THE LEGACY OF FRANTZ FANON

The Dialectics of Culture, Class and the Psychology of Oppression.

by

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Thesis Declaration

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted to any other University or Institution.

(Signed) ----------

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I am indebted:

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The important theoretical problem is that it is necessary at all times and in all places to make explicit, to demystify, and to harry the insult to mankind that exists in oneself. There must be no waiting until the nation has produced new men [and women]; there must be no waiting until men are imperceptibly transformed by revolutionary processes in perpetual renewal. It is quite true that these two processes are essential. But consciousness must be helped. The application of revolutionary theory, if it is to be completely liberating and particularly fruitful, exacts that nothing unusual should exist. One feels with particular force the necessity to totalise the event, to draw everything after one, to settle everything, to be responsible for everything.

Frantz Fanon

Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity.

V. I. Lenin

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PART THREE: CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE

GLOSSARY

ORGANISATIONS
AIS: *Armée Islamique du Salut* FIS armed wing
ALN: *Algerian Armée de Libération Nationale*
CRUA: *Comité Révolutionaire d'unité et d'action* left faction of the MTLD
ENA: *Étiole Nord-Africaine* nationalist group formed in France, precursor of FLN
FIS: *Front Islamique du Salut* Islamic Salvation Front
FFS: *Front des Forces Socialistes* Berber party led by Ait Ahmed
FLN: *Front de Libération Nationale* National Liberation Front
GIA: *Groupe Islamique Armé* Armed Islamic group
GPRA: *Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne*
HAMAS: *Harakat El Mujtamaa El Islami* Movement for Islamic Society
HCE: *Haut Comite d'Etat* High State Council formed after 1992 military coup
MDA: Movement for a Democratic Algeria, Ben Bella's current party
MTLD: *Le Mouvement Pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques*
MPLA: *Movimento Popular de Libertaçao de Angola*
OAS: *Organisation Armée Secrète* the fascist combat force for *Algérie Française*.
OS: *Organisation Spéciale* early offshoot of the MTLD, armed wing
PAIGC: *Partido Africano da Independencia da Guiné e Cabo-Verde*
PCA: *Parti Communiste Algérien*
PRS: *Parti de la Révolution Socialiste* led by Boudiaf
RCD: *Reassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie* Rally for Culture and Democracy - radical Berber party
UGTA: *Union Général des Travailleurs Algériens* Algerian Trade Union Federation
UNFA: *Union Nationale Des Femmes Algériennes* FLN Women's Union
UPA: *Uniào das Populaçòes de Angola* Angolan guerillas led by Robert Holden

WORDS

Djebel: literally peninsula but used to refer to highlands as base for guerilla operations

Djema: traditional council, congregation.

Fellahin: peasant

Fidayin: male urban guerilla

Fidayat: female urban guerillas

Gharbzadegi: westoxification - a polemical term used against those who assimilate to Western values

Haik: head scarf

Hijab/Jilbab: veil, modest Islamic dress for woman

Imam: religious leader, originally descended from the prophet, now more general.

Jihad: war or struggle

Madrassah: college which trains religious leaders but not limited to theology

Maquis: the underground forces, used by the French resistance when fighting the Nazis.

Moudjahid: male warrior

Moudjahidat: female warrior

Pieds Noir [Black Feet]: the French settlers in Algeria. Of uncertain origin but probably based on the fact that French settlers did not wash their feet for prayers.

S*hirk*: the opposite of *tauhid*, the principle of discord or more roughly, sin.

Tauhid: The Muslim worldview based on equality before god.

Ulama: Islamic religious leadership

Umma: the community of Muslims

Wilaya: province, territory

Abstract

This thesis discusses the work of the revolutionary social theorist and psychiatrist, Frantz Fanon. Recent appropriations of his work have been in the area of postcolonial discourse analysis while his earlier popularity rested on his contribution to debates about class and revolutionary social change. This thesis seeks to rehistoricise Fanon by examining his work in the colonial context and the ways it has been appropriated since then. Part One provides the reader with an overview of the complete range of Fanon's work. Part Two looks at a number of appropriations of Fanon's work and finally Part Three begins the process of assessing Fanon's contemporary relevance.

