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Frantz Fanon and the Politics of Solidarity: On the Practice of Third World Intercontinentalism

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Political Science

by

Anuja Bose

2017

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Frantz Fanon and the Politics of Solidarity: On the Practice of Third World
Intercontinentalism

by

Anuja Bose

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Raymond A. Rocco, Chair

How was France consolidated as an imperial state, and how was its imperial form challenged from the colonies? This is the question I address in this dissertation by turning to the works of Frantz Fanon. I argue that Fanon's first published work *Black Skin, White Masks* offers a critique and diagnosis of how the French imperial state was consolidated through racialized relations of social solidarity. In this work, Fanon shows that race mediated how social solidarity was articulated and practiced such that colonial subject-citizens were simultaneously included into and excluded from republican citizenship. Caught in the double bind of inclusion and exclusion, the possibility of forging any substantial sense of social solidarity between black and white citizens in France and its colonies was forgone. In Fanon's subsequent writings - *A Dying Colonialism*, *Towards the African Revolution* and *The Wretched of the Earth* – he demonstrates

that the racialized social solidarity of imperial France and the international political community more broadly, were challenged by practices of regional political solidarity between the Third World masses in the post-war era. Specifically, I argue that his writings articulate two sets of political practices that the masses of the Third World engage in to transform the imperialist structure of France and international state system 1) the practice of vigilance in response to being vulnerable to undemocratic rule internally and being subject to imperial domination externally and 2) the practice of sacrifice as a way to share and distribute the burdens of waging armed resistance against powerful imperial states. These practices form the basis of Fanon's distinctive account of Third World political solidarity as a form of intercontinental populism between formerly colonized nations that could obliterate the bonds of racialized fraternity that defined colonial relations, and continued to define core and periphery relations in the postcolonial era.

The dissertation of Anuja Bose is approved.

Carole Pateman

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University of California, Los Angeles

2017

For Rethi Devi Bose
and in memory of Nassim Mobasher

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Vita

Anuja Bose graduated from the University of British Columbia in May, 2006 with a B.A. in Political Science. She went on to earn an M.A. in Political Science from the University of Toronto in 2008. A year later, she moved to the United States to pursue her Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of California, Los Angeles. As a graduate student, she was awarded the Masters and Doctoral fellowship from the Social Sciences Research Council of Canada. During 2015-2016, she organized the Political Theory Workshop and the *African American Political Thought Conference* at UCLA. Between 2013-2016, she was the head steward of the UC Graduate Student Union at UCLA, where she addressed issues related to access, equity and diversity in graduate education. To complete her dissertation, she was awarded the University of California Office of President Dissertation Year Fellowship in 2016-2017. She will be a lecturer in the Department of African American Studies and Political Science in 2017-2018, offering courses in black political thought; the political theory of empire and imperialism; and feminist theory.

INTRODUCTION: FRANTZ FANON ON THE QUESTION OF EMPIRE AND SOLIDARITY

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line – the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea.

- W.E.B. Du Bois, “To the Nations of the World,” 1900¹

European empires were consolidated by relations of social solidarity that bound the metropole and colony together. Economic, linguistic, political, and administrative linkages formed the basis of European imperial social solidarity, which held together politically and culturally diverse colonies as a single political formation.² Colonial subjects who sought to put an end to imperial domination found themselves facing the political dilemma of how to challenge the basis of this imperial social solidarity. They could either work within the imperial structure to reform the unequal and racialized relations of social solidarity or they could demand national independence in order to forge new relations of national and regional solidarity, thus building the political power

¹ W.E.B. Du Bois “To the Nations of the World” in Eric J. Sundquist, ed., *The Oxford W. E. B. Du Bois Reader*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Du Bois first made this statement on the color line in an address titled ‘To the Nations of the World,’ which was delivered at the First Pan-African Congress in London in July 1900. That conference was the first of many gatherings of colonized peoples from around the world, including the Congresses of Black Writers and Artists, the All African Peoples’ Conference, and numerous Third World Solidarity meetings, which began with the first International Congress Against Imperialism and Colonialism in Brussels, Belgium in 1927. With this statement, Du Bois inaugurated a long history of political organizing by colonized peoples across state borders, colonial boundaries, and racial divisions, focusing their attention on the relationship between racism, imperialism, and capitalism. Fanon belongs to this long tradition and his works exemplify the ways in which colonized peoples sought to build political solidarity in the postwar era across Cold War divisions.

² Gary Wilder makes an extensively researched historical argument about how the social solidarity of the French imperial state was formed through a number of economic, political, and bureaucratic linkages and circuits. See Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars*, (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2005), 32-40.

necessary to abolish the imperial foundations of the international state system. Frantz Fanon took the latter route to freedom from imperial rule.³

In this dissertation, I trace the ways in which Fanon engages with questions of empire and solidarity throughout his four published works *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952); *Year V of the Algerian Revolution* (1959); *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961); and *Towards the African Revolution* (1969). Doing so, I argue that he critiqued the racialized social solidarity of the French imperial state in order to reconstitute relations of political solidarity between formerly colonized nations that could work towards undermining the imperial foundations of the international order. As a result, Fanon rejected the possibility of working within the structures of the imperial state to repair and reform the racialized social solidarity of the imperial state by instituting more egalitarian and democratic federalist structures that could supplant the economic and political structures of European empires.

Many of Fanon's writings after his first published work *Black Skin, White Masks* were an intervention into the debates in the Francophone public sphere about whether to form a federal system with France, or whether to pursue the path of national independence in order to bolster an anti-imperialist coalition with other postcolonial states. The emancipatory potential of federalism was particularly attractive to Francophone intellectuals and activists such as Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, for whom freedom from colonial rule could be pursued within a supranational federation such as Greater France. Against the federalists, and also against an elite led anti-

³ For instance, there was a division between those who advocated for a federalist approach to decolonization such as Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, and those who advocated for complete disassociation from the colonial power, such as Frantz Fanon, Houari Boumédiène, and Sékou Touré.

imperialist movement, Fanon articulated an intercontinental vision of political solidarity between Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Fanon's intercontinental anti-imperialism diverged from prominent strands of Third Worldism, which was largely led by intellectuals and statesmen from the colonies. Instead, Fanon persistently articulated the basis for intercontinentalism to be grounded in the political actions that the masses of colonized and decolonized nations took part in, and in this sense, his intercontinental vision of anti-imperialism was populist and anti-authoritarian. Specifically, I show how his writings articulate two sets of political practices that the masses of the Third World engage in to transform the imperialist structure of the international state system: 1) The practice of vigilance in response to being vulnerable to undemocratic rule internally and being subject to imperial domination externally, and 2) The practice of sacrifice as a way to share and distribute the burdens of waging armed resistance against powerful imperial states. These practices form the basis of Fanon's vision of intercontinental solidarity as an oppositional force that could abolish the racialized social solidarity that consolidated the imperial states of European powers.

I. FANON AND THIRD WORLD POLITICAL THOUGHT

My re-reading of Fanon's works in order to recover his emphasis on questions of empire and solidarity not only affirm his position as a theorist of Third World internationalism, but also argues for paying closer attention to the specificity of Fanon's internationalism. Fanon's place within Third World internationalism is not disputed and indeed is often taken for granted by those who have paid close attention to his life and writings. For instance, Albert Memmi hailed Fanon as a prophet of the Third World in his 1971 article

for *The New York Times*.⁴ Sartre famously referred to Fanon's writings as the voice of the Third World.⁵ Yet aside from these statements of exaltation, there has been little scholarly effort to develop in any detail Fanon's place within the various strands of political thought that comprised Third World internationalism. The vast majority of the secondary literature on Fanon's writings makes only fleeting references to his relationship to the Third World movement, which was operating as the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) during Fanon's most politically active years from 1952-1961.⁶ Even the most extensive biographical work written on Fanon diminishes his understanding of the Third World as only constituting the geographical regions of the world to which he had travelled. As David Macey writes:

⁴ Albert Memmi, "Frozen by Death in the Image of Third World Prophet," *The New York Times*, March 14, 1971, sec. Archives, <https://www.nytimes.com/1971/03/14/archives/fanon-by-peter-geismar-illustrated-214-pp-new-york-the-dial-press.html>.

⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox, (New York: Grove Press, 2005), xvi.

⁶ Unfortunately, Third Worldism is generally considered to be a current of political thought initiated by fringe left groups that has very little relevance to understanding the current arrangement of the global order. Although there was a period in which the field of International Relations and International Relations Theory engaged with the non-aligned moment of Third Worldism as an important form of internationalism that challenged the postwar geopolitical arrangement of the world, there has been scant attention given to constructing Third Worldism as a robust tradition of political thought. For the relevance of the Third World movement to International Relations see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2007) In political theory, there is almost no extensive engagement with Third Worldism, and when there is a discussion of Third World internationalism, it is invariably characterized as the political context out of which postcolonial theory developed. For instance, in a commendable effort to open up political theory to questions of empire and decolonization, Margaret Kohn and Keally McBride co-wrote *Political Theories of Decolonization: Postcolonialism and the Problem of Foundations*. However, Kohn and McBride rarely take up Third Worldism in their work even though political thinkers of the Third World movement are some of the key figures who they identify as precursors to postcolonial theory. See Margaret Kohn and Keally McBride, *Political Theories of Decolonization: Postcolonialism and the Problem of Foundations* (Oxford University Press, 2011) 55-76; 98-117. Thus, there is insufficient clarity in the field of political theory of how to delineate the intellectual traditions of the non-Western world, which engage with questions of empire, colonialism, decolonization, and capitalism. Currently, they are grouped together under postcolonial theory, black political thought, anti-colonial thought and increasingly under comparative political thought. These categories are too broad and lacking concrete historical connections to the social movements that many of the political thinkers were involved with. In fact, if there is already an agreement that some of these thinkers were precursors to postcolonial theory as an academic field, it should be the case that more effort is made to understand and recover the political ideologies that they saw themselves to be a part of during their most politically active years throughout the twentieth century.

Fanon's own Third World is a curious geographical entity. It apparently does not include Asia, and there is little mention in the text of Latin America or the Middle East. Fanon makes the Third World synonymous with Africa and his Africa consists essentially of the Maghreb and the countries he had visited in West Africa.⁷

This is not only a poor reading of Fanon's works since he makes references to anti-colonial movements around Asia, Latin America and the Middle East throughout his writings, it is also a deficient understanding of Fanon's analysis of imperialism and how he imagined effective political resistance to imperial re-configurations in the postcolonial era as involving the consolidated political power of formerly colonized nations.

In my reconstruction of Fanon's arguments about imperialism, political resistance and solidarity, I place him firmly within Third Worldism. In so doing, I recover his contributions to a tradition of political thought that developed throughout the twentieth century in different locations of the First and Third World to understand the nature of Euro-American imperial domination, and organize toward its demise.⁸ This political tradition was composed of a range of political leaders, statesmen, activists, and thinkers who saw the importance of building an effective counterhegemonic movement to transform the inequality and hierarchy that defined the international order as a result of centuries of European colonialism. Among the range of thinkers who belonged to this group were Amílcar Cabral, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara, Fidel Castro, Mao Tse-tung, Ho Chi Minh, Jawaharlal Nehru, Jalal Al-i Ahmad, W.E.B. Du Bois, Richard Wright, and

⁷ David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*, (London ; New York: Verso, 2012). 465.

⁸ Fanon is often read as a pan-Africanist instead of a Third World Marxist. One exception is Ntongela Masilela, who understood Fanon's connection to Marxism and Third Worldism. For instance he wrote, "For Fanon the Algerian Revolution was the first and primary dialectical process towards the unfolding of the African Revolution. According to him, or at least in accordance with the logic of his political position, Pan-Arabism and Pan-Africanism were to find their historical expression within the concept of the Third World. It was Fanon who articulated the conception of the Third World into a serious political category, giving it a fundamentally rich historical content." Ntongela Masilela, "Pan-Africanism or Classical African Marxism?," in *Imagining Home: Class, Culture and Nationalism in the African Diaspora*, in eds. Sidney J. Lemelle and Robin D. G. Kelley, (London ; New York: Verso, 1994), 317.

Malcolm X. Fanon is part of this political tradition not only because he explicitly made references to the Third World movement throughout his writings, but also because one of his central concerns was to remake the global order on more egalitarian terms so that political and economic power could be re-distributed toward the masses of the Third World. A central claim of this dissertation is that Fanon's concern with imperial domination and Third World political solidarity began with his first work, *Black Skin, White Masks*, and continued to develop throughout his political writings as he became more immersed in anti-colonial struggles in North and West Africa. In other words, there is no bifurcation of Fanon's works between an earlier Fanon who was solely concerned with the problems of racialization in France and its colonies (*Black Skin, White Masks*), and a more politically engaged Fanon who confronted more forthrightly the urgent task of decolonization (*Towards the African Revolution, Year V of the Algerian Revolution* and *The Wretched of the Earth*).⁹ I argue that all four of his published works constitute an important contribution to the tradition of Third World political thought by taking up questions related to empire, political resistance, and solidarity.

Third World political thought encompasses a number of ideological positions that advance different articulations of the relationship between imperialism and capitalism. Against the common genealogies of Third Worldism, the genesis of the political tradition was not in the 1940s or 1950s when the beginning of the Cold War generated unity between colonized and newly decolonized Third World nations to take a position of non-

⁹ For instance, a number of articles take for granted that there is a clear distinction between *Black Skin, White Masks* and the rest of his writings. See for instance, Cedric Robinson, "The Appropriation of Frantz Fanon," *Race & Class* 35, no. 1 (July 1, 1993): 79–91; Henry Louis Gates, "Critical Fanonism," *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 3 (April 1, 1991): 457–70; Homi Bhabha, "Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche, and the Colonial Condition" in Foreword to Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, (London: Pluto Press, 1986), vii–xxi.

alignment in response to the emerging political struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union as they sought to re-establish imperialist hegemony in the postcolonial era.¹⁰ As Vijay Prashad has argued, the origins date back to the interwar years when the first conference of the International Congress Against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism was held in Brussels, Belgium in 1927. It was at this conference that the Third World political tradition was born as representatives of anti-imperialist organizations and delegates from around the colonized world gathered under the slogan “National Freedom and Social Equality” and established the League Against Imperialism.¹¹ Willi Münzenberg, one of the participants of the conference, declared that the delegates and representatives “lead the struggle against capitalist, imperialist rule, in support of national self-determination and independence in their home countries.”¹² Münzenberg was a German communist who was a key figure in the anti-imperialist movement in Europe in the 1920s, and one of the primary organizers of the first meeting in Brussels. It is important to trace the history of Third World internationalism to the interwar years because it reveals that the Third World tradition’s critique of imperialism was initially inseparable from a critique of capitalist exploitation, in part because of the close connections that developed between the Third World movement and the Communist international during the early twentieth century.

¹⁰ For a history of the Third World movement that emphasizes the beginnings during the 1940s and 1950s see Mark T. Berger, “After the Third World? History, Destiny and the Fate of Third Worldism,” *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2004): 9–39.

¹¹ Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*, (New York: The New Press, 2008), 20–21.

¹² Willi Münzenberg’s speech was included in the official report from the Brussels Congress, see Louis Gibarti (Hrsg.), *Das Flammenzeichen vom Palais Egmont*, Neuer Deutscher Verlag, Berlin (1927).

