew Hussey, The French Intifada; The Long War between France and its Arabs, Granta 2014, Chapter 5**.

33 See **Jeanne Auberger, «Il dérange encore le pouvoir» : Messali Hadj, ce père de l'indépendance algérienne que le FLN a voulu effacer, Marianne, 13 December 2024** at link. Fanon dutifully whitewashed the FLN of responsibility for the 1957 massacre of Messali's supporters at Melouza: **Shatz 2024, 238 ff. Hussey 2014, Chapter 10ff** is good on the growth of Algerian resistance to French rule from the 1920s onwards.

34 The origins of the expression are obscure.

35 **Kepel 2024, 29** draws the inevitable parallel.

36 A thought he may have taken from Alexander Kojève's 1930s seminars on Hegel at the College de France: see **Richard Bourke, Hegel's World Revolutions, Princeton 2023, 221ff** and **Axel Honneth, Recognition, A Chapter in the History of European Ideas, CUP 2021, Chapter 2**. The latter very helpfully juxtaposes the development in France of a relentlessly negative interpretation of Hegelian "*Anerkennung/ Recognition*" with the far more benign British tradition going back to Shaftesbury, Hume and Adam Smith. In other words, just because Kojève, followed by Sartre and Lacan, claimed that something is so, is no reason to believe them. That applies equally to Kojève's subsequent career as a Machiavellian French diplomat: **Danilo Scholz, The Art of Diplomacy: Alexandre Kojève's Guide for the Perplexed, e-flux Journal, Issue 150, December 2024** at link. Scholz reports that Kojève may have been a KGB asset. Quelle surprise!

37 As **Memmi 1971** points out, it is odd for a Martiniquais to describe ancestral Algerian Arabs as "*our fathers*" – as Fanon does in **Les Damnés de la Terre** - when he objects to describing similar mythic ancestors in France as "*our fathers, the Gauls*".

38 A belief which was widespread in anticolonial circles at the time: see **Howard French, A Damn Nuisance, NYRB, 25 September 2025** at link. French draws on an extraordinary recent documentary about the war in the Congo by a Belgian director, **Johan Grimonprez, Soundtrack to a Coup -d'État**, which is well worth watching, not least for the supportive role played by black American jazz musicians – offering a codicil to Fanon's own remarks about jazz.

39 **Thomas Meaney, Frantz Fanon and the CIA Man, The American Historical Review, Volume 124, Issue 3, June 2019, Pages 983–995** at link.

40 See **Sir John Jenkins, Islamism and The Left, Policy Exchange 2021** at link and **Roger Kimball, The marriage of Marx & Freud, The New Criterion, December 1997** at link: "*No wonder Leszek Kolakowski concluded that Marcuse's philosophy advocated "Marxism as a Totalitarian Utopia." In the end, Kolakowski points out, Marcuse's entire system "depends on replacing the tyranny of logic by a police tyranny. . . . The Marcusian union of Eros and Logos can only be realized in the form of a totalitarian state, established and governed by force; the freedom he advocates is non-freedom.*" We live with the consequences.

41 Roger Scruton's description.

42 **Edward Thompson, The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays, London 1978** is still a vastly entertaining read on this topic. An exception was the distinguished scholar of the Middle East, the late Fred Halliday, who broke with the New Left Review in 1983 - as Thompson had done two decades earlier - over the violence and repression of anti-imperialist regimes and movements and his scepticism about the transcendent value of subalternity: **Susie Linfield, The Lions' Den: Zionism and the Left from Hannah Arendt to Noam Chomsky, New Haven, 2019, Chapter 6.**

43 **Memmi 1971**: "*Le succès de Frantz Fanon tient probablement davantage à ce prophétisme global, qu'au détail de ses affirmations ou à la justesse de ses analyses. De sorte que, là encore, c'est son échec même qui s'est transformé en rayonnement.*"

44 Even taking an Algerian name as a nom de guerre.

45 **Fanon 2008, 82. Memmi 1971, Macey 2000** and **Shatz 2024** are all good on this. One FLN insider wrote, "*We wrong Fanon when we make him the theoretician of the Algerian revolution, as some have tried to do. In order to speak the language of a people, one must share its convictions: yet Fanon was an atheist*", quoted in **Memmi 1971**. The multivariate origins of racism clearly escape some: **Muslim Vote frontman suggested Britain helped 'create racism', The Daily Telegraph, 25 May 2024** at link.

46 **Frederic Jameson, The Years of Theory: Postwar French Thought to the Present, Verso, 2024, Chapter 2, Reification or Otherness**. The idea of reification – the more precise *Verdinglichung* in German - originates with Marx but was popularised – if the word is appropriate here - by the Hungarian-German literary theorist and Stalinist lickspittle, György Lukács: **Roger Scruton, Fools, Frauds and Firebrands: Thinkers of the New Left, Bloomsbury 2015.**

47 Distinct from the forces of the interior which the French decimated.

48 Admittedly shaped by C19th racial taxonomies: **Appiah 1992, Chapter 2** and **Zachariah Mampilly, The Du Bois Doctrine: Race and the American Century, Foreign Affairs, September/October 2022** at link.

49 Interestingly, **Fanon 1952, 187** remarks, "*Je suis un homme, et c'est tout le passé du monde que j'ai à reprendre. Je ne suis pas seulement responsable de la révolte de Saint-Domingue*". He wanted a claim on all history not simply Black history. James later took up with the Workers Revolutionary Party in the UK.

50 **Shatz 2024, 61** and **99ff.** Fanon's short piece, **Richard Wright's: White Man, Listen! El Moudjahid, No 47, 3 August 1959** in **Fanon 2018** (with an illuminating commentary) illustrates both Fanon's intellectual rigidity and his ignorance of the American context of Wright's work.

51 Again, inspired by Alexander Kojève: see notes 25 and 32 above.

52 **Malcolm Bowie, Lacan, Fontana 1991** is more forgiving. **Scruton 2015** is not. **Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory: An Introduction, Oxford 1983, 151ff** is tolerant. **Raymond Tallis, The Shrink from Hell, THES, 1997** at link is damning. **Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont, Intellectual Impostures, London 1998** demolish Lacan's claims to mathematical or scientific precision. **Grünbaum 1984** describes Lacan's claim that the unconscious is structured like a language as an "*obfuscating view…… If this characterization were appropriate for neurotic symptoms, why would it not also be applicable to psychosomatic and even somatic symptoms?*" Quite so. Fanon seems to have been influenced in his writing by Lacan's hermeneutics without wanting to apply them clinically. Lacan – with Derrida and Foucault (who shaped the thought of Edward Said) - continues to lurk behind much postcolonial theorising: **Spivak 1999, Chapter 3, Note 24** helps explain why. Lacan may have

believed - in the words of Samuel Beckett: ""*And more and more my own language appears to me like a veil which one has to tear apart in order to get to those things (or the nothingness lying behind it.*" But that makes him a self-regarding high modernist not a prophet: **Shane Weller, Language and Negativity in European Modernism, CUP, 2018.**

53 Well described by **Appiah 1992,74f** as "…*the paradoxically histrionic concern of existentialism and the beat poets, which is also central …. to Proust and psychoanalysis*". It is interestingly criticised by **Theodor Adorno, The Jargon of Authenticity, Routledge 2002**. **Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, Cambridge, Mass 1989** is the classic account of the emergence of this idea: the cyborg futures envisaged by thinkers of the "dark enlightenment" such as Nick Land or even Mary Harrington take the idea towards an impasse for humanity as we understand it. However you slice it, it is deeply problematic. An irony is that at the heart of the Lacanian view of the human psyche is a hole, gap, a lacuna, something missing, desire that is not desire, an "I" that is a fiction, the Other which constitutes the imaginary self. His 1957 lecture, **The Insistence of the Letter in the Subconscious** in **David Lodge, Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader, Longman 1988** exemplifies the matter.