Part One surveys of the scope of Fanon's thinking and emphasises the psychiatric and phenomenological aspects of his work as an implicit critique of more recent psychoanalytic readings. Fanon developed a dialectical analysis of cultural change arguing that there are three cultural stages - assimilation, reaction and fighting stages. This thesis then applies this analysis to explore a variety of contexts. Part Two tests Fanon's analysis beginning with the immediate postcolonial period in Algeria. It looks at his contemporary in Africa, Amilcar Cabral, the leader of the liberation struggle from Portuguese colonialism in Guinea-Bissau. Then it turns to the United States of America in the 1960s with the Black Panther Party and to Iran with Ali Shari'ati, the progressive ideologue of the Iranian revolution in the 1970s. Finally his most recent appropriation into colonial discourse analysis in the 1980s is examined. Part Three uses his cultural theory to examine what Fanon might make of contemporary Algeria. Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen draw out Fanon's contribution to contemporary debates around class and gender. The next two chapters look at the question of violence and Fanon's sociogenic approach to the question of agency.

After this elaboration of the whole of Fanon's work this thesis concludes that a willingness to engage with the entire range of his thought makes him a theorist of great contemporary relevance. It identifies three unifying themes that allow his work to be read as a whole namely culture, class and the psychology of oppression. In an age where issues of identity politics and globalisation are pressing Fanon's cultural theory is a useful tool in analysing the contemporary situation. His discussion of the role of class and organisation in social change and the limits of nationalism, while flawed, still raises the key issues for developing a progressive social agenda. His analysis of gender, which by focusing on issues not identities charts a path to a forming a political practice that is not woman-centred but remains critical in an increasingly globalised world. Finally it draws out his theory of the self as an ensemble of social relations which are always located in specific contexts. This model of the self is a useful counter to overly individualised models that tend to predominate in psychology and serves as a means of linking identity and structure in a more fruitful way.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This thesis, written from the Australian end of the former British Empire, seeks to demonstrate the ongoing relevance of the work of Frantz Fanon. It argues that in a world characterised by globalisation and neoliberalism there is a need to recover the radical aspects of Fanon's analysis, which deals with the issues of race, class and gender. In the academic setting there has been a 'retreat' from class analysis and the rise of 'identity politics' in gender studies and queer theory to which Fanon's analysis has been appropriated. At present Fanon is most well known in Cultural Studies for his work on racism. This thesis examines Fanon's legacy and reasserts the importance of categories like class and imperialism for sociological analysis.

On June 1, 1998, the daily newspaper *The Sydney Morning Herald* ran a short article on racism in Australia written by Neva Mwiti. Neva Mwiti is a black woman who had been a United Nations' aid worker in Nairobi. She had worked with United Nations' staff children repatriated from Rwanda after the racialised massacres there. She describes the following experience:

> Four years later and I am in Sydney, watching as the harbour dons the night. The ferry lights blink mischievously, piercing the shadows of dusk. I feel a presence close behind, footsteps a beat off with mine. Then I hear him "I've never fucked a nigger before. I sho' would love to!"
>
> The night is suddenly ugly, menacing, storming with my rage. I swing around to meet his laughing blue eyes. He melts into the darkness. I've just experienced my first racist encounter in Australia. I tremble in anger, powerless and alone. Different.

This anecdote has a distinctly Fanonist ring to it but it is in linking experiences like Mwiti's to broader social, or global, contexts that Fanon's work transcends the limitations of much contemporary theorising on these issues. All of Fanon's analysis is grounded in a colonial context. He would seek to understand experiences such as Mwiti's as a product of the colonial (or neo-colonial) situation, rather than as issues of identity per se. Social theory is still marked by a Eurocentric lack of 'integration' of the three axes of class, race and gender and this thesis demonstrates the need to re-historicise Fanon as a means of overcoming such disintegration and assessing his contemporary relevance to both sociological theory and liberating practice.