As the Third World movement developed, a number of different political positions developed to oppose European imperialism. The 1955 “Conference of Afro-Asian Peoples” in Bandung, Indonesia largely captured the refusal of newly independent nation-states to align with any major power during the Cold War. The Indian, Egyptian, and Indonesian heads of states - Jawaharlal Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Achmed Sukarno - advanced the non-alignment position at Bandung, which later crystalized as the Non-Alignment Movement in collaboration with Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Josef Broz Tito of Yugoslavia. Although the leaders at Bandung were acutely aware of the re-assertion of imperialism in the postcolonial era, they were divided on the means through which imperialism could be abolished in the postcolonial era. In the end, the consensus at the Bandung conference was for the political elites of the Third World to exert diplomatic pressure in order to diffuse the growing tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹³ In this sense, it was a far less radical moment of Third World internationalism than that which preceded Bandung in Brussels in 1927, where the presence of communists from the First and Third World pushed the League Against Imperialism to simultaneously critique capitalism and imperialism as imbricated structures of oppression.¹⁴ Bandung was also far less ambitious politically than the meetings that would follow in the 1960s and 1970s, where another generation of Third Worldists met in Havana at the Tricontinental Conference in 1966. The Tricontinental conference followed in the lineage of Brussels and Bandung, but it was also a gathering that came directly after the successes of populist national liberation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America that instituted socialist governments. As a result, the new generation of Third

¹³ Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, 36-37.

¹⁴ Fredrik Petersson, “Hub of the Anti-Imperialist Movement,” *Interventions* 16, no. 1 (January 2, 2014): 52.

World leaders were far more concerned with remaking an unequal global world order by any means necessary than diffusing tensions between emerging superpowers. Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara set the agenda of the conference by posing the central question at the Tricontinental conference. Namely, he asked the participants how it would be possible to provide genuine solidarity for the Vietnamese who were struggling to defeat American imperialism. Guevara, like others at the Tricontinental conference argued that without the use of violence and militancy, it would not be possible to abolish the imperialist foundations of the world order.

Fanon’s political thought belongs in this century long tradition of anti-imperialist organizing, struggle, and intellectual production. Brussels (1927), Bandung (1955) and Havana (1966) represent three geographical and temporal cornerstones where the Third World political tradition took full and concrete form. There were many moments in between that also contributed to the evolution of the political tradition.¹⁵ It is possible to summarize the positions that developed throughout the centuries into three distinct ideological formations: Third World socialism, Third World liberalism, and Third World Maoism. Although there are a number of differences that distinguish between these three ideological formations, including questions over whether the UN can be reformed, to which path would best lead to sustainable development for postcolonial nations, they were unified by their steadfast opposition to “all forms of foreign aggression, occupation, domination, interference, or hegemony, as well as against great power and bloc

¹⁵ For instance, Vijay Prashad structures the history of the Third World around seventeen cities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, including Cairo, Buenos Aires, Arusha, Kingston and Singapore. Each of these cities represents a meeting place for the Third World, but also an instantiation of the ways in which centuries of imperial rule transformed the politics and economy of these cities. See Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 16-276.

politics.”¹⁶ One of the most important differences relates to how thinkers within these three ideological camps conceptualized the role of the masses of the Third World in global anti-imperialist struggles. In other words, how did Third World political thinkers see as the role of the state institutions, its representative leaders, and the masses in rectifying the global structure of inequality that was left in the wake of centuries of colonization? Where did Third Worldists fall on discussions related to transformative political change, which either emphasized horizontalist organizational forms by upholding the importance of political change propelled by the masses, or vertical democratic centralism that propounded the importance of the state, its representatives, and institutions? Those who advocated Third World socialism and Third World liberalism from the Brussels and Bandung era affirmed the importance of decolonized and independent nation-states leading the struggle against imperialist re-assertions of power. Whereas Third World Maoism during the 1960s and 1970s rejected vertical relationships between a vanguard leadership and the masses in order to privilege more egalitarian, directly democratic and at times anti-state approaches to anti-imperialist struggles.

Although Fanon is typically grouped together with other Third World socialists such as Kwame Nkrumah, Sékou Touré, and Michael Manley, I emphasize how Fanon anticipated the emergence of Third World Maoism in the 1960s, and by doing so, bring to the foreground his position on the vital role that the masses of the Third World were to

¹⁶ “Non-Aligned Countries Declaration, 1979 (Havana Declaration)” in Edmund Jan Osmańczyk, *Encyclopedia of the United Nations and International Agreements: A to F* (Taylor & Francis, 2003), 1599.

play in anti-imperialist struggles in the postwar era.¹⁷ Unlike Third World socialists, Fanon did not have much confidence in the postcolonial state's institutions and leaders to forge the path towards equitable economic and political development. In fact, he suspected that the postcolonial state would re-align with imperialist powers in due course. Thus, the political subjects who take the helm of anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle in Fanon's writings are the peasantry, who on opportune occasions collaborate with the working classes and the lumpen-proletariat. In this sense, whenever Fanon refers to the 'masses' in his writings, he means to refer to this composite aggregation of populist power from below made up predominantly of the peasantry, but also the working classes and the informal urban poor who for him, constitute the revolutionary political subjects of Third World revolutions.¹⁸ In addition to Fanon's de-emphasis on the postcolonial state as a primary agent that can instigate transformative political change; his championing of mass political struggle from below; and his persistent critique of imperialism as inextricably connected to capitalist expansion; Fanon also insisted that violence in the form of armed struggle would be necessary to overthrow and re-make the international order on more egalitarian terms. These aspects of his political thought align him more

¹⁷ Few works trace the connections between Maoism and Fanon's political thought. Ntongela Masilela briefly suggested parallels between Maoism and Fanon's political thought in "Pan-Africanism or Classical African Marxism?" eds. Sidney Lemelle and Robin Kelley, *Imagining Home: Class, Culture and Nationalism in the African Diaspora*, 318 ; More recently, Priyamvada Gopal has very helpfully utilized Fanon's political thought to understand Maoist insurgencies in India. See Gopal, "Concerning Maoism: Fanon, Revolutionary Violence, and Postcolonial India," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 1 (December 21, 2013): 115–128.

¹⁸ Miguel Mellino makes a similar argument by pointing out that in the translation of "Les damnés" to the final English "The Wretched", the messy, multitude of the Third World poor is not fully conveyed. He writes, "What is lost in translation here is nothing less than Fanon's *modernist* political imagination." In other words, Fanon was not simply speaking of the peasantry when he speaks of the masses throughout his works, but rather he was speaking to the modern conditions of colonized and decolonized nations where the masses were a multitudinous group composed of the slum dwelling lumpenproletariat, the working classes, the Third World middle classes, and the peasantry. See Mellino, "The Language of the Damned: Fanon and the Remnants of Europe," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 1 (December, 21, 2013): 80.

closely with Third World Maoism than with the other ideological strands of the Third World political tradition.

In this dissertation, I reconstruct the various aspects of Fanon's Third Worldism as a practice of intercontinental political solidarity. I use the term intercontinentalism in lieu of Third Worldism throughout the dissertation because it captures more accurately Fanon's affinity with the Tricontinental era of Third Worldism, which was much more influenced by Third World Maoism than any other strand of the Third World political tradition.¹⁹ I re-read what has been called Fanon's internationalism as a form of intercontinentalism, which foreshadows the political positions that were articulated at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, where the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) was first established.²⁰ Fanon is

¹⁹ For instance, Ernesto "Che" Guevara's "Message to the Tricontinental" sent to the Tricontinental Solidarity Organization in Havana in 1967 from his camp in Bolivia is considered to be one of the key documents of Third World Maoism. Furthermore, Alexander C. Cook writes, "It was really only after the emergence of the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s - and especially after the onset of the Cultural Revolution (CR) in 1966 - that Maoism was appreciated in the Third World as a complete military, political, cultural and economic ideology distinct from Soviet Communism." In other words, it was during Tricontinental era of Third Worldism that Maoism began to shape the politics and ideology of the movement. See Cook, "Third World Maoism" In Timothy Cheek, ed., *A Critical Introduction to Mao*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and Arif Dirlik, "Mao Zedong Thought and the Third World/Global South," *Interventions* 16, no. 2 (March 4, 2014): 233-56.

²⁰ There are a number of affinities between Huey Newton's conception of intercommunalism and Fanon's conception of intercontinentalism. It is well known that Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* was an influential text that shaped the political ideas of members of the Black Panther Party. Thus, Newton may have been one of the first to pick up on Fanon's conception of intercontinentalism and lend it greater clarity with his conception of intercommunalism. For instance, in his writings Newton speaks to the insufficiency of internationalism as a revolutionary concept for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles. He writes "The people and the economy are so integrated into the imperialist economy that it is impossible to decolonize and return to former conditions of existence. If colonies cannot return to their original conditions of existence then nations no longer exist and since there must be nations for revolutionary nationalism and internationalism to make sense, we say that the world today is a dispersed collection of communities." See Huey Newton, *Revolutionary Intercommunalism and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*. ed. Amy Gdala. Newtown: Superscript, 2006, 31. Newton's argument here is that genuine decolonization and national liberation are difficult to achieve because of the extensive reach and penetration of the imperialist political and economic system, which he argues has worked over the entire globe. Thus despite formal decolonization and decrees of equality, imperialism reconstitutes itself through a different set of players and political institutions. For this reason, Newton calls for political solidarity between resisting communities to form a revolutionary intercommunalism. In this sense, both Fanon and

typically read as a nationalist who fleetingly gestured towards internationalism in his writings.²¹ I argue that this is a narrow reading of Fanon that does not sufficiently consider the anti-imperialist dimensions of his political thought, which advocated not only for an end to the colonization of individual nation-states but also an end to all forms of imperial domination and hegemony. It is also a reading that unwittingly uproots him from the Third World political tradition by diminishing his intercontinentalism in favor of an augmentation of the nationalist dimensions of his political thought. There were certainly many Third Worldists who were nationalists, but the Third Worldist call for solidarity with the nonaligned peoples of Asia, Africa, and the Americas articulated postcolonial nationalisms that opened onto intercontinental connections of political solidarity with other nation-states determined to resist the consolidation of US imperialism during the 1960s and 1970s. The Tricontinental conference in Havana was the zenith of such postwar intercontinental solidarity between Third World nation-states.

In this sense, Fanon's conception of intercontinental political solidarity in his essays from *Towards the African Revolution*, *Year V of the Algerian Revolution*, and *The Wretched of the Earth* are a precursor to the expression of anti-imperialist political solidarity articulated at the meeting in Havana. Written in the decade (1952-1961) before the meeting in 1966, Fanon's works anticipate the increasing influence of Maoism on the Third World political tradition and consequently the increasing radicalization of Third

Newton unsettle the nation-state as the political basis for anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist social movements. They imagine political blocs that simultaneously expand outward and contract inward from the nation-state, which are nevertheless unified in their commitment to remake a world order founded on capitalist-imperialism.

²¹ See Jane Anna Gordon, "Revolutionary in Counter-Revolutionary Times: Elaborating Fanonian National Consciousness into the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy* 19, no. 1 (June 13, 2011): 37-47; and Nigel Gibson, "Nationalism and a New Humanism" *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination* (Cambridge, U.K. : Malden, MA: Polity, 2003), 177-203.

Worldism on questions related to the role of the peasantry in social struggles; the use of violence; the interconnection of imperialism and capitalism; and the participation of the masses in struggles against capitalist exploitation and imperialist oppression. To capture the parallels between Fanon's political thought and Third World Maoism, I use the term intercontinentalism because it captures the ways in which nation-states themselves are not the primary units for political organization in the Maoist understanding of a "Global People's War", which involves a populist insurgency of the masses of the Third World against parasitic First World imperialist powers and its collaborators in newly independent nation-states in the Third World. This is what Fanon meant when he described the Third World as a colossus facing Europe.²² He was referring specifically to the overwhelming majority of the world's poorest populations concentrated in the regions of Asia, Africa, and the Americas whose collective political power had the capacity to bring an end to the historically unequal relationship built between the First and Third Worlds. Although Fanon's expression of political solidarity is translated as a form of internationalism, it is not in fact the internationalism of Marxism.²³ When Fanon's later works are properly contextualized as a precursor to the Third World Maoism of the 1960s, his internationalism is more accurately described as a form of intercontinentalism that understands one of the most central cleavages of social struggle to be between the regions

²² For instance Fanon writes, "The Third World is today facing Europe as one colossal mass whose *project* must be to try and solve the problems this Europe was incapable of finding the answers to." See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 238.

²³ In his earlier writings, Karl Marx argued that capitalism's colonial penetration into the global periphery was a progressive force, which would result in the economic and social development of Third World nations along the lines already experienced by the First World. This would result in the conditions of labor exploitation that would make possible international proletarian unity across First and Third Worlds. Even after Marx recognized uneven economic development and the structural relation of poorer nations to richer colonizing nations, he called for unity and solidarity between the proletariat of the richer and poorer nations at the First International in 1864. See Karl Marx, *On the First International* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1973), p. 174.

of the world that make up the Third World and the regions that make up the First World.²⁴ In other words, Fanon's intercontinentalism erases the distinctions between the nation-states that constitute the Third World in order to advance a counter-hegemonic bloc of social forces that put forth an understanding of global justice that could transform the imperialist ordering of the globe and redistribute its wealth to rectify the centuries of colonization.

For example, Samir Amin's work on political economy articulates some of the core principles of the Third Worldist vision in the postwar context.²⁵ Amin argues that the Third Worldist program must be one that works towards the equalization of nation-states by means of global disarmament, equitable access to resources, transfers of technology and the means of production. He also calls for reparations, the abolition of financial monopoly, and the complete liquidation of presently existing world organizations such as the WTO and the World Bank. Fanon's works do not articulate the programmatic details of the Third World vision in this way. However, his political writings are an important resource for thinking about how to undermine the hegemonic consensus of capitalism as the harbinger for individual liberty, material abundance and the rising tide of affluence that will lift all boats. Specifically, his works articulate the political bloc of the Third World as constituting a mass of political activities that resist this hegemonic consensus of

²⁴ Vicky Randall interrogates the concept of the Third World to argue that the concept retains relevance for geopolitical analysis. Randall's contention is that "the Third World" signals a major axis of inequality and the basis for collective action. She writes, "Today 23% of the world's population live in the global North, while 77% live in the global South. They respectively enjoy 85% and 15% of the world's income" See Vicky Randall "Using and Abusing the Concept of the Third World: Geopolitics and the Comparative Political Study of Development and Underdevelopment," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (February 1, 2004): 41–53.

²⁵ Samir Amin is influenced by Third World Maoism and has written a number of works on the development and contribution of the ideology to Marxism. See Amin, *The Future of Maoism*, trans. Norman H. Finkelstein, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983); and Amin, "Post-Maoist China: A Comparison with Post-Communist Russia," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 22, no. 4 (1999): 375–85.

capitalism as the path toward economic development imposed through external domination by imperialist powers and the internal domination by anti-democratic leaders and institutions. Fanon's writings are a testimony of the range of political activities, which the masses of the Third World engage in as they resist both internal and external domination that seeks to re-institute the capitalist-imperialist order on neoliberal terms during the postwar era. In this dissertation, I argue that the mass political work of the Third World masses, which Fanon draws our attention to persistently throughout his writings, is the basis for his intercontinental conception of political solidarity. In other words, intercontinental political solidarity arises from the shared condition of being subject to external and internal domination from imperialist powers and anti-democratic leaders. The practices of political solidarity that arise to resist this shared condition of oppression authorize an intercontinental political body who contest the imperialist world order and advance counterhegemonic visions of global justice.