54 "Sartre's "*activities on behalf of the French Resistance were half-hearted and uneventful*": **Wolin 2018, 210**. Lévi-Strauss and Lacan were similar. The latter "…. *felt, according to an admirer, Jean Bernier, that "the events that history forced him to confront should have no effect on his way of life, as befits a superior mind*": **Tallis 1997**

55 See **Martin Kramer, Genet Among the Palestinians, Commentary, July 1994** at link. In 1970 Jean-Luc Godard proclaimed from Jordan, just before Black September and with eliminationist violence an integral part of the armoury of Palestinian fedayeen, that "*the Palestinian struggle is just a part of the general struggle all over the world against imperialism, related to Vietnam, to Laos, to Cuba, to South America*" see **Kaleem Hawa, From Palestine to the World, the Militant Film of the PLO, NYRB, 17 October 2020** at link. It probably made a change from hanging out with the Rolling Stones. Even the otherwise admirable Maxime Rodinson could not bring himself to condemn ultimately futile Palestinian violence: **Linfield 2019, Chapter 3.**

56 A meeting memorialised in a remarkable *bande dessinée* by **Frédéric Ciriez and Romain Lamy, Frantz Fanon, La Découverte, Paris 2020.** There is now also a film about Fanon: see **Martin Legros, "Fanon", le film : peut-on se désintoxiquer de la violence ?, Philosophie Magazine, 16 April 2025** at link.

57 Savaged not just by **Scruton 2015** but by Claude Lévi-Strauss in the final chapter of *La Pensée Sauvage*. **Richard Wolin, The Wind from the East: French Intellectuals, the Cultural Revolution and the Legacy of the 1960s, Princeton 2018, 207ff** is good on Sartre's fetishisation of violence. So is **Daniel J Mahoney, Contre Sartre, The New Criterion, July 2025** at link, who draws deserved attention to Raymond Aron's principled

opposition to Sartre's disreputable intellectual evasions: a good start would be **Perrine Simon-Nahum (ed), *Aron: Contre Sartre*, Calmann-Lévy 2025.**

58 Later the Director of the extraordinary film about the Holocaust, *Shoah*. Lanzmann and Fanon would probably have fallen out over Israel if the latter had lived: **Shatz 2023.**

59 "*For in the first days of the revolt you must kill: to shoot down a European is to kill two birds with one stone, to destroy an oppressor and the man he oppresses at the same time*", Sartre's preface to **Fanon 1967, 19.**

60 **Fanon 1961, 3**

61 Which he interestingly treated with neuroleptic drugs and EST – therefore electronically and pharmacologically as a condition with physiological causes - not with readings of Lacan.

62 He devotes a whole chapter to the issue in **Fanon 1967.**

63 **McDougall 2017, 224ff**

64 **McDougall 2017, 206ff; Shatz 2024, 245; Macey 2000, 352f.**

65 The dialectic between savagery and tactical violence has been a constant in all the internecine conflicts of the region ever since: ***Abu Bakr Naji, The Management of Savagery*** (*idarat al tawahhush*) is perhaps the most spectacular and repellent example.

66 Like the Old Bolsheviks who went to their deaths in the Soviet Union of the 1930s without denouncing the show trials or the system that had condemned them.

67 Any more than does **Ken Chen, In the Zone of Nonbeing: Frantz Fanon in his time—and in ours, The Nation, 3 June 2024** at link; "*During the first weeks of Israel's bombardment of Gaza, I biked through the streets of New York weeping……. This is why, when we read Fanon, we must disinfect his work of the moral panic that surrounds colonized people struggling for their freedom*" – thus combining both a lachrymose claim to universal empathy with the sort of toleration of extreme violence that ***George Orwell, Inside the Whale and Other Essays, Victor Gollancz Ltd 1940, 169*** – commenting on Auden's poem, *Spain 1936* - anathematised: "*Notice the phrase 'necessary murder'. It could only be written by a person to whom murder is at most a word….. Mr Auden's amoralism is only possible if you are the kind of person who is always somewhere else when the trigger is pulled. So much of left-wing thought is a kind of playing with fire by people who don't even know that the fire is hot.*" The willingness of intellectuals to excuse murderous brutality if committed in the name of a higher cause goes back at least to the revolutionary massacres of unarmed prisoners in French prisons in September 1792.

68 As, of course, did Foucault and Kristeva: ***Wolin 2018*** helps explain why.

69 Born to Jewish parents in Algiers in 1930.

70 **Neiman 2024** puts it well: "*Hannah Arendt was the first to point out that the book's most famous claim—that violence is a necessary part of anticolonial liberation—is far more strongly stated by Sartre in his preface than by Fanon himself. Fanon did write that violence can désintoxiquer, but Shatz argues that*

the word is often misunderstood; when translated as "cleansing" or "healing," the implication that violence itself intoxicates is ignored. "Fanon's more clinical word choice," he writes, "indicates the overcoming of a state of drunkenness, the stupor induced by colonial subjugation." In a blow that must have stung at the time, Arendt quotes Sartre's glorification of violence as sentences "Marx never could have written." Were they true, she continued, revenge would be the cure-all for most of our ills." Arendt's incisive commentary on Fanon, Sartre and also Pareto is in ***Hannah Arendt, On Violence, Harcourt Inc, 1970.*** Helpful context for her views on such matters is given by Renata Adler in her posthumous memorial, long unpublished, which eventually saw the light of day in ***Granta 171, April 2025*** at link.

71 See his ***Appeal for a Civilian Truce in Algeria*** in ***Albert Camus, Speaking Out: Lectures and Speeches, 1937-58 (tr Quintin Hoare), Penguin 2021***.

72 Ironic, given that Sartre was stigmatised after the 1967 Arab-Israel war for allegedly sitting on the fence, exactly what he had accused Camus of doing: what goes around, comes around.

73 Most spectacularly in ***The Rebel***, leading to an irrevocable split with Sartre: see ***Sam Dresser, How Camus and Sartre split up over the question of how to be free, Aeon, 27 January 2017*** at link: **"***Camus condemned revolutionary violence. Violence might be used in extreme circumstances (he supported the French war effort, after all) but the use of revolutionary violence to nudge history in the direction you desire is utopian, absolutist, and a betrayal of yourself."*

74 Fanon perversely uses the word to designate his ultimate objective in ***Fanon 1961, 202: «*** *Cette nouvelle humanité, pour soi et pour les autres, ne peut pas définir un nouvel humanisme. Dans les objectifs et les méthodes de la lutte est préfiguré ce nouvel humanisme.* » ***Said 1993,323ff,*** reflecting both his pupillage under Foucault and his admiration of Fanon, struggles with this.

75 ***Albert Memmi, Portrait of a Jew, trans. Elisabeth Abbott, New York, 1971, 175f***, quoted by ***Linfield 2019, Chapter 5***

76 ***Jonathan Judaken and Michael Lejman (eds), The Albert Memmi Reader, Lincoln, Nebraska 2020*** is a convenient selection.

77 ***Portrait du colonisé, précedé par Portrait du colonisateur, Paris 1957***

78 ***Portrait du decolonisé: arabo-musulman et de quelques autres, Gallimard 2004***

79 A delusion to which ***Steve Salaita, The Revolutionary as Critic: Ghassan Kanafani's On Zionist Literature, Liberated Texts, 27 June 2022*** at link, drawing on Fanon, also willingly succumbs: "*Then as now, that experience has a universal dimension. Kanafani's fierce counterpoint to Zionist literature aims to show that Palestinian revolutionary sentiment and national liberation are indispensable to the creation of a better world.*"

80 ***La vie impossible de Frantz Fanon, Esprit, Nouvelle série, No 406 (9), Septembre 1971, 248-273*** at link.

81 ***Gordon K Lewis, The Growth of the Modern West Indies, London 1968, 393*** suggests that the attraction of African causes for West Indians was that it was only possible to construct an authentically inspirational history – centring indigenous agency - of the former. ***James 1938***

in his preface suggests that a desire to contribute a Caribbean dimension to this history motivated his own work – and was clearly proud that his work in turn inspired African revolutionaries.