It is in area of postcolonial discourse analysis that Fanon's work, or at least his name, has most recently emerged. It is the theorists of colonial discourse who have returned to Fanon's work to recover him as a 'postcolonial' thinker. Focusing mainly on his earlier work they see in him a pre-cursor to their concerns about identity and ambivalence. In what is seen, somewhat dubiously, as a 'Fanonist tradition' in postcolonial studies, Henry Louis Gates Jr outlines the various competing positions taken by theorists who use Fanon. In the opening remarks to his article, Gates (1991) laments Fanon's status as a 'global theorist' and seeks to begin the process of 'rehistoricising' Fanon. He states:

> Fanon's current fascination for us has *something to do* with the convergence of the problematic of colonialism with that of subject formation. As a psychoanalyst of culture, as a champion of the wretched of the earth, he is an almost irresistible figure for a criticism that sees itself as both oppositional and postmodern (Gates 1991: 458 emphasis added).

Gates' vague phrasing: 'our' *fascination* has 'something to do with' colonialism and subjectivity serve as a counterpoint to the basic themes of this thesis. This thesis aims to 'historicise' Fanon, but not in the manner of postcolonialists. Gates confesses on the last page of his article that his 'rehistoricising' only includes the first of Fanon's books Black Skin White Masks. In his concluding remarks Gates warns:

> Not to elevate him [i.e. Fanon] above his localities of discourse as a transcultural, transhistorical Global Theorist, nor simply to cast him into battle, but to recognise him as a battleground in himself. Fanon wrote, with uncanny and prescient insistence: "In no fashion should I undertake to prepare the world that will come later. I belong irreducibly to my time". This is one proviso we ignore at our own risk.

Gates conceives his contribution to 'rehistoricising' Fanon very narrowly and violates his own advice. While Fanon says 'I belong irreducibly to my time' Gates only discusses colonial discourse theorists of the 1980s, nothing from Fanon's time. In fact Gates only quotes Fanon twice. While this thesis does not engage in a critique of postcolonial studies per se it is agreement with Robinson (1991: 88) who argues in relation to the Fanonist tradition in postcolonial studies 'the handling of that tradition makes it appear woefully mistaken if not harmless'. One of the aims of this thesis is to correct this by 'rehistoricising' Fanon, exploring his work in various contexts (not as Gates does by re-appropriating Fanon into colonial discourse analysis).

This thesis argues that from the time of his death in 1961 Fanon's work has been subject to a series of partial appropriations. To respond to Gates' challenge to begin 'rehistoricising' Fanon means firstly recovering the early debates. The chief historical context for a reading of Fanon's work is not cultural studies but as Sheldon Woldin notes Fanon's writings are part of 'a distinct tradition of revolutionary writings, flourishing for the most part outside academic and scholarly communities' (Jinadu 1986: 97-8). This first set of appropriations, while partial in its way, sets the context for understanding Fanon's arguments in his magnum opus The Wretched of the Earth.[1]

This thesis is divided into three parts. A central theme is that it is only parts of Fanon's work that have been taken up at different times. This thesis seeks to rehistoricise Fanon by examining his work in the colonial context and the ways it has been appropriated. The first step in this process involves acquainting the reader with the body of Fanon's work and the contexts in which it was written. Part One is a detailed outline of his major works including his clinical work, to give a survey of the scope of Fanon's thinking. Part Two begins looking at a number of appropriations of Fanon's work. This is necessarily selective. The discussion is limited to areas where Fanon or his work has had a direct influence. Subsequent chapters look at one example from Africa, namely Amilcar Cabral, a contemporary of Fanon, one from the African diaspora – the Black Panther Party in the United States in the late 1960s. One from the Islamic world, Ali Shari'ati, in the 1970s and finally his appropriation by contemporary cultural studies in the 1980s. Part Three begins the process of assessing Fanon's contemporary relevance. First it examines the current situation in Fanon's adopted country Algeria. Then bringing together parts of the discussion from Part Two into Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen draws out Fanon's contribution to debates around class and gender. Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen look at the question of violence and Fanon's sociogenic approach to the question of structure and agency.

[1] Hereafter simply Wretched of the Earth.

Chapter Three analyses his first work Black Skin White Masks. This work was written in the context of the post-war Hegelian revival in France. Hegel's concept of the master and the slave first occurs here and is a recurrent theme throughout Fanon's work. In this text he draws on Sartre's notion of the look. Fanon was the first to explore the sexualised nature of the look. The colonial situation underpins his analysis of the theme of (mis)recognition within and between races. These racial and gender relations represent a phenomenology of black existence through an exploration of material social relations of dominant Self and subordinated Other represented in language and desire. The reading strategy used in Chapter Three highlights the importance of Fanon's background in phenomenology that has been overlooked by more recent psychoanalytic readings of the text.