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

The argument of the dissertation proceeds through four chapters. The first chapter takes up Fanon's first published work *Black Skin, White Masks* and locates in this text the beginnings of his preoccupation with the problem of empire and solidarity. *Black Skin, White Masks* is a text that is widely read for explicating the specificity of French colonial racism in the metropole and colony. The text moves between Fort-de-France and Paris to paint vivid descriptions of a series of black Francophone individuals who experience the affective state of racial alienation. It concludes with a chapter on "The Black Man and Recognition," which has often circumscribed the interpretive possibilities of the text to

issues related racial misrecognition and the struggle to reconstruct a racial identity emancipated from the injuries of racial misrecognition.²⁶ The focus on these themes in *Black Skin, White Masks* has not only restricted the reading of this early text to issues related to racial identity and its misrecognition, but it has also been wrongly understood as a work that is disconnected from the rest of Fanon's oeuvre, which is typically read as having emerged from his days of being involved in the anti-colonial war in Algeria as a political activist, pamphleteer, intellectual, journalist, physician, and political delegate. The bifurcation of his oeuvre in this manner is the result of paying inadequate attention to Fanon's biography, particularly during his early years when he was a young student and soldier in Martinique and France. In the first chapter, I reconstruct Fanon's time in Martinique and his journey to France as a soldier in World War II, and then as a student in order to show how the problem of French imperialism emerged as central problematic in his political thinking even during the early years of his life in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Doing so, is the first necessary step to opening up *Black Skin, White Masks* to questions related to empire, solidarity, and political resistance.

I then go on to advance the central claim of the first chapter that Fanon critiqued and diagnosed France as a racial and imperial formation that forges social solidarity through the contradictory relationship between race and fraternity. Namely, he understood republican France as bound together through a form of social solidarity that he critically diagnosed as an expression of racialized fraternity. Although fraternity was a central ideal of the French Revolution, Fanon shows us how race mediated the ways in

²⁶ Homi Bhabha popularized the interpretation of *Black Skin, White Masks*, which focuses on racial identity and its misrecognition with his foreword to the 1986 edition of the text. See, Homi K. Bhabha "Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche, and the Colonial Condition" in Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 2008 [1986]) xxi - xxxvii.

which fraternity was forged such that colonial subject-citizens were simultaneously included into, and excluded from republican citizenship. Caught in the double bind of inclusion and exclusion, the possibility of forging any substantial sense of social solidarity between black and white citizens in France and its colonies was forgone. I elaborate on how this dual structure of inclusion and exclusion operates through a reading of two key scenes from *Black Skin, White Masks*: 1) Fanon's account of Aimé Césaire's speech given in Fort-de-France during his electoral campaign to be a member of parliament and 2) Fanon's famous biographical account of the young French boy and his mother whom he encounters in France. I re-read the boy's reaction of fear and his mother's attempt to console her child as an instance of how racialized peoples in France were simultaneously included and excluded from the body politic. Moreover, both of these scenes demonstrate how the simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of racialized peoples ruptures the fraternity that bound together the body politic of the French imperial state. In other words, fraternity, which was the basis for the social solidarity of the French imperialist state, is not an instantiation of equality and liberty between the citizens of France, but rather an instantiation of hierarchy on the basis of race.

Thus, I argue that in his first text, Fanon diagnoses the French imperial state to be crippled by a fragile social solidarity that undermines the ties of equality and liberty necessary for sustaining a cohesive and stable body politic. Namely, the social solidarity of the French imperial state is broken by practices of racial differentiation, which he found to be deeply rooted in the habits and worldviews of its white French citizens. Unlike his counterparts, Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, Fanon did not think that it was possible to repair the racialized social solidarity of the French imperial state. For this

reason, he was resolutely opposed to the political movements that advocated for departmentalization as a route to colonial liberation. Fanon argued that the ideal of fraternity and the notion of universal brotherhood that emerged from the French Revolution did not include the vast majority of the world's population who were suffering under European colonial subjugation. As he writes, "In 1789, after the bourgeois French Revolution, the humblest French peasant gained substantially from the upheaval. But it is common knowledge that for 95 percent of the population in the developing countries, independence has not brought any immediate change."²⁷ In other words, he contends that the formal decrees of equality and independence which European powers formulated in response to anti-colonial movements do not bring about any meaningful change to the lives of the masses in the Third World. As a result, Fanon rejected the efforts of national elites in colonized and decolonized nation-states, who attempted to work with Europe to repair and expand on the social solidarity of the emerging decolonized world order. He understood this project as doomed to failure because the social solidarity of the international system in the postcolonial era would be built on the racialized fraternity of the colonial era. For Fanon, it was necessary "to try and solve the problems this Europe was incapable of finding the answers to"²⁸ by turning away from Europe in order to re-imagine and re-build new forms of political solidarities that were emerging throughout decolonization struggles across Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

²⁷ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. 35.

²⁸ Ibid.

The second chapter of the dissertation is concerned with how Fanon was re-imagining which sorts of political alliances in the postcolonial era would be made possible through the practices of political solidarity that were emerging in anti-imperialist social movements. This chapter critically engages with Fanon's theoretical and testimonial writings in *The Wretched of the Earth* to track how he is conceptualizing an anti-imperialist political solidarity that cuts across the newly instituted national borders of the decolonized world. As a springboard for entering into Fanon's writings, I take up the historiographical discussions surrounding two of the most widely promoted routes to decolonization in the French colonies: federalism and national independence. Fanon is a marginal figure in the historiography of these movements even though at the time, he was a vocal participant in the debates over which of these two paths of decolonization would sustain political and economic independence. The consequence of marginalizing Fanon in the historiography is that there are few perspectives that emphasize a populist vision of decolonization. The authors who provide rich and detailed historical accounts of the movements for federalism and national independence tend to center their narratives around the grand visions and savvy political actions of a few intellectuals and statesmen from the colonies. Fanon is one of the few political actors from the time whose writings reveal more than just the political maneuverings of elites. Rather, he centers the agency of the Third World masses as they sought to emancipate themselves from colonial rule and continued to persevere in their struggle against the re-assertion of imperial rule in the postcolonial era.

In the second chapter, I re-introduce Fanon as a major participant in this debate, particularly by focusing on the essay "On National Culture", which was originally written

as a speech that Fanon delivered to the Second Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Rome, in 1959. My main aim in this chapter is to uncover the political form of Fanon's populism. I argue that his conception of "the masses" throughout his writings was not limited to Algeria, or any particular nation-state in the colonized or decolonized world. Rather, when he evoked the notion of "the people" or "the masses" of the Third World in his writings, he made this invocation from Africa toward the other two continental spheres of Asia and the Americas, which were produced at the nexus of global capitalism, imperialism, and racialized political economy, making their social and political conditions comparable to those in postcolonial African nations. It is this basic idea that he sought to convey in the speech, which he delivered at the Second Congress to an audience that was divided on the question of whether decolonization should take the form of a supranational federal state or the form of an alliance of decolonized and independent nation-states. In other words, the audience members were transnational federalists or internationalists. They had yet to imagine or conceptualize a form of political solidarity that was intercontinental in scale. I underscore the original form of the chapter "On National Culture" as a speech in order to draw out the ways in which Fanon persistently evoked a more expansive conception of the "we," which sought to build political solidarity by forging new conceptions of political community than those that were in circulation at the time. Throughout his address to the Second Congress, Fanon deepens the dialectical contradictions of building political community in order to press toward a more open articulation of a "we" that was grounded in an intercontinental populism of the Third World.

Having established the scale and reach of Fanon's conception of political solidarity, in chapters three and four, I develop more fully Fanon's account of intercontinental populism by taking up his essays from *Year V of the Algerian Revolution* and *The Wretched of the Earth*. In addition to giving shape to the forms of political solidarity that he saw emerging in the anti-colonial movements, Fanon also articulates the set of political practices that constitute intercontinental political solidarity between Asia, Africa, and the Americas. These political practices are built from below by the masses of these three continental spheres as they find themselves caught in new conditions of imperial domination where national projects for equitable development of the postcolonial state's resources are repeatedly endangered by external imperialist interventions and internal anti-democratic rule. Fanon presciently understood that this constant endangerment of the national liberation project was a political condition which was common to the masses in colonized and decolonized parts of Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and this commonality is what made it possible for him to articulate collective political practices that Third World peoples engaged in at an intercontinental level. In that sense, it is not the case that by evoking a conception of the Third World, Fanon homogenizes the social, cultural, and political conditions of the Third World into a monolith. In fact, he acknowledges the complexity of the geographical regions of the colonized and decolonized world, but he also identifies in these regions certain social conditions, which were prevalent enough to call forth mass anti-systemic politics.

In chapter three, I develop more substantively how Fanon is conceptualizing the shared condition of oppression, which he argues is the common ground for fostering political solidarity between the masses of the Third World. Fanon was deeply influenced

by Jean Paul Sartre's concept of seriality from the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* when he was composing *The Wretched of the Earth*. In this chapter, I trace the influence of this concept on Fanon's writings to bring out how Fanon uses the concept of seriality to demonstrate how the colonized are made passive and depoliticized by external imperialist domination and by internal elite domination. In other words, seriality is the common condition of oppression, which Third World peoples experience when they are reduced to an anonymous mass subject to external and internal domination. Fanon identifies among the Third World masses political practices that disclose a comportment of vigilance to resist their serialized condition of colonial and postcolonial political existence. Specifically, in chapter three I argue that Fanon identifies vigilance as a practice that develops in three stages: 1) the acquisition of more knowledge and insight about the social and political situation of colonialism; 2) the active distrust of the postcolonial government's claims of progress from the colonial era; and 3) the resistance of imperialist imposition and control into the economic and political spheres of postcolonial politics.

In chapter four, I build on this interpretation of seriality to re-read Fanon's account of political violence as a form of collective resistance against the social and political structures of colonial and postcolonial society that become serialized by the dual pressures of imperialist domination and authoritarian rule. It is a known fact that Fanon abhorred violence, yet he sees it as a necessary condition for overthrowing imperialism. In the final chapter, I situate Fanon's arguments for the use of violence in relation to his conception of sacrifice as a practice of political solidarity. By turning to Fanon's articles in *Towards the African Revolution* and his essays in *The Wretched of the Earth*, I argue

that the turn to violent resistance is a form of political sacrifice that distributes the immense burden of struggling against imperialist regimes across the colonized and decolonized world. Specifically, Fanon envisions colonized peoples as sacrificial agents who act at the intercontinental scale. They begin to re-imagine their national sacrifices for political independence and economic freedom as part of a global struggle against imperialism. When sacrifice shifts from an expression of national consciousness to one of intercontinental solidarity between the masses of the Third World, I contend that it transforms in two ways: 1) The demands of national sacrifice which are usually grounded in a narrow conception of racial/ethnic identity are transformed to encompass a multi-racial coalition and 2) The burdens of sacrifice are dispersed from resisting national populations to an intercontinental body of people in order to effect change at the global scale.

Thus, vigilance and sacrifice are two practices of Third World political solidarity that Fanon believes were important for transforming the racialized social solidarity of the French imperial state and undermining the imperialist foundations of the international order. Specifically, the political practices of vigilance and sacrifice gave concrete political expression to the intercontinental populism of Third World peoples that arose to challenge European imperialism by articulating a new “we” of the global order. Fanon’s writings displace elitist actors from the First and Third Worlds in order to uplift the political practices, ideals, and visions of masses of the Third World, who after decades of capitalist industrialization and neoliberal globalization in the postcolonial era, have yet to experience meaningful self-determination at an economic, political, and cultural level. Fanon, more than any other political theorist, helps us understand the demands for

political change that have been shaping the contemporary world from Egypt to South Africa, Venezuela to India, Guadeloupe to Nigeria, South Korea to Mexico, and Palestine to the urban centers of the United States. He gives us a framework through which to understand the burgeoning multitude that is emerging from the Third World in widespread uprisings by the youth, the unemployed, trade unionists, activists, writers, artists, and religious groups.

CHAPTER 1: RACE AND FRATERNITY UNDER FRENCH COLONIALISM

Fraternity, the third element of the French Revolution's motto *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, gives expression to the social solidarity that is necessary for the ideals of liberty and equality to be sustained within a polity. Fraternity is not a right, but a moral sentiment that generates fidelity to the ideals of equality and liberty, and in turn establishes the moral obligations that guarantee the equal enjoyment of individual political rights based on equality and liberty. In this sense, it is the basis for French civic nationalism because it cultivates the passion and commitment to the ideals of the French Revolution.²⁹

Feminist critics of fraternity have brought attention to the gendered nature of term, pointing to the assumption of masculinity that underlies political communities formed through the solidarity of fraternal bonds. Carole Pateman's critique of the social contract in *The Sexual Contract* exemplifies this point when she argues that the contract was a fraternal pact between men that only included women through the sexual contract of marriage.³⁰ In *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*, Lynn Hunt's study of the French Revolution reveals how fraternity organized the post-revolutionary politics of France through the family romance of brothers acting autonomously as citizens.³¹ The family romance of brothers was a dramatic effort to reimagine a polity unhinged from patriarchal authority. Françoise Vergès extends the critique of fraternity to the problem of

²⁹ See Hauke Brunkhorst's study of the importance of "solidarité" for the French Revolution, and how the ideal retained the force to supplant the ethnic nationalisms that preceded the French Revolution. Brunkhorst, *Solidarity: From Civic Friendship to a Global Legal Community* trans. Jeffrey Flynn (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005).

³⁰ Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 79.

³¹ Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 42.

colonialism and race in *Monsters and Revolutionaries: Colonial Family Romance and Métissage*. She argues that the fraternal bond was formed exclusively between metropolitan brothers, which meant that colonized men were included as younger brothers who could not inherit the culture and heritage stemming from parental authority.³²

These critical interpretive works on fraternity, gender, and political community by feminist scholars are a springboard for re-entering Frantz Fanon's first book *Black Skin, White Masks* (hereafter, *Black Skin*) from a new and insightful vantage point. I argue that a central contradiction in Fanon's first book, *Black Skin*, is between race and the ideal of fraternity. When citizens are shaped within racial hierarchies, it becomes difficult, if not impossible to realize the goals of fraternity, and therefore the concomitant ideals of equality and liberty. This contradiction structures *Black Skin* so deeply that we should pay renewed attention to Fanon's complex account of how race undercuts fraternity, or social solidarity more broadly. This chapter focuses on two scenes from *Black Skin* to analyze how social solidarity is made impossible by the effects of racism and colonialism on authentic communication and mutual recognition. Fanon's description of Aimé Césaire's speech in Fort de France, Martinique, and his encounter with the young French boy who reacts with fear upon seeing him, are key locations in *Black Skin* that portray the rupture of the French imperial state as a single political community held together by commitments to the ideals of the liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The chapter proceeds by first giving a historical account of how racialized relations of fraternity operated under French colonialism. This first section sets the

³² Françoise Vergès, *Monsters and Revolutionaries: Colonial Family Romance and Métissage*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 11.

historical and biographical ground for the interpretive work that ensues. In the second section, I argue that colonial fraternity is conceptualized as a social structure that simultaneously includes and excludes. Through a reading of two key scenes from *Black Skin*, I elaborate on how this dual structure of inclusion and exclusion operates by universalizing and particularizing; modernizing and primitivizing; and racializing and rationalizing at the same time. It is this dual structure that makes colonial fraternity self-legitimizing, and therefore difficult to unseat as a racial regime.