82 Gilles Kepel, Holocaustes: Israël, Gaza et la guerre contre l'Occident, Paris 2024

83 Link

84 "*The ethno-tribalist fantasies of the decolonial left, with their Fanon recitations and posters of paragliders, are indeed perverse*", ***Adam Shatz, Vengeful Pathologies, LRB Vol 45 No 21, 2 November 2023*** at link.

85 « *Il reste que le Fanon revendiqué et simplifié par les mouvances postcoloniales et décoloniales est un Fanon théoricien de la violence révolutionnaire, qui selon lui « désintoxique » les individus et « illumine » la « conscience du peuple », contre la « domination blanche » et la civilisation occidentale.* » **Taguieff 2020,80.**

86 Who was sacked by the Post in September 2025 for gross misconduct after posting incendiary remarks about the death of Charlie Kirk: ***Ed West, You can't say anything these days, Wrong Side of History, 20 September 2025*** at link. What goes around, comes around.

87 ***Sofia Rubinson, Cornell Professor "Exhilarated" by Hamas's Attack Defends Remark, The Cornell Daily Sun, 16 October 2023***, at link. The reference is to **Fanon 1952, 187**, « *Ce n'est pas parce que l'Indochinois a découvert une culture propre qu'il s'est révolté. C'est parce que « tout simplement » il lui devenait, à plus d'un titre, impossible de respirer* ».

88 **Judith Butler: "*October 7 was an act of armed resistance*"**, at link.

89 ***Eli Lake, Frantz Fanon, Oracle of Decolonization, The Free Press, 1 November 2023*** at link.

90 See the list in ***Peter Savodnik, This Is What 'Decolonization' Looks Like, The Free Press, 10 October 2023*** at link. ***Open letter: Statement of solidarity with Palestine and call to action from the University of Melbourne's staff, students, and alumni, November 2023*** at link is an example from Australia less than a month after Hamas' assault. ***Sebastian Milbank, The dark roots of the University of Edinburgh racism review, The Critic, 5 August 2025*** at link provides dismal comparators from the UK. ***Joanna Takarska Bakir, Part of the Western Left is now a clear and present danger to Jews and the West, Fathom, December 2024*** at link is a bleak *catalogue raisonné* of decolonial and leftist lunacy on the matter. See also ***Roger Kimball, From the Classroom to Congress: The Rise of Anti-American Rhetoric in Critical Race Theory, American Greatness, 24 October 2024*** at link and ***AJ Caschetta, Radical U – Part 1: How Professors Became Architects of the Academic Palestinian Resistance, ME Forum, 18 August 2025*** at link.

91 ***Rashid Khalidi, Does Columbia still merit the name of a university?, The Guardian, 25 March 2025*** at link.

92 See ***Assaf Sharon, October 7: The Tragedy of the "Debate", Liberties Journal, Summer 2024 Volume 4 - Number 4*** at link: "*The sympathy of some Western intellectuals with pogromists is not the fruit of rigorous analysis of either history or the current political environment. Rather, it reflects a knee-jerk radicalism that*

divides the world into oppressors and oppressed and sides with the latter no matter what they do. It regards victimhood as a sign of righteousness and replaces politics with an international solidarity with underdogs. In this Manichaean moral universe, empathy is reserved for one side only, and so is context.".

93 The blog by the American academic political theorist ***Jodi Dean, Palestine speaks for everyone, Verso, April 2024*** at link may be the most crassly reductive: "*Defending Hamas, we take the side of the Palestinian resistance, responding to a revolutionary subject — the subject fighting against occupation and oppression — and recognizing this subject as an effect of a contested and open process. Which side are you on? Liberation or Zionism and imperialism? There are two sides and no alternative, no negotiation of the relation between oppressor and oppressed.*" ***Arash Azizi, Why America's Leftist Literati Loves to Fetishize Hamas Brutality, Ha'aretz 18 April 2024*** at link explains why.

94 His last book was called by the British sociologist, Stuart Hall, the "*Bible of decolonisation*": ***Reingard Nethersole, Shards of Hegel: Jean-Paul Sartre's and Homi K. Bhabha's Readings of The Wretched of the Earth*** in ***Van Haute P, Kistner U, eds. Violence, Slavery and Freedom between Hegel and Fanon. Wits University Press; 2020:117-140.*** For a humane attempt to make sense of the claims and counterclaims – using psychoanalysis as Fanon himself did - see ***Jacqueline Rose, "You Made Me Do It", LRB Vol 45, No 23, 30 November 2023*** at link. Subaltern studies have had a particular valency among Indian scholars, doubtless for reasons connected with their country's particular history: ***Spivak 1999 269ff***. ***Achille Mbembe, Qu'est-ce que la pensée postcoloniale?, Revue Esprit, December 2006*** at link reviews the situation.

95 ***Graham Huggan (ed), The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies, OUP 2013*** and ***Neil Lazarus (ed), The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies, CUP 2004*** and ***Forsdick and Murphy, (eds) 2009*** are useful guides. ***Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, Critical Race Theory: An Introduction, New York 2017*** is a companion piece.

96 "*(Fanon's work) has become a part of the canon for undergraduates studying everything from the Middle East to comparative literature. One finds him in the syllabi for most of the "studies": race, ethnicity, migration, colonialism, diaspora. He is mandatory reading for many of the required courses university students must now take to graduate. For the pro-Hamas left, Fanon is not so much an intellectual as an oracle*": ***Lake 2023.***

97 The latter identified by the generally excellent ***Mbembe, 2006*** as the foundational text of postcolonial high theory – after the period of anti-colonial struggle represented by Fanon and others. The podcast by ***Eli Lake, The Godfather of the Campus Intifada, The Free Press, 4 April 2025*** at link offers an interesting account of Said's trajectory, including many of Said's own words – and why Said has come to be so central to pro-Palestinian campus activism.

98 ***Wedge 7:8: 120-130, 1985***: reproduced in an updated form in ***Spivak 1999, Chapter 3***. ***Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean, A Spivak Reader, Routledge 1996*** provides further learning opportunities.

99 ***Penguin 2017.*** Freire was an admirer of Lenin, Mao, Castro and

Guevara. His pedagogy is, of course, unknown in Russia, China or Cuba.

100 Who has attracted significant criticism from those less enamoured of his writing as he seems to be himself: see for example **Marjorie Perloff, Cultural Liminality/Aesthetic Closure? The "Interstitial Perspective" of Homi Bhabha, Literary Imagination, Volume 1, Issue 1, 1999, Pages 109–125** at link. **Emily Eakin, Harvard's Prize Catch, a Delphic Postcolonialist , The New York Times, 17 November 2001** at link. Bhabha himself wrote a preface to a 2004 addition of Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*: **Nethersole 2020**

101 See **Daniel Butt, Proceeds of crime, The TLS, 10 January 2025** at link and the exchange of letters between him and Nicholas Oulton of the LSE in the immediately following editions for a flavour of the debate.

102 **Dan Hicks, The Brutish Museums. The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution: Pluto Press 2020** is a well-known example. A welcome corrective is offered by **Staffen Lundén, Distorting history in the restitution debate: Dan Hicks's The Brutish Museums and fact and fiction in Benin historiography, International Journal of Cultural Property, First View, pp 1-24, 24 December 2024** at link, who rigorously demolishes many of Hicks' claims. **Hanna Pahls, Historical narratives: How the Palestinian Museum tells history, SGMOIK, 12 August 2024** at link offers counterpoint from Bir Zeit. **Justin M Jacobs, Plunder? How Museums Got Their Treasures, Reaktion Books, 2024** is suitably scathing about Hicks. **Tiffany Jenkins, Losing Their Marbles: How the Treasures of the Past Ended up in Museums – and Why They Should Stay There, OUP 2016** is bracing.