The sub-title of the thesis 'Culture Class and the Psychology of Oppression' attempts to capture the key contributions to social science that arise out of Fanon's work. The first contribution that needs to be highlighted is what this thesis calls his dialectical or three-stage theory of culture. Fanon tries to capture a situation as a series of cultural processes. He begins by setting a static stage: 'we shall go very slowly for there are two camps: the white and the black.' Each side is initially posited as separate 'the white man is sealed in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness' (1967a: 8). Then he shows how this Manichean situation evolves. The theme of Manicheanism runs through his work though he first makes explicit the idea of cultural stages in his speech 'Racism and Culture'. This thesis returns to this framework repeatedly as a heuristic for charting appropriations of Fanon's work, rather than focussing on either his earlier or his later work. After military conquest, the first set of reactions to colonialism is assimilation. Alienated natives reject their culture (and themselves) as inferior and seek to assimilate to the dominant culture. For Fanon this included the 'native' intellectuals trained in French universities. Today the assimilated intellectual elite promote neoliberalism and elections as pragmatic solutions to global problems. Co-incidentally their dominant theoretical perspective has its roots in the French academy.

A second response or reaction occurs as it becomes clearer that assimilation is not a genuine option. Now natives return to their culture with a vengeance seeing in it all that is good. This 'authentic' culture is valorised in forms recovered from the past. Fanon (1967b: 43) remarks (ironically): 'the sense of the past is rediscovered, the worship of ancestors resumed'. Fanon sees this stage as subjectively necessary but it is a dead end if it does not lead to a recognition that one needs to fight exploitation, to change the existing set of social relations. A focus on identities, which were often constructed by the coloniser in the first place, can have reactionary outcomes. In Fanon's day the *Negritude* movement was an example. Its two founders were Aimé Césaire and Leopold Senghor. While it promoted black pride and raised consciousness eventually Césaire voted against Martinican independence and Senghor became a demagogic African president. More recently such 'nativism' is evident in Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam.

The country that Fanon fought for, Algeria, is now a testament to the limitations of retreatist responses. Chapter Twelve analyses this in detail using Fanon's dialectical model. It is misleading to see the process as linear rather than cyclical. The end of the fighting phase can lead to a new elite and new cycle. This chapter also examines the issue of gender demonstrating that the dynamics of the veil and the symbol of the *moudjahidat* [female guerilla] can be understood as sub-cycles within the three stages.

The third stage is the 'fighting phase'. Fanon's engaged critique of colonialism was part of realising that all struggles have a cultural element that is part of the terrain of struggle. This final fighting stage mobilises people against the oppressor in a program of national liberation and self-

determination. This third phase draws on traditions but does not fetishise them. Instead it focuses on changing the underlying social relations. His participation in the fighting phase of the Algerian struggle is the context from which he writes. Chapter Seven examines events in Algeria up to 1978 to assess the accuracy of his analysis. His predictions proved substantially correct. There was some industrialisation and nationalisation but little change for the vast majority of Algerians, eventually after the military took power. As Fanon feared the *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) never became a party of the masses with a clear program, that is, it never went beyond national consciousness. Fanon's main error was an underestimation of the working class movement who through the UGTA (*Union Général des Travailleurs Algériens*) fought hard to secure the egalitarian promises of the revolution.

Keeping with the Islamic context Chapter Ten looks at the Iranian revolution. Ali Shari'ati translated The Wretched of the Earth into Persian after being involved with the Algerian struggle while studying in Paris. He was drawn to the idea of 'turning one's back on the West'. Apart from relating Fanon's influence, this chapter argues that Shari'ati should be seen as building a 'fighting culture' in Fanon's sense, not as a 'retreatist' as some have argued. He is part of the process of using the past to critique the present and open up the future drawing on Islamic traditions to create a progressive Muslim identity, not returning to a mythical past. In what is a complex and confusing situation around the Iranian revolution Fanon's dialectical model proves a useful tool for analysing movements within a national culture.