My reading of the text with an eye for the social structure of race and fraternity offers a new account of how to think more coherently of Fanon's political theory. This task has been made difficult by the tendency to bifurcate his oeuvre between his early work, as being focused on race and psychology, and his later writings, as being engaged with revolutionary politics and political realism.³³ Scholars of Fanon have tried to bridge this separation by tracing the dialectical development of his thought to overcome the contradiction between Fanon's early and later thinking.³⁴ However, the assumption of dialectical development requires that a contradiction must exist in Fanon's political thought between an individualized account of racial alienation and a collective account of

³³ Homi Bhabha for instance developed a famously psychological reading of *Black Skin, White Masks* in "Remembering Fanon", which was the foreword to the 1986 edition of the text. See Frantz Fanon *Black Skin, White Masks* trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London: Pluto Press, 2008 [1986]) xxi–xxxvii. Others such as Peter Geismar, Irene Gendzier and Jock McCulloch trace a maturation of Fanon's work from a psychological to political analysis of race and colonialism, and by doing so they characterize his early work as strictly apolitical. See Geismar, *Fanon* (New York: Dial Press, 1971); Gendzier, *Frantz Fanon: A Critical Study* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973); and McCulloch, *Black Soul, White Artifact: Fanon's Clinical Psychological and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

³⁴ See George Ciccariello-Maher "Decolonial realism: Ethics, politics, and dialectics in Fanon and Dussel. *Contemporary Political Theory* 13(1): 2–22; and Ato Sekyi-Otu, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996).

political emancipation.³⁵ Another way to bridge the separation without assuming that a contradiction exists in his thinking would be to read his works within its proper socio-political coordinates so as to reveal Fanon's persistent concern with the larger context of French imperialism and racism. In this chapter, I begin the work of reading Fanon's oeuvre with greater historical sensitivity in order to establish coherency and continuity in his body of work,³⁶ and to disclose his systematic critique and reconstruction of a central ideal of political modernity – solidarity.³⁷ While this chapter is primarily diagnostic and focuses on Fanon's critique of the ideal of solidarity, later chapters will show how Fanon reconstructs this ideal through engaged political action in decolonization struggles. Ultimately, this reading of Fanon's body of work establishes that he was always concerned with the relationship between empire and solidarity, whether in his more individualized examination of racial alienation in a range of characters from the Antilles, or his revolutionary writings of collective struggle against colonialism.

³⁵ Cody Trojan makes a similar point in C. Trojan, "Revolution as Restoration or Foundation? Frantz Fanon's Politics of World Building," *Contemporary Political Theory* 15, no. 4 (November 1, 2016): 5.

³⁶ Despite the large body of secondary literature on Fanon, few works offer a historically contextualized reading of his writings. One exception is David Macey's interpretive work in his political biography of Fanon. See: David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*. (New York : Verso Books, 2012).

³⁷ A number of scholars who have written on Fanon have made passing remarks about his commitment to a politics of solidarity between colonized peoples. Yet, there have not been any significant interpretive attempts to develop his account of solidarity with a degree of consistency and continuity throughout his texts. For brief references to Fanon's account of political solidarity see Paul Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line*, (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press Harvard, 2000), 247-249; Nigel Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 145-150; Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 93-159; Yogita Goyal, *Romance, Diaspora and Black Atlantic Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 4-6.

I. FRATERNITY AND THE COLONIAL FAMILY ROMANCE

With the abolition of slavery in the French colonies in 1848, a central problem arose about how to imagine the relationship between France and its colonies. The colonies, which continued to supply raw goods for France, had to incorporate the descendants of slaves and the newly arrived indentured workers as members of the French republic. The post-slavery society soon transitioned into a colonial order as new laws and regulations were instituted to continue the extraction of labor and goods from the colonies. Françoise Vergès argues that the French colonial state drew on the fraternal family romance of the French revolution to reimagine the relationship between freedmen, indentured laborers, and the citizens of France.³⁸ The fraternal family romance was born out of the 1789 revolution, and a form of solidarity that sought to unsettle patriarchy as the basis for social bonds in the *ancien régime*. The revolution ushered in a republican model of solidarity based on fraternity, a brotherhood of equals who rejected the tyranny of an all-powerful father to form a political state based on liberty, equality, and fraternity.³⁹ This model of fraternity transmogrified in the colonial context as colonized men were imagined as younger brothers of a political community that expanded from the 40 million citizens of France, to include the 100 million citizens and subjects that constituted France and its colonies.⁴⁰

³⁸ Laura Janara makes a similar argument of the fraternal imaginary that constituted the relationship between European, native and black Americans in the United States through her reading of Alexis de Tocqueville and Gustave de Beaumont's works. See Janara, "Brothers and Others: Tocqueville and Beaumont, U.S. Genealogy, Democracy and Racism," *Political Theory*, 32 (6), 773-800, 2004.

³⁹ This argument is made most persuasively by Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), and Juliet Flower MacCannell, *The Regime of the Brother: After the Patriarchy*, (New York: Routledge, 1991).

⁴⁰ Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars*, (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2005), 31.

Vergès articulates some key characteristics of the metaphor of colonial fraternity that constituted the French imperial state as a coterminous political community of citizens, hierarchically structured through a complex juridico-political system. She argues that the fraternal relationship between metropolitan and colonial brothers was defined by primogeniture – the law whereby the right of inheritance and succession belonged to the firstborn children, the metropolitan brothers who overthrew monarchy to establish republican democracy. This meant that younger brothers in the colonies were doomed to be under imperial tutelage by metropolitan brothers, who as the rightful inheritors of the culture and civilization of France, considered colonized peoples their protégés to guide towards full citizenship. Vergès underscores the ways in which this narrative of deferred development was differently articulated under French colonialism because the colonies were considered to be an inseparable part of the French nation-state. In Gary Wilder’s study of the French imperial state, he emphasizes this point by quoting Octave Homberg, a French diplomat and financier who worked in the French colonies in the early twentieth century. In Homberg’s widely read book on investments in the French colonies he writes, “one doesn’t sell one’s brothers...our colonies are not...a property: they are truly the most fecund and sacred part of our territorial formation: it is thanks to them that France, despite its poorly closed wounds, is still a world important nation.”⁴¹ In other words, France’s colonies were imagined to be part of a single organic community that was held together through powerful familial metaphors of fraternity.

However, the familial metaphor of fraternity organized and structured the relationship between French citizens and subjects through the logic of racism such that

⁴¹ Octave Homberg, *La France des cinq parties du monde* (Paris: Plon, 1927), 2-3, 6-7 in Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial State*, 32.

fraternity continued to exist in a contradictory relationship to paternity, which was never completely effaced even after the abolition of slavery in 1848. Younger brothers in the colonies were infantilized as children who did not have access to the vocabulary of rights and democratic ideals of France, which all brothers of the republic should have attained even within the model of primogeniture. Rather paternity continued to define the relationship between France and its colonies such that debt and dependence mutated the fantasy of fraternity into an unequal relationship between colonizer and colonized, where metropolitan brothers would not recognize colonial brothers as descendants of the same parents.⁴² Vergès contends that this contradiction arose because the extension of the French republican ideals to the colonies was understood as promoting Enlightenment and progress, for which the colonies were expected to repay France by supplying raw materials such as sugar and minerals, and most importantly, bodies to fight in the France's wars.⁴³ Fraternity turned into a relationship of obligation, duty, and dependence; taking on the characteristics that often define the structure of interaction between parent and child. The colonial family romance thus imagined a Greater France beyond its original hexagonal boundaries through contradictory familial metaphors that superimposed fraternal relations over the racist paternalism that existed during slavery.⁴⁴

⁴² Françoise Vergès, *Monsters and Revolutionaries: Colonial Romance and Métissage*, 6

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁴ Recent scholarship in French colonial history refigure republican France as an imperial political formation, where the relationship between the continental nation and its overseas colonies are conceptualized to be coextensive and interdependent. See, Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars*. (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 2005); Laurent Dubois, *A Colony of Citizens: Revolution & Slave Emancipation in the French Caribbean, 1787-1804*. (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 2004); and Alice Conklin. *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa 1895-1930*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

As a citizen of Martinique, Fanon inhabited the contradictions of this coterminous political community throughout his life. His early education at Lycée Schoelcher composed of European history, philosophy, and literature, strongly concentrating on classical French literature and philosophy of the 17 and 18th centuries.⁴⁵ The outcome of his colonial education is summarized concisely in David Macey's exceptionally detailed biography of Fanon: "He was French and identified with the French culture in which he had been brought up and educated."⁴⁶ Indeed, Fanon not only considered himself a Frenchman, he was also a patriot who was prepared to sacrifice his life for the democratic ideals that France stood for. At first in 1943, and then again 1944 he enlisted with the Free France Forces of the West Indian battalion to fight the growing dominance of the Axis powers in Europe and North Africa. Fanon's commitment to the war was founded on his belief that his own freedom, that of Martinique and of France were inextricably bound together. When Fanon's brother Joby Fanon recounts to David Macey why he thought his younger brother left to fight in the Second World War despite his family's disapproval, he simply says, "At seventeen, he was still convinced that freedom is indivisible."⁴⁷ Charles Cézette, who fought with Fanon in the Free France Forces expresses a similar sentiment when questioned on why he chose to enlist with the army. He says with heartfelt directness, "We were twenty and we believed in France."⁴⁸

These fragments from Fanon's early life indicate that he not only identified with France passionately, but that he also felt his fate, and that of the French West Indies were

⁴⁵ David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*. (New York : Verso Books, 2012), 63

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 70.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

tied to defending the ideals that the French republic stood for. The solidarity expressed in these quotations is not born out of empathy with an oppressed foreign nation, but rather it is a form of solidarity built on fraternal bonds, where one's own well being and others in one's community is at stake. Freedom was indivisible for Fanon because he was captivated by the belief in France as a singular political community united across racial difference through the familial bonds of fraternity. There is no indication from these early fragments of his life that he was motivated by a sense of obligation or duty to re-pay a debt to France for bestowing gifts of knowledge and promoting progress in the West Indian colonies. The paternalistic undertone of the French conception of fraternity remained opaque to Fanon at this point in his life. He saw himself as an equal who was deeply invested in the French civic nationalism that promoted fraternity and its concomitant ideals of equality and liberty.

Until the war, Fanon did not have much exposure to white Frenchmen from the metropole. He was for the most part sheltered on the island of Martinique, interacting only with black and creole populations in Fort de France.⁴⁹ During the war, he began to slowly discover that he was a black soldier in a white man's army. His first port of entry was Algiers where the racially diverse army that Fanon had hoped would free Europe from fascism was fractured along racial and ethnic lines with white Europeans at the top and North African Arabs at the bottom. Black colonial troops were considered superior to Arabs but were also structured through a hierarchy that treated West African troops with a paternalism that forced them to wear the fez and sleeveless jackets instead of the

⁴⁹ Ibid., 62.

standard French uniform.⁵⁰ Fanon continued to observe instances of racial discrimination with poorer rations and shelter for troops from the colonies, made worse by the fact that they were also forced to take the brunt of fighting and casualties.⁵¹ In 1945, Fanon wrote a dejected and impassioned letter to his mother about his experience of the war:

If I don't come back, and if one day you should learn that I died facing the enemy, console each other, but never say: he died for the good cause. Say: God called him back to him. This false ideology that shields the secularists and the idiot politicians must not delude us any longer. I was wrong!⁵²

Fanon's experience of racism in the French army and in sections of the French population exposed him to the underlying racial hierarchy that structured the French ideal of fraternity. He remained deeply troubled by how the community of patriots that he had hoped to meet during the war had treated him with contempt and had abandoned him on occasions when troops from the colonies needed support. Instead of meeting a fraternity of brothers bound by their commitment to equality and liberty, he encountered racist attitudes that established a paternal relationship between subject and citizen.

As a result of participating in the war, the colonial family romance became destabilized for Fanon. Colonial brothers were included in the de-terrorialized community of Greater France through a structure of paternity that operated superficially through the discourse of fraternity. Colonial fraternity demanded the duty of military service without bestowing full political rights; established ties without reciprocity; and sought harmony without a social contract. As a result, it relapsed into a paternalism that had defined the relationship between France and its colonies before the 1848 revolution

⁵⁰ Ibid., 91.

⁵¹ Ibid., 95-96, 98.

⁵² Frantz Fanon, *Memorial international Frantz Fanon: Interventions et communications prononcées à l'occasion du Memorial international Frantz Fanon*, (Presence Africaine :1984), 269.

abolishing slavery. These contradictions would remain with Fanon as he journeyed back to France and began to work on his first full-length book on the effects of colonial racism on the people of the French Antilles. For this reason, I argue in this chapter that *Black Skin* is a work that remains enraptured by the contradictions of the colonial family romance. It is vitally concerned with the dual structure of paternity and fraternity and how this duality produces a specific racial formation that is simultaneously universalizing and particularizing; modernizing and primitivizing; and racializing and rationalizing.

II. RACE AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Near the beginning of *Black Skin* Fanon states the objective of his first book in a series of characteristically brief statements. He writes, “The black man wants to be white. The white man is desperately trying to achieve the rank of man. This essay will attempt to understand the Black-White relationship. The white man is locked in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness.”⁵³ There are at least two ways to read this opening quotation that sets the tone and directs the emphasis of the text. On the one hand, it is an articulation of the psychological complexes that have afflicted black and white people as a result of racism and colonial domination. The aspiration of the black person to become white, and the aspiration of the white person to become human are impossible as long as racial domination defines the relationships between black and white people. The key problem posed by racism and colonialism is of the impossibility of attaining an authentic sense of self as a result of being caught in the struggle to attain a more universal status of the human. The remaining chapters of the work can be read as articulating different facets

⁵³ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), xiv.

of the problem of race and inauthenticity, as expressed through gender relations (chapter two and three); the erasure of linguistic identities in favor of the colonial language (chapter one); the experience of racial objectification (chapter five); and the sense of alienation experienced through the colonial structure of education (chapter four). This is a reading of *Black Skin* that emphasizes Fanon's engagement with Jean-Paul Sartre and existentialism by centralizing the problem of identity, authenticity and bad faith as it relates to racial domination.⁵⁴

A second interpretation of these opening lines reads them as signifying the rupture of political community as a result of the racial ideology that constituted citizenship in France and its colonies. The aspiration to achieve an elevated social status in a hierarchical racial order not only alienates one from oneself resulting in bad faith and inauthenticity, but also alienates one from others so that the possibility of recognition between black and white citizens is foreclosed: "The white man is locked in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness." To take up the second part of these opening lines would be to engage Fanon on the question of race and fraternity, and in turn to see this theme as a persistent concern throughout *Black Skin*. We can then read the work as a series of scenes that illustrate failed attempts at achieving recognition between black and white citizens, thus suspending the possibility of realizing the ideal of fraternity. This reading of Fanon puts emphasis on his engagement of Hegel on the question of recognition, and

⁵⁴ Lewis Gordon's *Fanon and the Crisis of the European Man* constructs a productive relationship between Sartre and Fanon to argue that the Sartre's notion of bad faith finds expression in Fanon's work as a form of racial alienation where one hides from oneself, one's freedom, and responsibility. Living in bad faith consequently results in a form of self-deception about one's racial identity and the risks and possibilities that emerge from that identity location. See Lewis Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of the European Man*, (New York: Routledge, 1995), 14-21.

extends Fanon's critique of recognition as a broader critique of the possibility of fostering social solidarity under conditions of racial domination.

The problems relating to bad faith and inauthenticity do not disappear, but rather must be understood as issues of subject formation under racism and colonialism that curtail the possibility of cultivating social solidarity and realizing the ideal of fraternity. In his first work Fanon brings together an eclectic range of philosophical and literary works but Sartre and Hegel occupy a prominent place because of their ability to speak to his two thematic concerns of racial alienation at the individual level and fostering social solidarity at the level of nation and community. The opening quotation is thus both an entry into the key problems of the text and also an indication of the main interlocutors that will shape the discussion of race and fraternity.