103 The Asante or Zulu for example. On all of this, see **Nigel Biggar: Colonialism: A Moral Reckoning, London 2023**. **Mbembe 2006** makes great play of the Atlantic slave trade as a facilitator of migration, displacement and the creation of creole identities. But so was the Roman empire and the colossal centuries-long Ottoman and Safavid enterprises taking slaves from as far away as the steppes of eastern Europe and the Black Sea – often through the slave markets of the Crimean Khanate - or the Ethiopian highlands. The Arab slave trade, involving raids into Italy and as far as Southern England and Iceland, on which commentary is less extensive (and public acknowledgement limited), was at least the equal in numbers and impact: see **Justin Marozzi, Captives and Companions: A History of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Islamic World, Penguin 2025**; **T. N'Diaye, Le génocide voile, Paris 2008**; **Jeremy Black, A Brief History of Slavery, London 2011, 26ff**; **Stokes 2023, Chapter 4; Ralph Leonard, Christopher Columbus isn't to blame for the Caribbean's problems, UnHerd 2024** at link; and **Monir Ghaedi, How are Gulf countries coming to terms with their history of slavery?, Deutsche Welle, 8 February 2022** at link. **Mohammed Ennaji, Slavery, The State and Islam, CUP 2013** provides a theoretical underpinning. For those with shorter attention spans,

Thomas Sowell, Intellectuals and Race Basic Books 2013, 118ff is concise.

104 ***Graham Huggan, General Introduction, The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies, OUP 2013.***

105 ***Places of Mind, Bloomsbury 2021***

106 Perhaps most frequently in ***Culture and Imperialism, Vintage 1994***

107 Rather as Foucault was uneasy with the way his ideas were interpreted by his disciples – and Fanon's ideas interpreted by his, including Said: see ***Caleb Smith, Michel Foucault, the Bogeyman of the Culture War, Chronicle of Higher Education, 5 July 2024*** at link. Perhaps a productive way to consider these questions as a whole would be to see the *Rezeptsionsgeschichte* of each thinker's work and the construction of niche academic specialisations as exemplifying a Foucauldian archaeology of knowledge.

108 A term associated with ***Dipesh Chakrabarty, Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference, Princeton 2000***.

109 ***Culture and Imperialism*** is a notably conflicted book. Said also thought the linguistic turn in postcolonial studies was a mistake, occluding as it did a focus on the material conditions of oppression and resistance.

110 In the chapter on ***Identity, Negation and Violence*** in ***Politics of Dispossession. London 1994***

111 Classically in ***Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, Allen Lane 1977***

112 See ***Linfield 2019, Chapter 3.***

113 ***Brennan 2021, 337.*** The incendiary exchanges between Ernest Gellner and Said in the Times Literary Supplements of 19 February and 9 April 1993 are well worth reading – not least for Said's thin skin when challenged.

114 As ***Linfield 2019, 218*** points out, "*Said told Salman Rushdie in 1986, "You should remember that I haven't been to Palestine since the mid-sixties"; in a later essay, he admitted that he had not visited between 1947 and 1992."* Not that this stopped him claiming to know what millions of Palestinians thought about the Oslo Accords, of course.

115 ***Erik Linstrum, Frantz Fanon's Conflicted Vision for Decolonization, The New Republic, 4 March 2024*** at link.

116 Both ***Macey 2000*** and ***Shatz 2024*** – to their great credit – wrestle with this question.

117 ***McDougall 2017, 238ff***

118 They were received in France instead, of course : ***Andrew Hussey, The Paris mosque upending Macron's diplomacy: France and Algeria are trapped by mutual contempt, UnHerd 13 August 2025*** at link.

119 See ***Jenkins 2021***.

120 And he wasn't alone: ***Eli Lake, The Ties That Bind Islamists and Progressives, The Free Press, 7 August 2025*** at link. A shining counter example was the admirable Fred Halliday who, in his contemporaneous dispatches for *The New Statesman*, changed his views rapidly on the basis of what he actually observed: ***Linfield***

2019, 205ff

121 See **Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, The Gaza Passion Play and the Mythmakers of Revolution How Western Intellectuals Construct Deadly Fantasies, Substack, 26 May 2025** at link for a biting critique of the syndrome. Foucault was probably less influenced by Marx than by the idea – from Sade via Georges Bataille - that an escape from coercive order was the key to human satisfaction (**David Gress, Michel Foucault, The New Criterion, April 1986** at link): but the point stands.

122 As Fanon himself understood: "*In no fashion should I undertake to prepare the world that will come later. I belong irreducibly to my time*": **Black Skin, White Masks, 15.**

123 As does **Pierre-André Targuieff, L'imposture décoloniale : Science imaginaire et pseudo-antiracisme, Paris 2020, 76ff**

124 **Frederic Jameson, Postmodernism, Verso 1992**.

125 "*No one represents those struggles more clearly than Fanon, whose life and work have inspired books that often reveal more about their authors than their subject. "Fanon," wrote Henry Louis Gates Jr., "is a Rorschach blot with legs."* **Neiman 2024**.

126 **Paul Berman, Terror and Liberalism, New York 2004, David Martin Jones and MLR Smith, Sacred Violence: Political Religion in a Secular Age, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014** and **Georges Sorel, Reflections on violence** in **Jeremy Jennings (ed), Cambridge Texts of the History of Political Thought, CUP 1999.** The first English translation of Sorel was by the radical English thinker, T E Hulme, who was in turn a great influence on T S Eliot - there are connections within connections: see **Gregory Conti, The New Right of T E Hulme, Compact, 7 February 2025** at link.

127 At one point it was also certainly a part of both the ideology and praxis of Fatah who claimed that violence "*is a healing medicine for all our people's diseases*": **Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, eds., The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict (New York: Penguin Books, 2001),**

128 Actual state practice was much less clear cut. **Baer 2021** is excellent on this aspect of the Ottoman state.

129 See **John Calvert, Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism, London, Hurst and Company 2010** and **Hazem Kandil, Inside the Brotherhood, Cambridge, 2015.**

130 **Ahmad 'Adnan, Nasir al Huzaimi and Mansur al Nuqaidan, "Qissat wa Fikr al Muhtallin lil Masjid al Haram, ("The Story and Thoughts of the Occupiers of the Sacred Mosque"), Al Mesbar 2011** describes the milieu very well. In general see **Sir John Jenkins, Dr Martyn Frampton and Tom Wilson, Understanding Islamism, Policy Exchange, 2020** at link.

131 **Abbas Amanat, Iran: A Modern History, New Haven 2017, Chapter 12** is excellent on the connections.

132 It is curious that some time earlier, at the end of his military service, he and a friend had been invited to dinner by a local businessman, whose daughters were also present: "*Given Fanon's subsequent traumatic encounter with the white gaze ("look, maman, a negro"), it is ironic that it was*

he and Manville who gazed at the children and could not take their eyes off them. They had never seen a girl with truly red hair or such a blond boy, and they were fascinated" **Macey 2000,104f.** It is perhaps equally curious that ***Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me, New York 2015*** recounts an analogous story – involving his son on an escalator in New York City, again interpreting it as evidence of white claims on black bodies. Epiphanies are everywhere – and to their recipients always univocal. See also ***Anthony Daniels, Coates contra mundum, The New Criterion, October 2015*** at link and (for another alleged example of artfully reframed storytelling) ***Cory Franklin, The Moral Myopia of Ta Nehisi Coates, John Kass News, 2025*** at link.

133 Of which Fanon was a great admirer, as expressive of the true spirit and culture of black America: **Shatz 2024, 310f.** Qutb clearly differed. So incidentally did Adorno: ***Daniel Steinmetz-Jenkins, What Adorno Can Still Teach Us, The Nation, 9 January 2025*** at link.

134 See ***John Calvert, Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism, London 2010, 141ff*** and Qutb's own ***The America I have Seen,*** interestingly available in the English translation of Osama bin Laden's Abbottabad Papers at link. For the Hassan al Banna episode see also ***James Toth, Sayyid Qutb: the Life and Legacy of a radical Islamic Intellectual, OUP 2013, 65*** and ***David Von Drehle, A Lesson in Hate, the Smithsonian Magazine, February 2006*** at link. Qutb fancifully claimed that the alleged seductress was an American agent.