In his second major work, A Dying Colonialism, which is analysed in Chapter Five, Fanon takes the Manichean colonial situation and examines the effect of revolutionary social change on various sections of Algerian society. Fanon wrote to a friend 'this book is the illustration of a principle: action is incoherent agitation if it does not serve to reconstruct the consciousness of an individual' (Geismar 1971: 125). The theme of Self and Other being constructed in relation to each other is explored in more detail. The Manichean situation provokes the three responses, though here he is looking more at the retreatist phase and fighting phase. In the first of these everything about French colonisation is rejected as 'bad' because it is imposed as part of the colonial project. Fanon argues that even potentially liberating forces like feminism and medicine are corrupted in the colonial milieu. Fanon picks up this dialectic and explores it. He shows how oppression creates forms of resistance - in this case 'the cult of the veil'- and illustrates the 'historical dynamism' of what appear to be fixed traditions. With the outbreak of armed struggle the old structures break down and things take on new meanings. The radio and medicine are no longer simply tools of the enemy but weapons in the struggle. What stands out is the way in which the oppressed are agents of the struggle, this is particularly striking concerning women. Fanon makes clear throughout that the only way to an authentic existence for the colonised is revolutionary praxis and the change in consciousness that it provokes.

Chapter Nine looks at Black Power in the United States. In North America in the revolutionary black struggles of the 1960s the most radical elements, in particular the Black Panther Party (BPP), drew inspiration from Fanon. They were quick to draw parallels between black ghettoes and the Third World, which made Fanon's Wretched of the Earth 'required reading for black revolutionaries' (Allen 1969: 61). The BPP argued that instead of learning one's place and directing one's anger inward or onto friends and family one must take up a violent struggle and not be drawn in by 'native' intellectuals who preach non-violence. They were critical of the cultural nationalists – Fanon's group of 'retreatists'. They found in his ideas on the role of

lumpenproletariat justification for their base in the ghetto. Their use of his ideas on revolutionary violence would mark them out as the most radical wing of the Black power movement.

The use of Fanon by women in the black power movement would prove quite significant. Herein lies the beginning of a radical black feminism that is sensitive to notions of class and racial oppression. From the early days of the Black Power movement women argued that the support of traditional gender roles by otherwise radical black men was an example of how the men are still bound to the dominant (white) culture. This racist culture does engender a sense of inferiority that leads black men to blame black women for emasculating them when they should stop blaming each other and struggle together against the causes of the problem - the class and racial structure of capitalism. Here in relation to gender there is the emergence of a 'fighting phase' as with those Arab feminists who find Fanon's analysis useful.

In Part Three of this thesis Chapter Fourteen brings together the feminist responses to Fanon. Radical black feminists, though aware of his limitations, use his work to critique anti-black culture and raising consciousness. Arab feminists critique Fanon for *overplaying* women's agency, and see his critique of nationalism as accurate if insufficiently sensitive to gender. Much as liberal feminism was co-opted by the French colonial project, liberal feminist responses to Fanon's work consist in portraying him as a 'black patriarch'.

Fanon has been credited with introducing class analysis into the African struggle for national self-determination, at a time (again much like the present) when class was not seen as a useful category.[2] Chapter Eight looks at Fanon's African legacy in the work of Amilcar Cabral. Cabral deepens and clarifies Fanon's class analysis, though agreeing with it in many aspects. He also shares Fanon's interest in the role of native intellectuals and the importance of culture and self-liberation. Cabral differs from Fanon most notably on the role of subaltern classes. He is more specific about the groups that make up Guinea-Bissau and their revolutionary potential. He also links the three-stage cultural process more directly to the class structure than Fanon.

In Part Three, Chapter Thirteen looks at the question of 'Fanon and Class'. It draws out the suggestions from Part Two and examines the debates around class and nationalism within the Marxist movement. Here the key debates are about the role of socialists in the anti-colonial struggles, the role of the party and definitions of class. One problem in applying class analysis to Africa is that it is necessary to avoid confusion by getting a clear definition of class categories and not simply relying on European models to explain colonial processes. On balance the Marxist criticism that Fanon is insufficiently critical of the class nature of the nationalist project seems valid.