Building on the latter half of Fanon's opening lines therefore re-focuses *Black Skin* as a critical exposition of colonial fraternity – the specific form of racial inclusion and exclusion that defined the French imperial state. Furthermore, it allows us to re-enter the text from a historical and sociological vantage point, and moves away from the tendency to read Fanon's first work as primarily an elaboration of the psychological complexes that afflict racially alienated individuals.⁵⁵ In important ways, Fanon was trying to expose the contradictions of colonial fraternity as a type of racial formation that defined the post-emancipation societies of the French West Indies. As he says plainly in the introduction, "The analysis we are undertaking is psychological. It remains, nevertheless, evident that for us the true disalienation of the black man implied a brutal

⁵⁵ See for instance Renate Zahar, *Frantz Fanon: Colonialism and Alienation* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974) pp 27-35; Hussein Abdulahi Bulhan, *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression* (New York : Plenum Press, 1985) chapter 11-12; Nigel C. Gibson, *Fanon : The Postcolonial Imagination* (Cambridge, U.K. : Polity Press, 2003) chap 1-2.

awareness of the social and economic realities.”⁵⁶ An attentive reading of *Black Skin* must therefore pay heed to the material and ideological foundations of French colonialism that Fanon sought to expose and bring awareness to. Fanon’s economic and social analysis of the Antilles has received interpretive amplification in a number of works, but few have sought to see his first work as an explication of the contradictions of colonial fraternity as a social structure of racial inclusion and exclusion.⁵⁷

The structure of colonial fraternity is depicted as both paradoxical and self-legitimizing in *Black Skin, White Masks*. The most telling example of this is given in chapter six where Fanon comments on the consequences of receiving a colonial education in Martinique and Guadeloupe, “In the Antilles, the black school boy who is constantly asked to recite “our ancestors the Gauls” identifies with the explorer, the civilizing colonizer, the white man, who brings truth to the savages, a lily-white truth.”⁵⁸ By analyzing the range of cultural and artistic material young Antillean children consume, Fanon speaks to the assimilationist tendency of French colonial education in this description of an Antillean schoolboy. Colonial education is concerned with transforming the black schoolboy into a white citizen by perpetuating the notion that his ancestors are the Gauls. In this sense the inclusionary predilections of colonial education are based on a strategy of denying the racial identity of the student. For this reason, Fanon charges that these inclusionary strategies are founded on perpetuating a “lily-white” truth, suggesting that it misrepresents and denies colonial history on the one hand, and glorifies the

⁵⁶ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, xiv.

⁵⁷ For expositions of Fanon’s social and economic analysis of the Antilles see Nigel C. Gibson, *Fanon : The Postcolonial Imagination* (Cambridge, U.K. : Polity Press, 2003) chap 1-2; Ato Sekyi-Otu *Fanon’s Dialectic of Experience*, (Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1996), 47-50 ; Lewis Gordon, *What Fanon Said: A Philosophical Introduction to his Life and Thought* (New York, NY: Fordham: 2015), 1-18.

⁵⁸ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 126.

colonizer as an explorer and civilizer on the other. Already the problematic contradictions of colonial fraternity are brought the surface with a single line describing colonial education, the primary vehicle for forging social solidarity within the French imperial domain. Fanon wants to highlight how the practice of colonial fraternity is a violent process of inclusion, where it is based on the erasure and denial of racial identity, and on the paternalistic need to bring truth to the “savage.”

The student who is subjected to this narrative of colonization soon embodies a disposition that “closely resembles self-sacrifice; a self-sacrifice loaded with sadism.”⁵⁹ The exclusionary aspects of colonial education are underscored with this pointed observation of the black Antillean student. Being successfully indoctrinated by colonial education meant identifying with France and its civilizing imperative so passionately that one was self-sacrificial in one’s commitment to France and hateful to the point of sadism towards those who were outside its racially marked boundaries. The self-sacrifice stems from a denial of one’s identity as a black Antillean, a denial that costs one’s sanity as it pushes the patriot towards a deep hatred of other racialized members from the French colonies. Fanon offers himself as an example of a young student who suffered from the maladies inflicted by colonial education. He writes, “As a schoolboy I spent hours discussing the supposed customs of the Senegalese savages. In our discussions, there was a lack of awareness that was paradoxical to say the least”⁶⁰ The lack of awareness of one’s black identity causes the young student to dis-identify with the Senegalese and exclude them from membership within French civilization. Becoming aware of one’s

⁵⁹ Ibid.,126.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

racial identity would entail coming to terms with the difficult knowledge that one is not in fact a part of French republican community of brothers. The young student therefore inhabits a paradoxical identity of two-ness where he has not reconciled the fact of being black and Antillean, and his inability to reconcile these aspects of his identity causes him to identify simply as a Frenchman from the Antilles.⁶¹ Colonial fraternity thus profits from a divided sense of self in which blackness is denied in order to form the community of brothers who contract into society to form the republican state. Fanon thus exposes the structure of colonial fraternity as an exclusionary mode of forming political community, which rejects as Other and savage those who are racialized as black.

The interpretive yield of this passage is that colonial fraternity is a social structure that seeks to simultaneously include and exclude. Its inclusionary mode is based on an assimilationist ideology that denies the racial identity of colonized peoples, while its exclusionary mode is built on a racial hierarchy that understands blackness as antithetical to being a citizen of the Third Republic. The young student from Fanon's example continues to be oblivious of the contradiction he inhabits as an Antillean and a black man until he arrives in Europe and is promptly awakened to reality: "He'll realize that once he gets to Europe, and when he hears Europeans mention "negroes" he'll know that they're talking about him as well as the Senegalese."⁶² The doubled character of colonial fraternity, where strategies of inclusion are accompanied by strategies of exclusion, are

⁶¹ The description here draws on W.E.B Du Bois' notion of two-ness from *The Souls of Black Folk*. The black Antillean who returns to Martinique after being educated in France cannot reconcile being French and black at the same time. There is in a sense two warring selves within him of being French and black. It is not clear whether Fanon was directly influenced by reading *Souls*, or coincidentally thinking through the problem of race and racism in France through the lens of double consciousness. See W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 10-11.

⁶² Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 126-127

thrown into stark relief in the metropolitan centers of Europe. As this passage demonstrates, the gradient of civilization on which black Antilleans were placed disappears, and the color line is unambiguous. This suggests that inclusion under colonial fraternity was precarious and the boundaries of membership could recede as quickly as they expanded to draw in the colonies within the French imperial domain and give the semblance of unity.

The dual structure of colonial fraternity is elaborated with more texture and depth in two scenes from *Black Skin*. These scenes dramatize the experience of an educated black Antillean in the colony and metropole. The first scene from chapter one on “The Black Man and Language” gives an account of how the structure of inclusion and exclusion operated through the dual process of modernizing and primitivizing; and universalizing and particularizing. The second scene is the well-known encounter between a black Antillean and a young child in Paris from chapter five “The Lived Experience of the Black Man,” in which the child screams in wonder and fear upon seeing a black man. This scene brings to the fore the dual process of racializing and rationalizing that was central to reproducing the racial regime of colonial fraternity. These are just two locations of the text where we should direct our gaze because it reveals more concretely how the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion operated simultaneously under French colonialism. Most importantly, it demonstrates how colonial fraternity legitimized itself through its double character.

III. THE DOUBLE BIND OF LANGUAGE AND RACE

Fanon's entry point into a discussion of racial alienation in the Antilles is through a meditation on the relationship between language and race, which captures how entangled these two features of the social world are. He writes, "To speak means being able to use a certain syntax and possessing the morphology of such and such a language, but it means above all assuming a culture and bearing the weight of a civilization."⁶³ As such, speaking is a practice through which one exposes oneself to the world as a member of a particular community and claims membership within it. To speak French with a particular accent, or affectation, is to claim unique access to a civilization and to share in its achievements. To use Benedict Anderson's famous conceptualization of language and community, "language gives shape to and reinforces national identity, generating imagined communities, and particular solidarities."⁶⁴ Thus, to speak French was a way in which to sustain the social solidarity that bound the de-territorialized community of Greater France together. The act of speaking French made it possible to imagine that citizens in far-flung corners of the world were part of a singular political community and committed to the ideals of the French republic.

Fanon does not leave us with such a neat formulation of the relationship between language and political community. Throughout *Black Skin, White Masks*, he shows that the racial hierarchy that defined colonial fraternity undercuts the seeming inclusiveness of the French linguistic community. Language is expressive of culture and notions of civilization and progress, which are thoroughly coded by racial ideology. As Fanon

⁶³ Ibid., 1-2.

⁶⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (New York: Verso, 1991), 133.

writes, “the more the Black Antillean assimilates the French language, the whiter he gets – i.e., the closer he comes to becoming a true human being.”⁶⁵ Mastery of the French language was a means through which one could achieve inclusion within the French republican political community, but it was also a way in which exclusion was enforced on the basis of race. Rather than a neutral vehicle of expression, language was a yardstick by which colonized peoples were deemed capable and ready for cultural and political membership in France under the Third Republic. This assessment often entailed a measure of whether colonized peoples were closer to, or further from their racial identities in relation to whiteness as the apex of a colonized individual’s developmental trajectory. Thus, the double bind of language and race under French colonialism was that race becomes less immutable because language acquisition was a way in which to transcend one’s racial identity, but ultimately racial hierarchies still determined the dynamic of inclusion and exclusion under the racial regime of colonial fraternity. Fanon wants to draw our attention to the contradictions that sustained this double bind of language and race, and how these contradictions were central to legitimizing colonial power.

The French language functions less as a mode of expression, than a mark of progress and modernization. As Fanon had disclosed at the beginning of his chapter on “The Black Man and Language,” “to speak means above all to assume a culture and bear the weight of a civilization.”⁶⁶ Language was a way in which social and cultural cues of scientific, economic, moral, and political progress could be transmitted. Citizens who

⁶⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

spoke French thus produced a national space in which the social and cultural signifiers of progress and modernization could be represented, reproduced, and reinforced. Fanon, who was acutely sensitive to the phenomenology of space, writes,⁶⁷

The black man in France changes because for him the métropole is the holy of holies; he changes not only because that's where his knowledge of Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Voltaire comes from, but also because that's where his doctors, is departmental superiors, and innumerable little potentates come from...⁶⁸

The black Antillean who enters France therefore becomes saturated by many of the recognizable aspects of European modernity, such as scientific progress, intellectual heritage, and governmental rationality. He enters a national space structured around these markers of modernity and becomes a participant in this space by speaking French, consequently taking on the attributes of European modernity. As Fanon says, "He proves himself through his language."⁶⁹ By mastering French, the black Antillean seeks to prove that he is fit for citizenship, capable of modernizing, and an equal member of the political fraternity bound by a commitment to the ideals of equality and liberty.

Thus, Fanon describes language as a modernizing force, imbued with the power to structure and give expression to the world. He writes, "A man who possesses a language possesses as an indirect consequence the world expressed and implied by this language."⁷⁰ As such, the colonizing power is able to transmit and legitimate the project of European modernity through the use of language. Colonized individuals therefore

⁶⁷ See for instance Ato Sekyi-Otu's discussion of the relationship between corporality and space in "Anti-Dialectic as Space" from *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, 72-98. Sekyi-Otu develops a distinctly Fanonian understanding of racial and colonial coercion to argue that it is "the imposition of restraint in the spatial dimension of existence." Sekyi-Otu, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, 78.

⁶⁸ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* 7.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 2.

undergo a transformation in the metropole, a mutation in their personality that results not simply from learning the colonizer's language, but also from taking on the characteristics of the modern, European world to which language gives expression to.⁷¹ Fanon recounts that the black Antillean who returns from France is often treated as a demi-god. We can surmise that this is not simply because he speaks French, but also because he personifies the characteristics of European modernity that could be expressed through the French language.⁷²

As a modernizing force, the French language reveals its inclusionary predilections, making linguistic command rather than race the criteria for membership within the hierarchically structured regime of colonial fraternity. However, the French imperative to modernize colonized people was often accompanied by the simultaneous need to primitivize. A black Antillean may seek to master French during his stay in France and assume all the markers of a modern man, but French citizens will not always receive him as a French-speaking compatriot. Fanon describes a number of interactions between black Antilleans and white Frenchmen, where the fraternal solidarity that should have emerged from meeting a French speaking man from the old colonies is withheld, and in its place, an attitude of curiosity and surprise is expressed. He writes,

The fact is that the European has a set idea of the black man, and there is nothing more exasperating than to hear: "How long have you lived in France? You speak such good French."⁷³

⁷¹ Ibid., 6.

⁷² Ibid., 3.

⁷³ Ibid., 18.

A casual question that seemingly expresses curiosity is in fact pregnant with meaning about the status of black people in France. The question assumes if one was black, one could not really speak French, and in fact was most probably spoken to in pidgin. The status of a black person is fixed and the burden was upon him or her to prove that they were more than their racial identities through their command of French.

In that sense, language is the means through which racial identities were determined. When white French citizens saw black Antilleans in France, they spoke to them in pidgin without hesitation, which was simultaneously an act of communication and misrecognition. As Fanon states,

To speak gobbledygook to a black man is insulting, for it means he is the gook. Yet, we'll be told, there is no intention to willfully give offense. OK, but it is precisely this absence of will - this offhand manner; this casualness; and the ease with which they classify him, imprison him at an uncivilized and primitive level - that is insulting.⁷⁴

Here, responding in pidgin to a black Antillean who speaks perfect French can be read as an act of misrecognition because it reduces the speaker to a primitive level and overdetermines the role of his race.⁷⁵ When the black Antillean speaks French with skill and finesse, he expresses his desire for recognition as a full citizen of the French republic, and above all as a human being, which is immediately jettisoned when the white citizen

⁷⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁵ A number of scholars have expounded on the Hegelian theme of recognition and misrecognition in Fanon's writings: Alfred J. López 2013. "Occupying Reality: Fanon Reading Hegel." *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no.1, 71-78; Ato Sekyi-Otu. *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, (Cambridge, MA ; London : Harvard University Press, 1996), 10-31; Nigel C. Gibson *Fanon : The Postcolonial Imagination*. (Cambridge, U.K. : Polity Press, 2003), 29-37; Nelson Maldonado Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 93-159; and most recently Glen Coulthard in *Red Skin, White Masks*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 2014) 25-50.

responds to him in pidgin.⁷⁶ To respond in pidgin is to throw an insult at the black man and to treat him in a paternalistic manner that imprisons him at an uncivilized and primitive level. The possibility of recognition is thus foreclosed, and the relationship of fraternity that could have emerged through a respectful exchange between a black Antillean and a white Frenchman is undermined by the paternalism inherent in the response:

Excuse me, could you please tell me where the restaurant car is?"
Yes, sonny boy, you go corridor, you go straight, go one car, go two car, go three car, you there.⁷⁷

A response of this nature precludes the possibility of forming egalitarian relations within the structure of colonial fraternity. A black man could elevate himself to the standing of a French citizen in terms of his superior command of the French language and his outstanding social comportment towards other citizens, but his race would overdetermine how others receive him in the world.

The contradiction between language and race is thus laid bare. Language initially offered the possibility of diminishing the power of racial stratification in France and its colonial domain by creating a more inclusionary basis for identity. To state it differently, the modernizing potential of the French language offered the promise of inclusion into the republican community. However, this promise of inclusion was unfulfilled because of

⁷⁶ Charles Taylor's argument that language is crucial in the formation of social identity parallels Fanon's understanding of language and race. For Taylor, language is a mode of agency, communication and self-definition. It involves some form of "negotiation" with other people: "...my discovering of my own identity doesn't mean that I work it out in isolation, but that I *negotiate* it through dialogue, partly overt, partly internal, with others. My own identity crucially depends on my dialogical relations with others." (32) However, Taylor is not attentive to the ways in which race structures the possibility of communicating on an equal terrain and thus negotiating one's identity, which Fanon brings to the fore in *Black Skin, White Masks*. See Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 32-34.