135 Interestingly Fanon rejects an account of an analogous epiphany by Emile Dermenghem at **Fanon 1952, 163.**

136 Perhaps surprising in someone who could write (in **Fanon 1952, 8**), "*On s'apercevra qui'il n'y a rien de commun entre le nègre de ce chapître (sc Chapter 5) et celui qui cherche à coucher avec La Blanche. On retrouvait chez ce dernier un désir d'être Blanc. Une soif de vengeance, en tout cas.* » Then again, consistency is always a problem with Fanon. He never wrote well about women. And his remarks about white female sexuality in the same work (**157:** "*We know nothing about the black woman*") are as bizarre as his claim that male homosexuality was unknown in Martinique.

137 Greeley was a dry town: **Berman 2004, 62**.

138 ***Shatz 2024, 18, 44 and 145***. ***Macey 2000*** reports the same.

139 ***Targuieff 2020, 77*** helpfully supplies a list: he persuasively interprets this as evidence of Fanon's own intellectual discomfort with some of his own claims – and therefore his honesty.

140 ***Peau noire, masques blancs, 98***

141 Usually committed socialists or communists, of course. Fanon's colleague at Blida, Alice Cherki, for example, the master-forger, Adolfo Kaminsky, the German trade-unionist, Jakob Moneta, the bomb-maker, Daniel Timsit, the American activist, Elaine Klein, the American academic, Herbert Weissor the distinguished academic Hellenist, Pierre Vidal Nacquet, and Sartre's colleague at *Les Temps Modernes* and the future producer/director of *Shoah*, Claude

Lanzmann. Simon Malley, the father of the American foreign policy official, Robert Malley, was one of them too – at a slight remove: see **Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, Robert Malley and the Call from the Third World, The Abrahamic Critique and Digest, 20 July 2023** at link. Lanzmann repudiated the cause of Algeria when President Ahmed Ben Bella announced he would send 100,000 soldiers to liberate Palestine: he also admired the "*reappropriation of violence*" by the soldiers of the IDF – Fanon's existentialism works both ways: **Shatz 2023**. Ottoman Jews, of course, fiercely supported Abdul Hamid II (**Baer 2021, chapter 19**): that has aged well. Ben Bella was overthrown in 1965 by Houari Boumediene in an internal coup, ironically using as cover the tanks stationed on the streets of Algiers for the shooting of Gillo Pontecorvo's highly Fanonist film, *La Bataille d'Alger*. **Shatz 2024, 435ff.**

142 Often, like the young epidemiologist, Pierre Chaulet, part of the circle around the charismatic André Mandouze, a teacher of Latin at Algiers University. Mandouze founded the radical journals *Consciences algériennes* and *Consciences maghrébiennes*.

143 Perhaps analogous to the way the Jewish contribution to the Civil Rights movement in the US has been disowned by some: **Joel Kotkin, Why we need to talk about black anti-Semitism, The Spectator World, 1 July 2025** at link.

144 **Hussey 2014, 207ff**

145 **Shatz 2024, 429**

146 Whom Josie Fanon interviewed in an act of reflexivity during his visit to Algeria: **Priya Prabhakar, Che Guevara on Africa (Interview with Josie Fanon), 26 January 2021** at link.

147 Who – like Fanon – explicitly supported the FLN. Sartre seems to have been an initial intermediary between the two, and they later corresponded. Shariati published a translation – which he had undertaken collectively with 3 others - of **Fanon's Les Damnés de la Terre** as **Mostazafin-e Zamin** in the early 1960s. "*Mostazafin*" then became a watchword for the Khomeinist revolution. See **Ervand Abrahamian, Khomeinism: Eassays on the Islamic Republic, University of California Press 1993. 47ff** and **Ali Rahnema, An Islamic Utopian: A Political Biography of Ali Shari'ati, London 1998, 117ff**. The Iranian-American theorist and academic, **Hamid Dabashi**, author of **Theology of Discontent, New Brunswick 2008**, adapted the themes of Fanon's **Black Skin, White Masks** in his **Brown Skin, White Masks, London 2011**.

148 Eldridge Cleaver, their leader, spent time in self-imposed exile in Algiers. He ended up a conservative Republican and a Mormon. Stokely Carmichael, another prominent activist, "*described Fanon as a mentor*": **Pankaj Mishra, Frantz Fanon's Enduring Legacy, The New Yorker, 29 November 2021** at link.

149 Who was given an honorary doctorate by Cambridge University in June 2025, along with Stormzy, Simon Russell Beale and a former Justice of the Supreme Court in London: you couldn't make it up.

150 **Christopher Rufo, *America's Cultural Revolution: How the Radical Left Conquered Everything*, New York 2023** discusses the connections between Fanon, Davis, the Weathermen and Marcuse.

151 Who famously rejected English as the language of the coloniser. But, as ***Appiah* 1992** observed, "*Ngugi's conception of the writer's potential in politics is essentially that of the avant-garde, of Left modernism*". This is a point made by ***Jean-Loup Amselle, L'Orient décroché: Enquète sur les postcolonialismes, Paris 2008***: it is a cage without an exit. ***Taguieff* 2020, 56ffr** is savagely amusing about the theoretical knowledge of most postcolonial scholars, who see Plato, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Heidegger and so forth through the eyes of Lacan, Althusser and Derrida.

152 ***Shatz* 2024, 431** quotes the admiring words about Fanon of Salah Khalaf/Abu Iyad, Arafat's deputy in both Fatah and the PLO.

153 ***Thomas Jeffrey Miley and Federico Venturini, Your Freedom and Mine: Abdullah Öcalan and the Kurdish Question in Erdoğan's Turkey*, Black Rose Books 2018, 30.**

154 It is worth recalling that in 2006, Tariq Ali wrote in an editorial for the New Left Review on the murderous insurgencies in Iraq and elsewhere that "*A radical wind is blowing from the alleys and shacks of the latter-day wretched of the earth . . .*": ***Mid-Point in the Middle East?" New Left Review 38, March–April 2006.*** The quote from Fanon seems designed to give the claim a quasi-apostolic stamp.

155 As Fanon himself feared: "*Dès Les Damnés de la terre, c'était son obsession : le risque de voir se reproduire des structures d'oppression et leur intériorisation*" : **Kodjo-Grandvaux 2016.**

156 And indeed France: ***Olivier Donnars, L'Irlande du Nord et la Palestine, unies par la colonisation, OrientXXI, 27 January 2025*** at link, a journal that never knowingly undersells the clichés of the decolonial Left.

157 A point made by Spivak herself, interestingly if often obliquely: see her ***A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of the vanishing Present, Cambridge MA, 1999,*** with the review by ***Terry Eagleton, In the Gaudy Supermarket, LRB,*** Vol. 21 No. 10 · 13 May 1999: "*But the ellipses, the heavy-handed jargon, the cavalier assumption that you know what she means, or that if you don't she doesn't much care, are as much the overcodings of an academic coterie as a smack in the face for conventional scholarship.*" ***Aijaz Ahmad, In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures, 1994*** is highly critical of the whole postcolonial academic enterprise from a Marxist perspective. ***Appiah* 1992, 148**, famously called such academics, "*a comprador intelligentsia …. A relatively small Western-style, Western-trained, group of writers and thinkers who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of world capitalism at the periphery.*" ***Lazarus* 2004, 100ff** struggles interestingly with this.