While the issues of culture and class figure loudly in his work and are focused on the macro level of social analysis, this thesis recognises that Fanon is also concerned with the level of the individual agent, in particular the psychology of oppression. Returning to the experience of Neva Mwiti with which this introduction opened, apart from structures that shape experiences, the second sense in which such experiences are not individual is that they involve an Other directly. In this case a white male other is the immediate agent of a racialised encounter. This incident occurs between a dominating self and a subordinate other.

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[2] One example was the Guinean leader Kwame Nkrumah. See Davidson (1989).

Further the three cultural stages can be individualised, the collective cultural responses at a macro level can be mapped onto an individual sense of the self as recognised by the other. This provides a useful way to think around the structure and agency division that typically places the 'objective' society at one end and the 'subjective' individual at the other. With this binary in place the questions that it generates involve how does society get inside the individual? In its orthodox Marxist form the answer lies in impersonal forces like the economic base determining social outcomes, over the heads of individual actors. Fanon preserves in his work a sense of the oppressed as agents of social change as revolutionary subjects which is essential. His dialectical view of culture can be married to his relational view of the self. This allows some mediation between the structure and the agent that explores the lived experience of structures - race, class and gender. While the focus in on the subordinate other it is also possible to explore how the dominant self is constructed, which is touched on in Chapter Fifteen.

As part of his anti-colonial critique Fanon fought the overtly racist Algiers School that saw natives as 'lobotomised Europeans'. Nowadays this idea takes more sophisticated rationalisations such as the Bell Curve. For Fanon psychiatry was about returning people to their freedom and reducing suffering. This is the subject of Chapter Four. He was interested in psychoanalysis but thought that: 'Psychoanalysis has a pessimistic view of man.' Here again Fanon's critique of psychoanalysis is overlooked in recent appropriations which ignore his own clinical work. As he put it: 'the care of the person must be thought of as a deliberately optimistic choice against human reality' (Vergés 1996b: 50). Fanon posits a socially relational self that is radically agentic, and mental illness as a 'pathology of liberty'. He locates illness in the social milieu of, for example, North African emigrants working in Lyons. His attempts to apply such techniques in Algeria led initially to failure but also to a deeper understanding of the role of culture. He also questioned the hospital's role in causing illness rather than curing it leading to the implementation of 'day-care' hospitals as more therapeutic.

Also fashionable in Fanon's time was the theory of the Dependency Complex, developed by Octave Mannoni Chapter Four looks at Fanon's critique of this and of post-war colonial psychiatry from the point of view of sociotherapy. In 1950 Mannoni wrote *Psychologie de la Colonisation* (translated as Prospero and Caliban: Psychology of Colonisation) which became something of a manual for colonial administrators. Mannoni explored the colonial relationship on the island of Madagascar colonised by the French in 1896. Using a psychoanalytic approach Mannoni saw the colonial relation was one of *mutual* dependence of coloniser and colonised. By contextualising Mannoni's work Fanon subjects his approach to a sociogenic critique that exposes its ideological weaknesses. This is particularly important for seeing how psychology and related disciplines were part of the colonial apparatus. Mannoni's notion of *mutual* dependence of the coloniser/colonised relationship has its recent parallel in the work of the postcolonialist Homi Bhabha that focuses on the *ambivalent* nature of the coloniser and colonised relationship.

Chapter Eleven turns to this latest addition to Fanon's legacy. Gates and Homi Bhabha are two of what Wyrick (1998: 158) terms the 'soft' Fanonists, those concerned with the ambivalences of colonial texts as opposed to the 'hard' Fanonists whose focus is on the Manichean divide and colonial politics. This chapter locates postcolonialism within Fanon's dialectical model arguing that the work of the soft Fanonists is a 'retreat' from the dominant Western culture of humanism. This 'retreat' consists in a rejection of notions of truth and humanism in favour of a cultural relativism and difference. Bhabha's appropriation of Fanon specifically rejects the premises that are the basis of Fanon's work. Notions like 'lived experience' and the effects of structures in the traditional sense are rejected in the interest of turning Fanon into what Parry (1987: 31) labels a

'premature poststructuralist'. Bhabha's focus is on the psycho-dynamics of otherness and marginality. His postmodern vision deprives Fanon of the weapons he would take for granted in constructing a culture of resistance. Even the sympathetic Gates (1991: 462) argues that Bhabha's essay, entitled 'Remembering Fanon', 'can easily be read as an index to all that Bhabha wants us to forget'. Class, gender and humanism are submerged in favour of cultural relativity and difference. Despite claims to finding a 'proper time and place' for Fanon, Bhabha's focus is on Fanon as a 'text' without a context.