⁷⁷ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 18.

the intransigent power of race. The demand for recognition by the black man is met with disdain, mockery and sheer incredulousness from his white counterparts, such that the modernizing potential of language is immediately undercut by primitivizing the speaker to the level of a savage. The uplifting potential of modernity was thus stymied by processes of racialization.

These contradictions between language and race produce a racialized modern subject, for whom the position of an abstract universal political subject is unavailable. Instead, racialized subjects are forced to inhabit a contradiction in which they aspire to attain the status of the abstract universal subject, only to be pushed into the particularity of their racial identity. In this first chapter on “The Black Man and Language,” Fanon draws our attention to the way in which the racial structure of colonial fraternity operated through a double process of universalizing and particularizing racialized individuals. In a sense, the dual process of modernization and primitivization gets re-expressed as universalization and particularization, making the doubled nature of colonial fraternity as a regime of racial inclusion and exclusion the persistent concern throughout *Black Skin*.

This concern is captured most succinctly when Fanon points to the apparent strangeness of “a black poet.” The strangeness arises from the poet’s existence in a black body, and none other than Fanon’s teacher Aimé Césaire captured this predicament most vividly. When Césaire is introduced to a crowd, he is often described as “a great black poet,” to which Fanon expresses his confusion:

These ready-made phrases that seem to be commonsense – after all Aimé Césaire is black and a poet – contain a hidden nuance, a persisting crux. What I mean to say is that there is no reason why Monsieur Breton should say of Césaire: Here is a black man who handles the French language unlike any white man today⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Ibid., 22.

A black man who can handle the French language like no white man draws attention because he presents a paradox. The French language represented the universal and the modern, the language through which important works in European poetry, literature and philosophy were expressed and most importantly, the language that gives expression to the political ideals of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. The black man represented the particular, and the primitive. As Fanon declares famously in his chapter “The Lived Experience of the Black Man,” the black man was responsible for his race, and the whole host of stereotypes associated with blackness from the grinning Senegalese man on the cereal box *Y a bon Banania*, to the cannibalism and backwardness attributed to his ancestors.⁷⁹

The universal and the particular, the modern and the primitive sit together uncomfortably in the black poet, pressing the need for an explanation. Césaire cannot simply be a poet, he must be introduced as a black poet with a university degree. The explanation underscores that an extraordinary transcendence has occurred, where an individual who was reduced to the particularity of his racial identity, exceeded these confines to gain recognition from the white man as an equal. Language is central to this transcendence as Fanon recounts from his own experience:

Following a lecture where I had drawn a parallel between black and European poetry, a French comrade telling me enthusiastically: “Basically you’re a white man.” The fact that I had studied such an interesting question in the white man’s language gave me my credentials.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Ibid., 92.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 21.

Here, language is the vehicle through which transcendence from blackness is achieved. To master the white man's language is to gain recognition from him as an equal participant and co-creator in his culture and civilization. As Fanon reminds us repeatedly: "To speak a language is to appropriate its world and culture."⁸¹ Put another way, to speak the French language was to diminish the significance of one's racial characteristics as a black man, and appropriate the European world that represented the universal attributes of beauty and truth as one's own.

However, without fail, Fanon wants to remind us that the recognition achieved through speaking French is a perverse one. The black Antillean may have achieved exceptional command of the French language, but he continues to speak from a black body, and this incites shock, astonishment and confusion, rather than the recognition of his humanity. Césaire's speech when he was running for parliament in Martinique provokes such a response:

It has been said that the Antillean orator has a power of expression which leaves the Europeans gasping. In 1945, during an electoral campaign, Aimé Césaire, who was running for parliament, was speaking at a boys' school in Fort-de-France in front of a packed auditorium. In the middle of his talk a woman fainted. The next day a colleague describing the event commented: "His French was so dynamite the woman fell on the floor and started ketching malkadi (fell into convulsions)." The power of language.⁸²

A black Antillean who could speak French eloquently was a sensation so affecting that he forced a white audience member to lose consciousness and fall into convulsions. It is difficult to confirm the veracity of this story, and as in other parts of *Black Skin*, the tone of this passage is mildly sarcastic. The reaction of the white audience member is nevertheless significant, for it reveals that a black man who spoke eloquently is treated as

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 22.

though he had acquired phenomenal powers to capture his audience and draw them into a trance-like state. The power of language is in fact great as Fanon affirms, so great that when a member of an oppressed racial group uses the master's language, he or she is deemed to have almost unearthly powers to arrest and capture.

At a broader level, Fanon highlights the double bind of language and race, which was simultaneously humanizing and exoticizing; modernizing and primitivizing; universalizing and particularizing. Caught in these double binds, the possibility of recognition is forgone, and so then is the possibility of forging any substantial sense of social solidarity among black and white people in France and its colonies. The structure of colonial fraternity is such that any inclusionary gesture is immediately undercut by exclusion, making it impossible to foster a relationship of fraternity between metropolitan and colonial citizens.

IV. REPUBLICAN RACISM AND THE PROBLEM OF INCLUSION

Republican racism is thus expressed through the double structure of colonial fraternity.⁸³ Fanon wants to expose this structure in part to demonstrate how it operates, and to disclose the reasons why republican racism is difficult to unseat. He shows in *Black Skin* that the double nature of colonial fraternity served to legitimize the racial formation as an ostensibly inclusionary structure of citizenship. However, the inclusionary gestures expressed through the modernizing and humanizing impulses, diminish the significance of the corollary tendency to exclude from full membership those who are racialized as non-white. The regression of the inclusionary gesture through processes of differentiation,

⁸³ I use the term “republican” and “republicanism” in this dissertation to refer to different iterations of the French Republic, and not to the tradition of republican thought in Euro-American political theory.

exoticization, primitivization and particularization are obscured through republican discourses that champion emancipation, civilization, and progress. These discourses incite from white French citizens a number of responses that are not conducive to confronting or challenging the racism at the heart of republican notions of fraternity. This problem is most clearly expressed in the famous scene from the chapter “The Lived Experience of the Black Man” of Fanon’s encounter with a young boy in metropolitan France.

The chapter and passage on the lived experience of blackness are usually read as a phenomenological account of the experience of being subject to the white gaze.⁸⁴ It is rich with detail of the dizzying, and often paralyzing experience of being turned into “an object among other objects.”⁸⁵ This chapter is also however an account of the different reactions to blackness from white citizens in metropolitan France. The reaction of a child and an adult citizen offer contrasting perspectives of how a black man was received in the metropole. The perspective of the child is candid, as he makes no effort to disguise the fear and awe that emerges from encountering a black man. He exclaims, “Maman, look, a Negro; I’m scared!”⁸⁶, to reveal how deeply foreign, unfamiliar and fearful blackness was for the young child. The reaction of the young child is not one that arises from ignorance, but rather Fanon wants to suggest that it is a response that is unconditioned by the

⁸⁴ David Macey critiques the psychoanalytic reading of Fanon and advocates for the importance of phenomenology as a philosophical framework through which to read his works in Macey, “The Recall of the Real: Frantz Fanon and Psychoanalysis,” *Constellations* 6 (1999); Two important works that read Fanon with an emphasis on phenomenology and existentialism are : Lewis R. Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man: An Essay on Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 1995); and Shannon Sullivan, *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 94-118.

⁸⁵ Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 89.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 91.

ideology of colonial fraternity. The child's fear and awe are the subconscious attitudes of adults, for whom the acknowledgement and expression of racial difference in such an overt manner would unsettle the ideology that France and its colonies were held together through a fraternity of equals, which they had been socialized to accept.

Consider for example how Fanon portrays the mother's response to the young child. Describing her reaction, he writes, "Ssh! You'll make him angry. Don't pay attention to him, monsieur, he doesn't realize you're just as civilized as we are."⁸⁷ Here, the mother does not simply admonish the child, but also warns the child of the danger posed by the black man's anger, revealing that she does not see him as a citizen capable of comporting himself well when confronted with a child's reckless outbursts. Unaware of the weight of her comments, she instinctively resorts to placating the target of the racist remarks: "monsieur, he doesn't realize you're just as civilized as we are." The mother's response attempts to enact a gesture of inclusion by recognizing the black man as a part of the French civilization she belongs to, and thus re-establishing the social solidarity that had just been torn asunder by Othering him as frightful and prone to irrational anger. Put another way, the social solidarity of the metropolitan space is re-established by forging the fraternal bond of equality. However, this affirmation of equality was preceded by drawing attention to the over-sensitivity of the black man, which questioned his character and capacity to be a citizen. As always, Fanon brings to the fore the dual dynamic of inclusion and exclusion to demonstrate how the discourse of fraternity is always elided by that of paternalism, which persistently sought to question the readiness of colonized peoples for French citizenship.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 93.

Moreover, this scene adds another dimension of insight to how the dual dynamic of inclusion and exclusion operated. The mother's instinctive response was to hush the child when he objectifies and denigrates another citizen on the basis of race. This response expresses the desire to deny or circumvent the problem of racism, rather than confront it directly. The child is not scolded for impertinent and insensitive behavior, but is rather asked to participate in a perverse gesture of inclusion when the mother points out to the child, "Look how handsome that Negro is."⁸⁸ The mother's response here reproduces the child's initial objectification of the black man by transforming him into an object of empathy, desire, and marvel. The attempt at inclusion obscures the Other's experience of being subject to the white gaze, while mother and child remain oblivious to the exclusionary effects of the white gaze. Even when the older adult attempts to mitigate the initial violence of racial objectification through an inclusionary gesture, she re-inscribes the act of "looking" at blackness as an object to be held and appreciated by the eyes. Significantly, this encounter reveals the ways in which the dehumanizing effects of racism could be evaded by rationalizing an exclusionary act through the gesture of inclusion. Inclusion, or a political commitment to forge fraternity between Frenchmen regardless of race, was the means through which a white citizen could remain in denial, and not confront the deep-seated problem of racial otherness and exclusion. Inclusion thus did not expand the bounds of political community but rather papered over the persistence of exclusionary dynamics.

Fanon wants to argue that the possibility of persistently denying and overlooking the fact of racial exclusion is unique to the racial regime that characterized republican

⁸⁸ Ibid., 94.

France. It was a regime that was self-consciously anti-racist, despite the persistence of the color line in different domains of social and political life. Fanon brings out this point most explicitly by comparing France to the racial regimes of different colonial nations: “In the United States, Blacks are segregated. In South Africa, they are whipped in the streets and black strikers are gunned down.”⁸⁹ He juxtaposes these forms of racial violence and exclusion to those that exist in France by narrating the racial attitudes of a white Frenchman: “You see, my dear fellow, color prejudice is totally foreign to me. But do come in chap, you won’t find any color prejudice here. Quite so, the Black is just as much a man as we are.”⁹⁰ Here, Fanon introduces the voice of a Frenchman to portray the subjective self-understanding of those who inhabit the racial regime in France. In contrast to the absolute form of racial exclusion that existed in the United States and South Africa, the Frenchman is passionately anti-racist, and this constitutes a fundamental part of his self-conception and identity as a French citizen. His perspective is offered in contrast to the factual descriptions of race relations in the United States and South Africa, which are presented as objective than the subjective perspective of an individual citizen. Thus, the Frenchman does not necessarily describe the state of race relations as they exist in France, which we are asked to investigate in relation to the United States and South Africa. Rather he provides insight into how France conceives of itself as free from racial prejudice in comparison to these other colonial nations.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 93

⁹⁰ Ibid.

In a sense, Fanon provides us with early republican expressions of the problem of colorblindness.⁹¹ The possibility of denying, evading, and diminishing the problem of racism is paradoxically enabled by the inclusionary move to expand citizenship to all regardless of race. Fanon reminds us that emancipation meant that the black Antillean “went from one way of life to another, but not from one life to another”⁹² indicating that there is merely a shift of the racial order from slavery to colonial fraternity. Colonial fraternity espoused the discourse of equality, while instituting a paternal relationship with colonized peoples racialized as black or Arab. The ardent commitment to the ideals of equality and fraternity meant that French citizens in the metropole could remain in denial about the ways in which a racialized paternalism shaped interactions between white and non-white citizens.

For this reason, Fanon emphasizes the difficulty of unseating colonial fraternity as a racial regime. Exclusion is fundamental and deeply ingrained in how colonial fraternity operates as a racial regime, and to confront this would mean a radical re-ordering of its value system, and a crucial shift in the self-conception of white French citizens, whose identities were bound to the ideals of republicanism. Fanon writes,

the scapegoat for white society, which is based on the myths of progress, civilization, liberalism, education, enlightenment and refinement, will be precisely the force that opposes the expansion and triumph of these myths. This oppositional brute force is provided by the black man.⁹³

In this passage, Fanon describes the co-existence of two discourses that contradict each other, and can never be reconciled; that of civilization and progress, and the racialized

⁹¹ In the American context, see Eduardo Bonilla Silva, *Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

⁹² Ibid., 195.

⁹³ Ibid., 170-171.

discourse of what remains oppositional to these values, which is invariably signified by those who were racialized as black. Here, Fanon alludes to the permanence of exclusion under French republicanism because blackness is the scapegoat that society relies on to represent deviations from the organizing myths of progress, civilization and enlightenment.

In the forthcoming chapters, I argue that Fanon's body of work is preoccupied with a deep and searching interrogation of the ideals that found political community in order to confront the persistence of exclusion on the basis of race. He does not forgo the possibility of re-imagining solidarity as the basis for political community and political action, but his diagnosis of how race subverts the possibility of realizing these ideals of Western political modernity make him a circumspect and disenchanted participant in the project reconstructing political modernity through the process of decolonization. This disposition of wariness makes his reconstructive project unique, and one to which we should pay close attention to.

V. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I read Fanon's *Black Skin* as offering a pointed critique of the racial formation that structured the post-emancipation societies of the French West Indies. I took cue from Françoise Vergès in calling this racial formation "colonial fraternity"; that is, a racial regime that unified France and its colonies through the discourse of fraternity, without every relinquishing the model of paternity that structured pre-revolutionary France. Colonial fraternity as a social structure seeks to simultaneously include and exclude. Its inclusionary mode is based on an assimilationist ideology that denies the

racial identity of colonized peoples, while its exclusionary mode is built on a racial hierarchy that understands blackness as antithetical to republican citizenship.

My first claim is that the relationship between of race and fraternity is a central contradiction in *Black Skin*. The text persistently tells an evocative narrative of how citizens who are shaped within the racial hierarchy of colonial fraternity are unable to forge genuine social solidarity, and therefore to strive towards the concomitant ideals of equality and liberty. In particular, two scenes from *Black Skin* demonstrate how social solidarity is made impossible by the effects of racism and colonialism on authentic communication and mutual recognition. The return of a black Antillean to Martinique after a long hiatus in Paris, and Fanon's encounter with the young French boy who reacts with fear and wonder upon seeing him, are key locations in *Black Skin* that portray the rupture of the French imperial state as a single organic community held together by commitments to the ideals of the liberty, equality and fraternity.

Moreover, these scenes indicate that *Black Skin* is a work that remains enraptured by the problem of colonial fraternity. It is vitally concerned with the double bind of race and fraternity, which was simultaneously universalizing and particularizing; modernizing and primitivizing; racializing and rationalizing. Caught in these double binds, the possibility of recognition is forgone, and so then is the possibility of forging any substantial sense of social solidarity among black and white citizens in France and its colonies. The structure of colonial fraternity is such that any inclusionary gesture is immediately undercut by exclusion, making it impossible to foster a relationship of fraternity between metropolitan and colonial citizens.