158 See ***Keith Windschuttle, Rewriting the history of the British Empire, The New Criterion.* 2000** at link - a review of the ***Oxford History of the British Empire***. Again, ***Baer* 2021** is excellent on both the splendour and the sheer brutality of Seljuk and particularly Ottoman rule:

he describes the enslavement and forced conversion of millions of Balkan, Slavic, Caucasian, Sudanese, Ethiopian and in the later C19th Armenian and Assyrian Christians, often using the boys as janissaries or - castrated (with a catastrophic mortality rate) - as eunuchs and the women as concubines. For the stomach turning details, see ***Justin Marozzi, Captives and Companions: A History of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Islamic World, Allen Lane 2025. Abbas Amanat, Iran: A Modern History, Yale 2017*** describes the similar practices of the Safavids from the C16th onwards. Chinese and Japanese imperialisms were no better. For the Huns, Mongols and Turks see ***Kenneth W Harl, Empires of the Steppes, Basic Books 2023***. As an afterthought, it is doubtful whether ***Baer's*** account – of Islam "spreading by the sword" – would be allowed under the current Labour government's proposed new definition of "Islamophobia". ***Lazarus 2004***, in his opening chronology, beginning in 1898, fleetingly mentions an occasional egregious Soviet or Chinese act of aggression but says little of Maoism, of Lenin's nationalities policy, of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, the occupation of Eastern Europe after 1945, the rise of the Young Turks, the ethnic cleansing of Greeks from Asia Minor and Egypt, the 1953 worker's revolt in E Germany, Nasser's subordination of Syria in 1958 and backing for coups in Iraq, Yemen and Jordan, the genocidal Turkish treatment of the Armenians and Kurds or the Indonesian occupation of E Timor – for example. ***Spivak 1999, 311*** recognises the problem: "*There may be something Eurocentric about assuming that imperialism began with Europe*". As does ***Gray 2023, 112:*** "*Woke thinking represents itself as a global movement in which America is taking the lead. In practice it is highly parochial. Books such as Robin D'Angelo's White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism (2018) provincialize a universal evil. A critique of racism cannot be based on twenty-first-century American theories of 'whiteness'. The Holocaust has not ceased to be an unparalleled crime because those who were murdered in it were 'white'.*" ***Alexander Morrison, Partisanship and Parochialism in the History of the British Empire (a review of Alan Lester (ed), The Truth about Empire: Real Histories of British Colonialism), Ab Imperio, 1/2025*** at link offers a wonderfully succinct but scholarly – and damning - critique of this tendency among postcolonial scholars of empire.

159 Or, as ***Gates 1991*** puts it, "*a tableau of narcissism, with Fanon himself as the Other that can only reflect and consolidate the critical self*". ***Aaron Sibarium, 'Revolutionary Suicide': UCLA Psychiatrists Cheer Self-Immolation in Leaked Audio, The Washington Free Beacon, 12 April 2024*** at link reports a classic example of the genre. ***Tallis 1997*** writes of Lacan, "*(his) lunatic legacy also lives on in places remote from those in which he damaged his patients, colleagues, mistresses, wives, children, publishers, editors, and opponents - in departments of literature whose inmates are even now trying to, or pretending to, make sense of his utterly unfounded, gnomic teachings and inflicting them on baffled students. Aleister Crowley, the 20th-century thinker whom Lacan most resembles,*

has not been so fortunate in his afterlife". It is, of course, ironic that postcolonial theorists who seek to Other the West do so almost exclusively in the academic dialects of the West, thus reinforcing its metropolitan status, a point with which **Spivak 1999** constantly wrestles – and fails to win.

160 See the agonised (and reflexively defensive) ***Una Mullally: What does it mean to say, 'up the 'Ra'? And why does it keep happening?, The Irish Times, 13 October 2022*** at link and ***Jonathan Wilson, Will Ireland ever forgive Robbie Keane? Sport struggles to be neutral, UnHerd, 3 February 2025*** at link.

161 For example, ***Arun Kundnani, From Oldham to Bradford: the violence of the violated, the Institute of Race Relations, 1 October 2001*** at link and ***Politics of a Phony Britishness, The Guardian, 21 January 2005*** at link - which offers an interesting thought experiment: could the same arguments be applied to French colons in Algeria – or indeed to Israelis and, if not, why not? The answer may lie in his highly Fanonist ***Israel, US campuses, and the fragility of the coloniser, 18 December 2023*** at link: "*To be a coloniser is to live in a state of terror in relation to the colonised…And their great fear is that the violence they inflict on the colonised will be directed back at them.*" The problem is that Israelis are not wrong in fearing Palestinian violence and the issue of colonisation is deeply contested: ***Adam Kirsch, On Settler Colonialism, New York 2024***. On the topic of institutional racism, ***Ed West, Britain is institutionally 'anti-racist'*** at link offers welcome perspective.

162 The radical scholar, Benita Parry, in a contribution to ***Francis Barker (ed), The Politics of Theory, Colchester 1983***, wrote of a contested Lacanian reading of Fanon that it "*obscures Fanon's paradigm of the colonial condition as one of implacable enmity between native and invader, making armed opposition both a cathartic and a pragmatic necessity.*" That seems congruent with the Tweet by Ms Alawi quoted at the start of this paper.

163 ***Stokes 2023, Chapter 4*** concisely demolishes the claim. Or to construct alternative utopian histories, in a desperate effort to assert an agency they themselves often deny is possible, in which the origins of Stonehenge, classical Greek culture and so forth are attributed not to aliens from outer space but to improbably distant subaltern cultures: link. ***Appiah 1992*** is good on the postcolonial instrumentalisation of alterity in this manner. The mindset is comprehensively debunked by ***Razib Khan, When civilization control-alt-deletes: prehistoric Europe's false dawn and long reboot, 30 January 2025*** at link and ***Charlotte Allen, The Scholars and the Goddess, The Atlantic Weekly, 2001*** at link.

164 Postcolonial theorists often seek to impose a disabling hermeneutical reading on historical texts that deprives them of evidential value: see for example the contrasting ***Spivak 1999, Chapter 3*** and ***Benita Parry, The institutionalization of postcolonial studies*** in ***Lazarus 2004***. This scholastic tendency to aestheticise reality and deny it epistemological valency was criticised three decades ago

by **Christopher Norris, Uncritical theory: postmodernism, intellectuals, and the Gulf War, London 1992.**

165 Which may, of course, help to explain why humanities and social science departments in universities across the United Kingdom are losing students and many are now shrinking, shutting down or facing severe financial risk.

166 Rather as Lacan's contempt for the Cartesian Cogito and the Christian idea of the soul disguises his own failure to demonstrate the truth of his untestable but all-encompassing claims about the mind.

167 Which cannot simply be attributed, as Fanon seeks to do in **Fanon 1967, Chapter 1**, to a single external cause – normally western colonialism or the Atlantic slave trade, continuing Eric Williams' discredited historiography: see **Stokes 2023, Chapter 4** (with further readings); the devastating **Morrison 2025 (**again with further readings); **Nigel Biggar and others, A critical commentary on Church Commissioners' historic links to African chattel enslavement, History Reclaimed, 22 July 2025** at link; **Lawrence Goldman, Empire, the Slave Trade, and Britain's Wealth: A Reply to Will Hutton in The Guardian, History Reclaimed, 10 May 2024** at link and the review of the literature in **David Kedrosky, Capitalism, Slavery, and the Industrial Revolution: The Williams Thesis, Part I, Great Transformations, 26 August 2022** at link (with links to two further parts).

168 **Fanon 1967, 46.**

169 Among them the distinguished novelist, Kamel Daoud, the author of the excellent **Meursault: Contra-Enquête, Actes Sud 2014** – a deliberate riposte to and complex imaginary reworking of Camus' **L'Étranger** - on whom **Adam Shatz, Writers and Missionaries Essays on the Radical Imagination, Verso, 2023** writes very well. See also **Jeffrey C Isaac, Camus on Trial, Dissent Magazine, Winter 2016** at link. The subject of a *fatwa*, Daoud lives mostly in exile in Paris. In him perhaps, the subaltern refuses simply to be a subaltern object of academic enquiry. The same might be said of his compatriot and fellow free-thinking novelist, Boualem Sansal, sentenced to 5 years in gaol in Algeria on charges of "undermining national unity" (not helped by a visit he made to Israel): **Hugh Schofield, Why is there no campaign to free novelist Boualem Sansal? The Spectator, 27 March 2025** at link and **French-Algerian author Boualem Sansal sentenced to five years in prison, Al Jazeera, 27 March 2025** at link. Shatz describes many others too, including the radical Egyptian writer, **Arwa Salih, The Stillborn: Notes from a Woman of the Student-Revolutionary Generation in Egypt, Seagull 2018** (first published in Arabic in 1996) who wrote, "*I no longer believe that the Israeli state is more vicious or more oppressive than its neighbours (and may my comrades forgive me if they can). It is simply the stronger state. Moreover, I confess, with grief, to now believing that a future Palestinian state—if it ever comes into being—will almost certainly also be built on inequality and exploitation.*" She killed herself shortly after writing these words.