In contrast the 'hard' Fanonists, like Abdul JanMohamed and Benita Parry, maintain a political focus, moving to a focus on what these texts say about the sets of colonial social relations (the Manichean economy as JanMohamed calls it) and the ways that these relations become part of 'lived experience'. Parry makes the key point that the deconstruction of colonial discourse did not begin with the post-colonial literary theorists of the 1980s but with the liberation movements themselves. They created their counter discourse by critiquing not just texts but the institutions that produced them. Parry argues that, in contrast most postcolonial theory is limited to placing 'incendiary devices within the dominant structures of representation' (1987: 43).

The Marxist critique of capitalism was forged in the mid-nineteenth century. Marx identified the proletariat as the agent of change due to its position in the means of production that rendered it indispensable to the creation of profit. Within this tradition there are numerous debates about how to achieve such fundamental change: what methods of organisation are needed? What is the role of other social classes for example the peasants? Who are reliable allies and on what terms should alliances be made? After Marx's death the tradition was adapted to varying conditions and attempted to provide answers to a new range of questions. One of these was national liberation struggles that Marx had done little on except for his later work on Ireland. The key figure here is Lenin who adapted Marxism to Russia and wrote the key text on imperialism.

Fanon's work was first debated around the issue of fundamental social change. As he put it:

> To put Africa in motion, to cooperate in its organisation, in its regrouping, behind revolutionary principles. To participate in the ordered movement of a continent – this was really the work I had chosen (Fanon 1967b: 177-8).

The key debate for Marxist theory on Africa was what attitude to adopt to colonial struggles and then, given the absence of a working class in the European sense, who was to be the agent of change. Initially the answer was that fundamental change for 'backward' countries was dependent on a revolution in the West. The success of the Russian revolution was held by all involved, including Lenin, to depend on a revolution in Germany. After the revolution the socialist states of Europe would come to the aid of the less developed countries, since the working class in Europe and the oppressed of the Third world were natural allies. African revolutionaries like Cabral and Fanon challenged the Eurocentrism of this aspect of the Marxist tradition.
Chapter Six looks at Wretched of the Earth in detail. Fanon's concerns develop in a much more concrete direction. The philosophical basis in Hegel's master and slave dialectic is still evident. Fanon now traces the breakdown of the Manichean colonial situation, understood as violence incarnate, by way of a series of answers to the political questions confronting the Algerian revolution. In Fanon's time liberal elements fought against the use of violence by oppressed people. He defends a notion of revolutionary violence in Algeria based on the need for slaves to fight for their liberty to gain recognition and self-determination - both national and personal. He defends this by tracing changes in consciousness based on a 'spontaneously revolutionary

peasantry' gradually educated by party militants and organised around a political program. He warns of the dangers of the emergence of a colonial bourgeoisie who will be 'good for nothing' and of the limits of nationalism that does not move to a broader political and social consciousness.