CHAPTER 2 – INTERCONTINENTAL SOLIDARITY AND DECOLONIZATION

The contradiction between race and fraternity deeply shaped French conceptions of citizenship under the Third Republic. As discussed earlier in the dissertation, Fanon first experienced the discrimination and exclusion that resulted from this contradiction as a black soldier in the Free France Forces during the Second World War. This experience radically destabilized his idea of France as the concrete political expression of republican ideals, and his own self-conception as a Frenchman who belonged to a political community of equals. In the previous chapter, I argued that Fanon's first published work, *Black Skin*, gives an account of the precise manner in which the contradiction between race and fraternity operated. Thus, despite the ethical universalism of *Black Skin*⁹⁴ it is also a text that clearly sets and defines the contours of Fanon's politics of emancipation by revealing his deep awareness of how the ideology of race, and the experience of racialization constantly undercut the emancipatory promise of the French revolution's ideals of fraternity, liberty and equality, and the forms of political communities that could be formed on their basis.

⁹⁴ George Ciccariello-Maher argues that Fanon's early work is characterized by an ethical universalism and his later work, specifically *The Wretched of the Earth*, expresses a realism that emerged from his advocacy of violent struggle as a necessary means towards achieving the end of decolonization. However, there is more continuity in Fanon's thinking than an abrupt break and turn toward realism. Fanon's realism originates with *Black Skin, White Masks* in which he expresses his disenchantment with the ideals of political modernity, most centrally that of fraternity. His disenchantment with fraternity causes him to take up the position that there must be an absolute termination of all relations based on colonialism, which propels him towards the advocacy of violent resistance. Tracing the unity in Fanon's thought can help to clarify the earlier philosophical foundations for his politics in the late 1950s and early 1960s. See, George Ciccariello-Maher, "Decolonial Realism: Ethics, Politics, and Dialectics in Fanon and Dussel," *Contemporary Political Theory* 13(2014): 2–22.

For this reason, Fanon was either opposed to or circumspect about the two paths towards decolonization that gained supporters among Francophone intellectuals and anti-colonial activists during the postwar era. These two paths were that of federalism, based on instituting a transnational structure of governance between colony and metropole; and that of national independence - a path which activists and intellectuals in France imagined would facilitate the establishment of an international power bloc of Third World nations to counter the battles for hegemony between the United States and Soviet Union in the postwar era. Fanon was a vocal participant in debates surrounding these two routes towards decolonization.⁹⁵ He was opposed to the movements in French West Africa and the Caribbean, which sought to imagine independence from colonialism within the edifice of the French imperial state, particularly by seeking to realize the full potential of the revolutionary ideal of fraternity through federalism. Fanon was more aligned with the movement for a Third World alliance, yet circumspect about the elitist internationalism that galvanized the movement, fearing that colonial elites would re-institute hierarchical relations akin to colonialism in order to advance undemocratic paths to economic development.

In this chapter, I argue that Fanon articulated an alternative vision of intercontinental solidarity between Africa, Asia, and the Americas - the three geographical spheres that are imagined as the Third World in Fanon's works – that counters the form of racialized fraternity which he understood to be the basis of French imperialism in his first work *Black Skin*. This alternative vision came to be articulated in

⁹⁵ Consider for instance Fanon's many articles in *El Moudjahid* such as "Letter to the Youth of Africa"; "A Continued Crisis"; "Appeal to Africans" or "Sequels of a Plebiscite in Africa" where he offers scattered critiques of the movement towards federalism in French West Africa. See Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*, trans. Haakon Chevalier, (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 106-143.

his later writings, particularly his last published work *The Wretched of the Earth* (hereafter, *The Wretched*). Fanon's vision of intercontinental solidarity arises from his critique of French colonial racism. His understanding of the contradiction of race and fraternity at the heart of French conceptions of citizenship drove him to articulate a radically democratic and populist vision of intercontinental solidarity stemming from the masses of formerly colonized nations. Fanon was deeply aware of the ever-present danger of exclusion and domination that could arise in societies shaped by racial ideology. Thus, to forestall and diminish the persistent threat of exclusion and domination, Fanon articulated political community through a form of solidarity with expansive boundaries and practices that demanded active commitment to democratic rule through the elimination of hierarchical political relationships between elites and masses.

Importantly, this vision offered a competing political imaginary to the transnationalism that was the basis for a federation of Greater France, promoted by African and Antillean political leaders at the end of World War II, and the internationalism that predicated the Third World movement, advocated by a group of Francophone intellectuals and activists for whom national independence would be the basis for building an international movement of newly independent nations unified to challenge and combat the continuation of imperialism in the postwar era.⁹⁶ Thus, the

⁹⁶ I make a distinction between transnational, international and intercontinental solidarity in order to differentiate Fanon's conception of solidarity in *The Wretched* from those which circulated in the post war era in the form of federalism and the movement for a Third World bloc. The federalism that was promoted between France and its former colonies is best described as being grounded in transnational solidarity because it sought build political community by eclipsing the nation-state, whereas the leaders of the Third World movement proposed a from of international solidarity because of their desire to form alliances between sovereign and independent nation-states. Fanon's conception of intercontinental solidarity was inspired by the Third World movement but a close reading of his later works makes clear that he did not ground or confine solidarity to nation-states, but rather articulated solidarity as emerging from the masses of formerly colonized nation-states of Africa, Asia and the Americas. Fanon expressed solidarity at the continental scale, often referring to this expression of solidarity as a form of "international consciousness"

larger context for *The Wretched* was not only the struggle for independence in Algeria, but also the debates in a Francophone public sphere about whether to form a federal system with France or pursue the path of national independence in order to bolster an anti-imperialist coalition with other postcolonial states. With *The Wretched*, his final work, Fanon sought to intervene into these debates by offering a vision of political community that was grounded in an anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist solidarity between formerly colonized nations in Africa, Asia and the Americas. His vision of intercontinental solidarity was certainly inspired by the Third World movement, which he supported and participated in. However, he also sought to re-imagine Third World internationalism on more populist and anti-authoritarian terms. In that sense, Fanon is a unique figure among black Francophone intellectuals and leaders of the post-war era in rejecting the proposals to form a federation with France, and actively supporting and re-imagining the prevailing visions of Third World solidarity as the basis for an intercontinental anti-imperialist movement of the masses in newly independent nations.⁹⁷ *The Wretched* is an expression of this vision, advanced as a counter-weight to the federalist proposals advanced by Léopold Senghor, Aimé Césaire, Félix Houphouët-

between those nations that came together as the Third World. To better capture what Fanon meant by “international consciousness”, I use the term intercontinental solidarity since it more accurately describes the forms of linkages he articulated between oppressed peoples of formerly colonized regions. In many ways Fanon was anticipating the form of political solidarity that would emerge at the Tricontinental conference in Havana where the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAAL) was founded in January 1966.

⁹⁷ Sékou Touré of Guinea is the other exception to most black Francophone intellectuals and leaders who supported federalism. Like Fanon, he rejected the proposals for a Franco-African Community, although he was initially supportive of the federalist structure of self-determination for Guinea. See Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 70-71 and Elizabeth Schmidt, “Anticolonial Nationalism in French West Africa: What Made Guinea Unique?” *African Studies Review*, 52, 2(2009): 5-7.

Boigny, Mamadou Dia, and an expansion of the Third World vision supported by Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Memmi and Messali Hadj.⁹⁸

My argument proceeds by first situating Fanon in the historiography on federalism and the Third World movement to gain a better understanding of how his arguments intervened in these debates about decolonization between Francophone intellectuals and anti-colonial leaders. I then take up the last two chapters from *The Wretched* - “On National Culture” and “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness” – which are typically understood to be the ground for thinking about a Fanonian conception of nationalism.⁹⁹ Against this reading, I argue that these two chapters in fact provide the basis for thinking about his vision of political community as a form of intercontinental solidarity rooted in mass participation. He advanced this vision of political community to counter the elitist forms of federalism and Third Worldism that dominated the postwar decolonization era. In order to make this argument, I first identify the specificity of intercontinental solidarity by tracing its development out of the dialectical conflict between pan-ethnic/racial forms of solidarity and national consciousness. Intercontinental solidarity, which Fanon describes as “international

⁹⁸ For the political positions of French intellectuals on the Algerian struggle for independence and the Third World movement see James D. Le Sueur and Pierre Bourdieu, *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics During the Decolonization of Algeria*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); and Paige Arthur, *Unfinished Projects: Decolonization and the Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre* (London: Verso, 2010). For the evolving political positions of black Francophone intellectuals on federalism see Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present*, 24-26, 40-49, 58-62.

⁹⁹ See for instance Nigel Gibson, “Nationalism and a New Humanism” in *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, (Malden, MA: Polity, 2003), 177-205; Jane Gordon “Fanonian National Consciousness” in *Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau through Fanon*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014) 129-161; David Hanley, “Frantz Fanon—Revolutionary Nationalist?,” *Political Studies* 24, no. 2 (June 1, 1976): 120–31; Neil Lazarus, “Disavowing Decolonization: Fanon, Nationalism, and the Problematic of Representation in Current Theories of Colonial Discourse,” *Research in African Literatures* 24, no. 4 (1993): 69–98; John Mowitt, “Algerian Nation: Fanon’s Fetish,” *Cultural Critique*, no. 22 (1992): 165–86.

consciousness,” emerges as the outcome of this dialectical conflict, and for this reason, it is defined by the dynamic tension between pan-ethnic forms of solidarity and national consciousness.

Fanon sketches the contours of intercontinental solidarity in open-ended and abstract terms towards the end of the last two chapters in *The Wretched*. Because of this, Fanon is generally read as only gesturing indistinctly to the form of political community that will transcend the nation-state. In the third section, however, I read these chapters as already fully embodying Fanon’s conception of intercontinental solidarity. I argue that the chapters stage multiple scenes of dialectical conflict between pan-ethnic and national forms of community where Fanon evokes intercontinentalism not only at the end, but also throughout the chapters as the emergent potentiality of pan-ethnic solidarity and anti-colonial nationalism. To this end, I center intercontinental solidarity as the mode of political community that Fanon articulated to push the elite led forms of transnational and international political community towards more democratic configurations that fully incorporated mass participation in the building of a decolonized world. In the final section of the paper, I synthesize the arguments of the previous sections to underscore the critical and revising nature of Fanon’s dialectical conception of political community when grounded in and subject to the political struggles of the masses. This is the populist component of his insights that makes it possible to forestall and diminish the persistent threat of exclusion, which he anticipated as the problematic legacy of European ideals of political community founded the practice of racial exclusion.

I. DECOLONIZATION BEYOND THE NATION-STATE: FEDERALISM AND THE TURN TO THE THIRD WORLD

A number of historical works on decolonization in the past decade have focused on a group of anti-colonial leaders and intellectuals whose vision of liberation from colonialism involved advancing transnational and international articulations of political association. These works examine the postwar conjuncture of the twentieth century, when it became possible to imagine and advocate for political affiliations that could empower the economically impoverished and politically disenfranchised post-independence nations. Many of these works focus on intellectuals and statesmen as the major political actors who seized the political possibilities of a particular historical moment to articulate a vision of decolonization that put forward a series of political objectives, only one of which was national sovereignty. However, largely missing from these accounts is a populist vision of how colonized peoples sought to surpass the limitations of the nation-state. In other words, what sorts of political practices and forms of political comportment did ordinary people of the colonized world engage in to bring about decolonization, and sustain their liberation from the imperial domination? How did these practices make it possible to transcend ethnic and national forms of identification? This question has not received sufficient attention in the secondary literature.

Fanon is a peripheral figure in the historiography on postwar transnationalism and internationalism. It is impossible to avoid engaging his writings given his commanding role as a thinker of decolonization in the postwar era. However, his works are engaged either as a counterpoint to the wave of federalist possibilities, or as an affirmation of the internationalism that fortified the Third World coalition. He is rarely taken up as offering

a distinct vision of decolonization that surpassed the nation-state. In fact, Fanon's later works are an important starting point for thinking about Third World solidarity as a form of intercontinental populism, grounded in peoples mobilizations across the postcolonial world. His works are an indispensable resource to begin to conceptualize a political theory of "the people" in the Third World. Such a theoretical and historical orientation shifts the emphasis from a story of elite political actors converging to reform or abolish imperial political institutions, to a focus on the political practices of community formation that newly freed citizens of the postcolonial world engaged in to sustain their liberation from colonial rule. Fanon more than any other theorist of the postwar decolonization era brings our attention to the populist dimensions of Third World political thought and thus offers insights into how solidarity was envisioned and practiced beyond the nation-state.¹⁰⁰ The purpose of this section is to lay the foundation to theorize this aspect of Fanon's thought by situating him in the historiography on postwar transnationalism and internationalism. Doing so helps to uncover the ways in which Fanon's political positions were understood in relation to these two routes to decolonization.

Gary Wilder's *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization and the Future of the World* is an example of a recent work that emphasizes the role of elite political actors in advancing transnational political affiliations. Drawing on the writings and political careers of Césaire and Senghor, Wilder offers a rich portrait of the political maneuvers these two figures engaged in under complex historical circumstances, where multiple

¹⁰⁰ P. L. E. Idahosa makes a similar argument in *The Populist Dimension to African Political Thought: Critical Essays in Reconstruction and Retrieval* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Pr, 2003), 101-153. However, Idahosa does not focus on the intercontinental reach of Fanon's populism, which is my objective in this dissertation.

possibilities of self-determination were available and circulating. Doing so, Wilder underscores Césaire and Senghor's political talent. They were able to engage in a pragmatic politics that demanded experimentation and utopian thinking, compelling them to entertain and advance grander visions of colonial emancipation that were not limited to national independence. Both of them understood autonomy and economic justice to be more important than national independence in a postwar world that was increasingly being shaped by neocolonial capitalism and Cold War geopolitics.¹⁰¹ Wilder offers a novel and insightful reading of Césaire and Senghor's writings to give an account of the forms of political action that these two statesmen engaged in to seize the postwar opening and remake the world on more egalitarian terms.

At the conclusion of Wilder's book, the reader is left with a sophisticated understanding of how Césaire and Senghor engaged with other colonial elites and anti-colonial collaborators to reimagine the political associations that would constitute the postwar world. However, Wilder's reading of Césaire and Senghor's works does not provide a sense of how these political actors understood and articulated the political actions of ordinary people in the Antilles and French West Africa, who were not simply led by elite political actors towards liberation from colonial rule, but were also strident actors who were seeking to remake the world on their own terms. Pan-African leaders such as Césaire and Senghor considered themselves to be expounding their own version of African and Antillean socialism, making their writings open to readings that recover and substantiate populist expressions of how the people constituted themselves as a

¹⁰¹ Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization and the Future of the World*, (Durham, N.C: Duke, 2015), 163, 256.

transnational democratic body.¹⁰² However, Wilder's primary interest in writing an intellectual history of two elite political actors in the Antilles and French West Africa causes him to overlook the aspects of Césaire and Senghor's writings and political biography that revealed a more populist and democratic articulation of postwar world making.