170 Fanon was clearly conscious of the risk: he specifically addresses it in ***Les Damnés de la Terre***. But he was also both conflicted and utopian about the possibility of wholesale societal reconstruction. **Spivak 1999** grapples with the impossibility of recreating an idealised past in the present. **Said 1993, 334** seeks to theorise the failure away, as if the language of the academic seminar can compensate for the absence of practical effect. The wider issue of postcolonial failure is reviewed by ***Tamara Sivanandan, Anticolonialism, national liberation, and postcolonial nation formation*** in **Lazarus 2004**.

171 ***James Bowman, Turning a Blind Eye, The New Criterion 12 September 2025*** at link.

172 And channels the sanguinary French revolutionary, Louis Antoine de Saint Just, "*qu'il n'y a point de liberté pour les ennemis de la liberté* **» :** Commentaire de texte Saint-Just, La Dissertation, 10 March 2023 at link

173 In that characteristic Pecksniffian manoeuvre of the progressive Left, who regularly claim privileged "asymmetric insight" into the secretly malign motives of others: ***Arnold Kling, Misreading Others' Minds: Asymmetric Insight, Substack, 15 January 2023*** at link.

174 See link: "*by any means necessary*" – a phrase associated with Fanon as well as Sartre and Malcolm X - is pretty unambiguous.

175 As both **Macey 2000** and **Shatz 2024** observe. It was also applied by Beauvoir to Claude Lanzmann: **Shatz 2023, 297**. Perhaps it was not a bug but a feature of their radical thought. For the radically binary – and Fanonist - nature of contemporary conflicts in the region see ***Todd Gitlin, Frantz Fanon Is the Manichaean Prophet of Today's Middle East, Tablet Magazine, 8 December 2014*** at link.

176 Which makes one wonder who was dominating or terrifying whom in the recently trending relationship between Kanye West and the Italian/Australian Bianca Censori: ***Mary Harrington, Kanye West's Twisted Power Fantasy, UnHerd, 4 February 2025*** at link.

177 « *Quittons cette Europe qui n'en finit pas de parler de l'homme tout en le massacrant partout où elle le rencontre, à tous les coins de ses propres rues, à tous les coins du monde. […] L'Occident a voulu être une aventure de l'Esprit. C'est au nom de l'Esprit, de l'esprit européen s'entend, que l'Europe a justifié ses crimes et légitimé l'esclavage dans lequel elle maintenait les quatre cinquièmes de l'humanité* » ***Les Damnés de la Terre 229ff.*** Fanon once wrote, "…*the white man cannot understand Armstrong*". Jazz, of course, was – and is – wildly popular among many whites – and Armstrong didn't complain: see **Shatz 2024, 310f** and **Macey 2000, 122:**

178 As he seems to suggest in **Fanon 1952, 177ff.**

179 Any more than **Mbembe 2006** does. He knows the goal : « *C'est une pensée de l'être-sujet, de l'être-pour-soi, de la manière dont la dialectique du maître et de l'esclave, du colon et de l'indigène pourrait être transcendée.* » But he also recognises the inevitable temptation to essentialise not reconcile difference : « *On retrouve les mêmes accents dans une grande partie de la pensée afro-américaine, confrontée qu'elle est, par ailleurs, à la difficulté de se réapproprier*

les héritages de l'esclavage et du racisme, de les ordonner au service de la résistance des dominés sans toutefois tomber dans le piège de la racialisation et de la glorification de la race.'

180 ***Ian Pace, The roots of academic irrationality, The Critic, 8 January 2024*** at link and ***Exhausting, divisive and irrational, The Critic, 15 January 2024*** at link are excellent concise guides to the "racket of "decoloniality" and its real world impact.

181 ***Matt Feeney, Donald Trump and the myth of whiteness, UnHerd, 5 December 2024*** at link gleefully dismantles the idiocy of « multiracial whiteness ». ***Taguieff 2020, 58:*** « *C'est là postuler quelque chose comme une inéluctable transmission des conditions ou des conduites de générations en générations, en supposant comme une évidence la thèse d'une culpabilité collective des « dominants » tout en attribuant aux « dominés » un statut indéfiniment transmissible de victimes. Dès lors, les héritiers des esclavagistes et des colonialistes, soit les « Blancs », les Européens ou les Occidentaux, sont porteurs d'une faute qui autorise à les mettre indéfiniment en accusation* ». This privileging of racial or other essentialising categories is, of course, anathema to Marxists and others on the Left who prefer a materialist – usually class-based - analysis of the problem, ***Aijaz Ahmad 1994*** is an excellent example. ***Frantz Fanon, racism and revolution, Socialist Worker, Issue 2883, 25 November 2023*** at link is shorter. As ***Pratinav Anil, Meet Brazil's art cannibals: Decolonisation achieved precious little, UnHerd, 4 March 2025*** at link remarks, "*The artists, and indeed activists and academics, of our time who go doolally over decoloniality would do well …..to swap the sentimental appeal of cultural nostrums for the hard-nosed allure of proper class politics.*" Marxism at least has a theory of change: de- and postcoloniality do not.

182 As ***Fanon 2008, 95*** himself suggests. He goes on, "*The Jewishness of the Jew …. can go unnoticed*". He may have derived this from ***Sartre's Antisemite and Jew*** – in turn a meditation on ***Marx's Zur Judenfrage***, in which Jewishness is a constructed identity – in the former case discursively, in the latter materially. Tell that to Holocaust survivors. There is little more reductively essentialist than this. For a trenchant dismantling of the claim – and many others about colonialism made by Ta-Nehisi Coates and others in the context of Israel – see ***Benny Morris, Response to Coates, Benny Morris' Corner, 5 February 2025*** at link, ***Katy Barnett, Unsafe spaces, What Katy Did, 10 December 2023*** at link and more generally ***Geoff Schullenberger, The Poverty of Anti-Wokeness, Compact, 29 December 2023*** at link.

183 The locus classicus is probably the tendentious and historically slapdash ***Fayez Sayegh (2012) Zionist Colonialism in Palestine (1965), Settler Colonial Studies, 2:1, 206-225, DOI: 10.1080/2201473X.2012.10648833***, cited in ***Yezid Sayigh, On Reading Herzl in Beirut, Carnegie 20 May, 2025*** at link. As Sayigh suggests, the ghost of Fanon hovers over the text.

184 See ***Peggy Cidor, Why the right-wing Mizrahi vote is misunderstood in Israel, Middle East Eye, 1 February 2023*** at link and ***Shany Littman, In Some Respects, Mizrahi Identity in Israel Is Dominant, and Ashkenazi Jews***

Face Inequality', Ha'aretz 19 May 2023 at link.

185 See ***Marilyn Stern, Amira Halperin on Negotiating U.K. College Campuses Post-October 7, MEF, 25 August 2025*** at link. I have personally heard of multiple similar experiences.

186 Among them Ghassan Kanafani, the Palestinian writer and founder member of the PFLP, who supported acts of terror against Israel, while also perhaps being privately ambivalent about the utility of violence: see ***Mahmoud Najib, The Revolutionary Tradition of Kanafani's On Zionist Literature, Ebb, 6 September 2022*** at link. ***Abd el-'Al 2024*** *"His approach was between the art of the pen and the art of the rifle……..Ghassan said in an interview with Mawaqif magazine [in June 1970]: "I called out in an extremely loud voice for resistance and violence"…….This was a refusal of pacification."*

187 You can find clips of Malema making this and other incendiary but entirely Fanonist statements at link. ***Milbank 2025*** has a startling example of the trope from within British academia.