These were all part of the general debates in this non-academic Marxist tradition to which Fanon addressed himself. The precise mechanisms of how to achieve revolutionary change hinged on the question of what kind of party structure and by extension what sort of party program was required. Should it be inclusive or limited to cadre? What about the problem of vanguardism? Should there be a class alliance based on opposition to imperialism, if so, on what terms? What exactly is the role of class consciousness? The Marxist tradition itself understood violence as a pragmatic necessity - as the midwife of the revolution. In the colonial struggle the role of non-violence was raised by some as a matter of principle. Fanon's argument extends the traditional scheme that violence is pragmatically necessary for liberation. Fanon argues that to achieve genuine liberation it must be fought for, the slave must fight the master, and not be granted their freedom. To move from being an object to a subject meant engaging in praxis. For Fanon this meant the praxis of violence understood in this context to mean armed struggle against the French. It was a strategy of native exploiters to call for non-violence in the face of the colonisers. This was the safest path to becoming compradors since there was less risk than arming the population.
Fanon in dealing with the self-determination of 'nations' provides a logic that argues that genuine national (or personal) independence cannot be granted, it must be taken by force. The controversy arises because Fanon wants to argue that violence is 'detoxifying' at the individual level without explaining (a) exactly what acts are involved for example, terrorism or guerilla warfare; (b) how this actually raises consciousness; (c) what other forms of praxis may also be liberating; and (d) the ways that it is liberating given his awareness of the negative effects of violence. To think this through requires the explaining of Fanon's theory of the self and his ideas about the question of agency. Fanon, then, has '*something to do*' with debates about class, nationalism and the role of the party, bourgeoisie and peasantry as well as issues of subjectivity. His works though are not just academic descriptions but interventions intended to raise consciousness and foster debate.

Apart from this location in debates with(in) Marxism it is issues of consciousness, that have been traditionally less of a focus for Marxists, that give Fanon's work its particular flavour. Fanon focuses on the way the world is 'experienced'. Fanon provides convincing psychological portraits of class actors but goes further than this. Fanon draws on his phenomenological background to connect structures with experiences. In this way Fanon seeks to link identity and liberation. For social science the originality of Fanon's work lies in its ability to give a sense to what this thesis calls the 'lived experience of structures'. It is easy enough to grasp inequalities in class or gender at the structural level but there is a need to grasp them at the level of the individual, or in other words, 'psychologically'.

Terms like 'individual' and 'psychology' are at best vague. The dominant tendency is to see the individual as the locus around which the world is fashioned. Even as one gets a grasp of the structural determinants of behaviour the thinking about it then takes on a binary form. The 'objective' structure and the 'subjective' agent exist as opposite ends of a continuum - the 'individual' is at one end and the 'society' at the other. The question posed is how, either the collective 'individuals' make up the 'society' - is the society more than the sum of the individuals? Or how does the 'society', social norms and so on get 'inside' the individual psyche? This problem recurs throughout the social sciences, with practitioners working at either the micro or macro end of the question. Here the long running debates between Marxism and psychoanalysis in which the Freudian unconscious 'explains' how bourgeois ideology penetrates the individual causing various

forms of false consciousness is the most well-known. It is Fanon's focus on 'lived experience' that gives his work particular relevance. Having outlined the structural issues and reinserted Fanon back into those debates, it is his 'sociogenic' approach to agency that needs elaboration since the literature largely neglects this. The central problematic here is the way structures like race, class and gender are lived and for Fanon as a committed intellectual it is the process of radicalisation that is foremost in his mind. It is in this sense that Gates is right in saying that Fanon has '*something to do*' with subject formation.

The final two chapters of Part Three return to Fanon's social psychology. Chapter Fifteen elaborates his views on violence and the Manichean psychology on which it is based. This chapter includes a critique of liberal responses to Fanon since their response has largely been a reaction to his views on violence. The chapter concludes by inverting the focus of the self/other binary and examines the effect of violence on the coloniser. One section deals with France during the Algerian war of Independence. The final section looks at recent controversies over the veil within the French education system.

Chapter Sixteen returns to a focus on the individual, to elaborate Fanon's ideas of the self and sociogenetics. Fanon develops a concept of the self as a dynamic system of relations between a (dominant) self and a (subordinate) other. Our self-identity is a layered construct of retrospective selections, cultural norms and images that others have of us. In this sense the self is not centred in a 'psychological' realm but is the 'ensemble of social relations' not just in the objective but in the subjective sense. The chapter returns to Fanon's texts and re-reads them from the point of view of the agent. This reading uncovers a 'theory' of agency that is structural - that is not predictive but is able to highlight contradictions. His focus on agency of the oppressed is a key focus both in academic debates about 'subjectivity' but also as part of the problem of building resistance to economic rationalism and structural adjustment, the creation of anti-imperial subjects. His calls for a new Humanism and demands for a more socially just and equitable set of arrangements, his focus on class and race and gender serve as a model for engaged critique and action.