188 Noam Chomsky, who could not be accused of anti-radical bias, was an early sceptic; ***Noam Chomsky on Postmodernism*** at link.

189 ***Harriet Hall, Freud Was a Fraud: A Triumph of Pseudoscience, Science Based Medicine, 12 December, 2017*** at link pulls no punches: *"Freud's impact on 20th century thought is undeniable, but he got almost everything wrong. He was not only not scientific; he was a liar and a fraud."* The classic accounts are ***Adolf Grünbaum, The Foundations of Psychoanalysis: A Philosophical Critique, Berkeley 1984*** and ***Frederick Crews, Freud: The Making of an Illusion, London 2017.*** The latter's ***The Freudian way of knowledge, The New Criterion, June 1984*** at link is a more succinct version.

190 And like Lacan dabbling in bogus mathematical symbolism to lend a veneer of scientism to his intuitions. See ***Kwame Antony Appiah. The Key to All Mythologies, NYRB, 13 February 2020*** at link. He was at least highly sceptical of revolutionary progress: ***Shatz 2023*** observes: *"Fanon's vision of a "new man" rising from the ashes of colonialism would have struck him as a fantasy."* For a more sympathetic view from a professional anthropologist, see ***Marshall Sahlins, On the Anthropology of Levi-Strauss, blogpost 7 July 2009*** at link.

191 ***Iain McGilchrist, The Master and His Emissary, Yale 2009***; and ***Gavin Francis, Changing Psychiatry's Mind, NYRB, 14 January 2021*** at link. ***Maggie Doherty, The Social Turn, Psychoanalysis at an Inflection Point, Harpers, April 2025*** at link is good on the way this has put pressure on psychoanalysts to take up activism instead: *"Many of these clinicians and candidates began psychoanalytic training in part because they wanted to fight for social justice; some had become attuned to inequities while training in social work, while others were drawn to psychoanalysis through exposure to the tradition's radicals, such as Frantz Fanon."*

192 *"Unfortunately, though he lacked all the qualities necessary to make a half-way decent doctor (eg kindness, common sense, humility, clinical acumen and solid knowledge), Lacan did not abandon medicine altogether, only its scientific basis. He chose to be a psychoanalyst where, instead of elucidating diagnoses, he could*

impose them." **Tallis 1997.** This is not to deny the role of social and cultural factors in the diagnosis of psychopathologies: the famous experiment documented by **D L Rosenhan, Being Sane in Insane Places, Science, 19 January 1973, Vol 179, Issue 4070**, at link is the classic demonstration. Lacan conducted no experiments.

193 Even in my own subject, Classical Studies: see **Canceling classics, The New Criterion, March 2021** at link; **David Butterfield, What would it mean to 'decolonise' the Classics?, The Spectator, 18 July 2020** at link and **Solveig Lucia Gold and Joshua T Katz, An Apology for Philology, Antigone, September 2025** at link.

194 "*We seek to achieve social justice, thinks Sauer, "through a renewed emphasis on collective identity by paying particular, and sometimes exclusive attention to a person's group identity, such as their ethnicity or sexual orientation". Identity politics and culture wars, in other words. The Academy bears much of the blame for this strategy. Academics, frustrated at being unable to effect real social change, and desperate not to be diagnosed as impotent or redundant, change instead the ways we talk about one another and pretend that that does real work*" : **Charles Foster, Them and us: How good are we at getting on with one another?, TLS, 10 January 2025** (a review of *Hanno Sauer, The Invention of Good and Evil: A world history of morality*) at link. For professional institutions, see **Michael Searles, British Psychological Society criticised over 'whiteness' and 'anti-racism' lessons, The Daily Telegraph, 14 December 2024** at link.

195 As Roshan Saleh of 5Pillars UK did on 5 January 2025 at link. The counter argument is put by **Ben Freeman, Jewish Indigeneity to the Land of Israel, Fathom, February 2025** at link. And for the genealogies of the claim see **Daniel Szeftel, From Johns Hopkins to Beirut, and from Beirut to Columbia: a history of the 'settler colonialism' charge, Fathom March 2025** at link.

196 The Voice to Parliament campaign, which proposed to give those of Aboriginal descent enhanced political representation was decisively defeated in a 2023 referendum: none of this is actually popular.

197 A linked *deformation professionelle* is to claim that western thought is in fact entirely dependent on non-western thought: see **David A Bell, A Flawed History of Humanity, Persuasion, 19 November 2021** at link.

198 An excellent if jaw-dropping example is **Steve Salaita, Decolonization: Survival: Water: Life Why does Palestine matter to Native Americans? How can Palestinians help liberate Native America?, Steve Salaita, 19 April 2019** at link: "*Any left formation that asks the subjected and disenfranchised to patiently wait out a series of reforms undertaken by a singular class of influential mediators, no matter how reasonable it sounds, is doing the work of capitalism, and itself ought to be destroyed.*" Salaita, of course, is another classic product of American academia.

199 As the impeccably Marxist and anti-colonial **Maxime Rodinson, Israel: A Colonial-Settler State? trans. David Thorstad, New York, 1973** wrote, '"*belonging to a colonizing group is not the unspeakable and unpardonable crime it is thought to be in cafes along Saint-Germain and Saint-Michel boulevards.*

Who is innocent of this charge? The only variable lies in the time that has elapsed since the usurping was done. . . . History is full of faits accomplis." (quoted in **Linfield 2019, 119**). See in contrast the stupefyingly ahistorical ***Alain Alameddine, Freeing the world from colonial institutions, MEMO, 21 October 2024*** at link.

200 Which is not to deny that the displacement of native Americans was not a violent process. It certainly was: ***Nicole Eustace, An Expanding Vision of America, NYRB. 27 March 2025*** at link. The point is that every state is established through a foundational act of violence. And other Native Americans might have something to say about Lakota, Iroquois or Comanche (for example) expansionism, as ***Ed West, Whose Land is it Anyway, 2 June 2025*** link points out. A WEIRD form of ethno-nationalist narcissism is not a basis for societal peace.

201 On which ***Baer 2021, chapter 18*** and ***Taner Akçam, The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity, Princeton 2012.***

202 There were three in my time as ambassador. I believe they have all now gone.

203 See ***Adam Kirsch, Settler Colonialism, New York 2024.***

204 ***Paul Berman, A Stupid Cartoon and the University Ideology, Liberties Journal, Summer 2024 Volume 4 - Number 4*** at link traces the afterlife of Fanon's thought: Berman was taught by Edward Said.

205 A theme of ***Andrew Hussey, Is civil war coming for France?, UnHerd, 19 March 2025*** at link.

206 An analogous response is that of the Israeli writer David Grossman, quoted in **Linfield 2019, 225**, "*I do not seek pure justice nor the settling of historical accounts, but rather possible life, no more than imperfect and tolerable, causing as little injustice as possible. . . . I fear life among people who have an obligation to an absolute order. Absolute orders require . . . absolute deeds, and I, nebbish, am a partial, relative, imperfect man who prefers to make correctible mistakes rather than attain supernatural achievements.*"

207 **Dresser 2017** agrees, "*The violence of communism sent Camus on a different trajectory. 'Finally,' he wrote in The Rebel, 'I choose freedom. For even if justice is not realised, freedom maintains the power of protest against injustice and keeps communication open.' From the other side of the Cold War, it is hard not to sympathise with Camus, and to wonder at the fervour with which Sartre remained a loyal communist. Camus's embrace of sober political reality, of moral humility, of limits and fallible humanity, remains a message well-heeded today. Even the most venerable and worthy ideas need to be balanced against one another. Absolutism, and the impossible idealism it inspires, is a dangerous path forward – and the reason Europe lay in ashes, as Camus and Sartre struggled to envision a fairer and freer world.*"

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