Frederick Cooper's *Citizenship Between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* is the another exemplary work that focuses on efforts to transform the French colonial empire into a democratic and socialist federation. Cooper's approach differs from Wilder's in that he presents a broader historical narrative of federation that focuses exclusively on French West Africa, and encompasses a multitude of actors who sought to reform the French imperial structure for a more egalitarian association. Although Cooper's account of how African leaders sought to transform empire into an egalitarian polity is formidably detailed and deeply textured, it remains a story about elite actors making claims on behalf of French subjects of colonialism. As Cooper claims in the opening lines of his preface "This is a book about politics in two senses. First, it is about politics as the art of individuals and organizations *getting people to do things they did not think they wanted to do*, about how the entry of different people into political debate changed the frameworks in which politics took place."¹⁰³ Here, Cooper is clear that the focus of his work will be on giving an account of politics as "the art of individuals," individuals who yield the power of political persuasion and foresight

¹⁰² On the socialist underpinnings of Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism*, see Robin D.G Kelley, "A Poetics of Anticolonialism", *Monthly Review*, 51(6), 1999. On Senghor's African socialism see Wilbert J. LeMelle, "A Return to Senghor's Theme on Socialism", *Phylon*, 26(4), 1965, 330-343.

¹⁰³ Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), IX. Cooper's argument is expressed in abbreviated form in Frederick Cooper, *Africa in the World: Capitalism, Empire, Nation-State*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014).

to lead the masses to become aware of and live in more liberated political associations. Thus, although Cooper's work covers a broader contingent of African intellectuals, statesmen, and political activists than Wilder's account, he is also ultimately committed to reading the actions of these individuals with an eye for their talent in politics, as opposed to recovering and substantiating their perspectives on how the agency of the masses helped to propel the reimagining political community after World War II.

Fanon is taken up in Wilder's and Cooper's works on federalist possibilities in the postwar era. However, he is either a marginal figure or positioned as a nationalist who was opposed to any immediate transformation of colonialism into a transnational federation. Both authors contrast Fanon's views with those of Senghor in order to underscore a fundamental conflict between transnationalism and nationalism as the two primary routes towards decolonization. For instance Cooper writes:

It is impossible to adjudicate whether Senghor's dialectic of African solidarity and French citizenship or Frantz Fanon's "the last shall be the first" – a rejection of any compromise with colonial authority and the creation of an insistent anti-imperial nation – was the better strategy, except to say that both were readings of colonial situations that corresponded to some of their realities.¹⁰⁴

Here it is clear that Cooper positions Fanon as advocating the more radical position of anti-imperialist nationalism, while Senghor represents the reformist movement towards creating a Franco-African federalist structure. Wilder on the other hand contends that Fanon's critique of Senghor is sharper and more severe. In his reading of *The Wretched*, Wilder advances the claim that Fanon did not just view Senghor as a reformist, but also as an apologist for colonialism:

¹⁰⁴ Cooper, *Africa in the World: Capitalism, Empire, Nation-State*, 63-64.

In the opening chapter of *Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon invokes Senghor as an archetypal “colonized intellectual” – a “vulgar opportunist” and “mimic man” who instrumentalizes the voice of “the people” to whom he has no authentic connection. This he suggests, is why President Senghor refused to properly decolonize Senegal.¹⁰⁵

Wilder goes on to argue that Fanon misses the radical potential of Senghor’s project of postnational democracy as one of social interdependence and cultural reciprocity because the policies of dispossession and exclusion under settler colonial subjugation in Algeria blinded him to the potential for transnational solidarities in the postwar era.¹⁰⁶

Both Cooper and Wilder are correct to articulate Fanon’s critique of Senghor and other black Francophone intellectuals’ turn to federalism as a form of reformism. However, their engagement with *The Wretched* misses an important facet of Fanon’s critique of colonial and colonized elites. Fanon’s main opposition to the federalist proposal put forward by black intellectuals and their collaborators in the metropole stemmed from the fact that the proposal represented an elite solution to the problem of the inequality and dependency created by colonialism. As Fanon writes in his 1958 article in the *El Moudjahid*:

The Africans who ask their compatriots to vote for de Gaulle and “the Franco-African Community” by plebiscite, show a profound lack of understanding of the problems of decolonization and a criminal ignorance of the national aspirations of the African peoples.¹⁰⁷

This is an important accusation that Fanon throws at African federalists who seek to realize self-determination under the umbrella of a Franco-African union. His criticism is not simply that the federalist proposal is a halfway measure, but that the measure remains

¹⁰⁵ Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization and the Future of the World*, 134.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹⁰⁷ Fanon, “Appeal to Africans”, *El Moudjahid*, no. 29, September 17, 1958 in *Towards the African Revolution*, trans. Haakon Chevalier, (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 132.

ignorant of the deep the desire for independence from France among colonized peoples in West Africa. As he says “French colonialism in the long run is playing a losing game. The same problems will subsist, the same needs, the same demand for national independence.”¹⁰⁸ That Francophone African leaders remained ignorant of this tenacious demand for independence that was sweeping the continent indicate their disconnection from the populace, and furthermore misaligned them with the tide of history that was moving towards national independence. Fanon’s criticism of the plebiscite in this context is that it is a political process that is engineered by elites to produce an outcome that corresponds to their ideas of liberation. Thus, he goes on to argue that despite the pretension of bringing about a democratic process of decolonization, the will of colonized people was not captured by the plebiscite, particularly due to the high military and police presence at voting sites and the long established tradition of gerrymandering during the colonial era.¹⁰⁹

Wilder and Cooper both overlook this aspect of Fanon’s criticism of the federalist path towards decolonization. They treat him as a radical figure who sought to push the agenda of federalist figures towards national independence. In doing so, they miss the substance of his critique of a Franco-African federalist state as an imposition from above that did not have popular consensus given the flawed and inadequate process of the plebiscite. By maintaining their focus on how elite actors shaped the political possibilities of the transnational opening of the post-war era, Wilder and Cooper overlook Fanon’s critique of elite driven politics. Returning to Fanon’s writings, as I do here, helps decenter elites as the main agents who steered the course of decolonization, and bring

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 134.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 133.

into view the ways in which the masses participated in the process of decolonization and sought to sustain liberation from colonial rule.

Against the current of those who proposed a federal political association with France, a number of intellectuals and political actors within and outside of France were drawn to a new movement for decolonization, which was popularly known as Third Worldism. French economist Alfred Sauvy first coined the term in 1952 to capture the upsurge of decolonization movements across Asia and Africa demanding freedom from colonialism. Sauvy was among the group of intellectuals and dissidents in France whose opposition to the war in Algeria led him to conceive of the term *tiers mondisme* to capture the parallel between the awakening of the formerly colonized nations to the *tiers état* of the French Revolution in 1789.¹¹⁰ Thus, from its initial conception, the ideology and movement of the Third World took inspiration from the popular revolt against power and privilege in 18th century France. As Sauvy writes “For this Third World, ignored, exploited, scorned, like the Third Estate, also wants something.”¹¹¹ Those committed to Third Worldism were thus guided by the belief that the masses of the colonized world were the revolutionary agents who were well positioned to achieve the social and political goals of decolonization. In that sense, Third Worldism was marked by its populism from the beginning, and for this reason represented a countervailing political movement to that of federalism as it offered an alternative path towards decolonization that was grounded in popular mobilizations across the newly emerging geographical and political bloc of the Third World.

¹¹⁰ Alfred Sauvy, “Trois Mondes, Une Planète,” *L’Observateur*, no. 118, August 14, 1952.

¹¹¹ Ibid., “Car enfin ce Tiers Monde ignoré, exploité, méprisé, comme le Tiers Etat, veut lui aussi être quelquechose.”

Despite the inspiration that the Third World movement in France took from the populist revolts of the nation's past, the movement gathered momentum mostly outside of France, and the other colonizing nations of Western Europe. Specifically, the three major conferences of the Third World movement were held in Brussels, Belgium in 1927; Bandung, Indonesia in 1955; and then finally in Havana, Cuba in 1966. At these conferences, leaders from Africa, Asia and the Americas met to forge a path towards decolonization or to sustain the liberation that they had struggled for. These conferences also became the sites that transformed the Third World movement from one driven by popular mobilizations to one that was led by national leaders whose main priority was to forge international solidarity between newly independent states to counter the emerging Cold war battles between the United States and Soviet Union. Thus, the foundation of Third Worldism shifted from a mass struggle for decolonization to that of a power play in the realm of international relations. Consequently, the basis for Third World solidarity became grounded in cultivating inter-state relations between leaders rather than fostering popular consciousness among the masses of being part of a people's front of the Third World. Fanon, like many thinkers of the Third World movement kept his focus on the latter goal of cultivating a popular consciousness of the Third World that could eclipse the narrow attachments of nationalism, which he deemed necessary for the early phases of the anti-colonial movement.¹¹² This commitment to forging a popular consciousness of the Third World finds expression in Fanon's writings, making them an important source

¹¹² Fanon is among a group of thinkers of the Third World who were committed to bolstering and invigorating the popular consciousness of the masses during the national liberation struggle and after formal decolonization during which time the national bourgeoisie gained power. The other notable figures committed to cultivating the consciousness of the masses were Amilcar Cabral, Steve Biko and Patrice Lumumba. Idahosa, *The Populist Dimension to African Political Thought*, 71-85; 129-151.

to track the evolution of the Third World movement from populism to an elitist internationalism.

Unfortunately, the historiography of Third Worldism, while attentive to its populist origins, succumbs to the tendency to reproduce a narrative of elites shaping the ideology and steering the direction of the movement at critical moments of its development. In this way, the secondary literature on Third Worldism does not significantly depart from that of postwar federalism in France, although scholars in the former group are certainly more prone to pay attention to the ways in which mass movements in different parts of the colonized world coalesced to form the Third World movement. Robert Malley's *The Call from Algeria: Third Worldism, Revolution and the Turn to Islam* is representative of a work that attempts to balance its focus on the role of elite political actors and that of ordinary people in establishing Third Worldism as an ideology and political formation. Malley's account proceeds chronologically to expound on three key moments of Third Worldism - its gestation, apogee, and demise - all the while keeping his focus centered on Algeria. Algeria's struggle for independence is represented as a pinnacle moment of Third Worldism that inspired and galvanized people across Africa and the Arab world. Furthermore, Malley contends that Algeria's evolution as an independent polity in the midst of Cold war era conflicts and its turn to religious authoritarianism exemplifies the fate of a number of postcolonial nations that constituted the Third World.¹¹³

Malley charts the unfolding of this story between Algeria and the Third World by tracking the broad social, political, and intellectual currents that brought people

¹¹³ Robert Malley, *The Call from Algeria: Third Worldism, Revolution, and the Turn to Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 10-12.

together in Western and non-Western capitals to advance an ideology and movement that sought to build solidarity across nation-states in order to maintain the political independence and promote the social development of newly liberated nations. There are a number of key protagonists who played a critical role in the unfolding of this story, including the Algerian independence leaders Messali Hadj, Ferdat Abbas, and Houari Boumédiène. These figures are portrayed as playing an instrumental role in producing the intellectual content that gave substance to politics of the Third World movement in Algeria, what Malley refers to as the “heroic ideologies of Third Worldism.”¹¹⁴ Although Malley does not erase the role of organized social movements in this narrative of postwar independence struggles of the Third World, it becomes clear throughout his work that a number of key individuals are elevated as having a critical role in shaping the contours of Third Worldism as an ideology and transnational political affiliation. As he writes,

For it is one thing to recognize that the peoples of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East shared the same foe. *It was quite another, requiring men and women of superior vision, to look beyond the unity of the oppression to see the unity of purpose.*¹¹⁵

The discontent of the masses is portrayed here as lacking unity of purpose and direction. Malley contends that it took exceptional men and women of superior vision to move beyond identifying the problem of colonialism to organizing the Third World from a geopolitical bloc into a social movement committed to unseating the power of imperialism and addressing the legacy of colonial subjugation. Thus, despite Malley’s

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 17

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 22.

attention to the populist foundations of Third Worldism,¹¹⁶ his historical narrative ultimately bolsters heroic leaders as the protagonists who provide coherence and unity to the anger and misery of the masses after decades of colonization.

In response to the tendency to emphasize the primacy of great leaders in the historiography of Third Worldism, Vijay Prashad wrote *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, offering a social history of Third Worldism. His work focuses on the mobilization of mass movements across the newly decolonized world, calling attention to the ways in which ordinary people across Africa, Asia, and the Americas became the primary agents who breathed life into the Third World project by assembling their grievances and aspirations into various political organizations. Leaders of exceptional political ability could then seize these organizations as platforms to articulate the demands, grievances, and aspirations of the masses. Prashad takes great care to emphasize the ways in which leaders of the Third World could only take on the mantle of leadership successfully by being attune to the popular demands for bread, land, and peace, or more specifically “a demand for the redistribution of the world’s resources, a more dignified rate of return for labor power and a shared acknowledgement of the heritage of science, technology and culture.”¹¹⁷ In fact, Prashad attributes the demise of the Third World project to the failure of leaders to act on behalf of the population when they conceded to pressures from the IMF and the World Bank to create a new economic order

¹¹⁶ For instance, Malley offers an incisive analysis of the ways in which the category of “the people” replace that of social class in the writings of Fanon, Cabral and Nkrumah. See Malley, *The Call from Algeria*. pp. 98-100

¹¹⁷ Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2007), xvii.

that did not advance the Third World agenda.¹¹⁸ Ultimately, Prashad writes an account of Third Worldism that originates from the popular demands of the masses. Leaders from the various nations of the Third World took these demands to international forums such as the Bandung conference in Indonesia in 1955 where they became the voice of the people and took on a heroic status.

Despite Prashad's commitment to write a social history of the Third World that displaces the centrality of charismatic leaders in developing and advancing the Third World project, his work is driven by the confluence of political forces that bring together leaders in cities around the world. The book opens in Paris and ends in Mecca with each city depicted as a site in which newly elected leaders from Africa, Asia, and the Americas convene to discuss the future of the postwar world. Although the narrative is interspersed with a history of the social movements that mobilized in each city to bring about independence from colonialism and champion the rights of the marginalized, the narrative ultimately consolidates around the machinations and maneuverings of political leaders of the Third World. Thus, despite Prashad's admirable undertaking to write a people's history of the Third World, his focus centers on the figures who played a pivotal role in forging the ideologies and establishing the institutions that constituted the Third World project.

Fanon's later writings are central to both Prashad and Malley's works on the Third World movement. *The Wretched* in particular is characterized as having inspired newly independent nations to think of themselves as a potent political force in the postwar world where the United States and Soviet Union were vying for a hegemonic position. For instance, Malley argues that Fanon was one of the main political activists

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 274-275.

and intellectuals who internationalized the Algerian war so that it was connected to other struggles against imperial domination.¹¹⁹ Further, Prashad's reading of the chapter "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" from *The Wretched* emphasizes the limitations of national liberation when the movement was limited to only obtaining state power.¹²⁰ In that sense, both Malley and Prashad characterize Fanon as one of the intellectual founders of the Third World project who articulated the transnational dimensions of national liberation movements in order to establish a countervailing movement that could oppose the reemergence of imperialism after World War II. Nonetheless, his works are rarely understood as a more radical expression of the Third World movement, which was centered on strengthening the power of the masses in the Third World. Instead Fanon's works are positioned in Malley and Prashad's works as an affirmation of the direction of Third Worldism, rather than as a critique of the movement as a form of elitist international cooperation that sought to strengthen the power of the post-colonial state.

For example, consider Fanon's writings on the Third World bloc in the FLN's newspaper *El Moudjahid*:

It is easy to regard President Nehru as indecisive because he refuses to harness himself to Western imperialism, and Presidents Nasser or Sukarno as violent when they nationalize their companies and demand the fragments of their territories that are still under foreign domination. What no one sees is that the 350 million Hindus, who have known the hunger of British imperialism, are now demanding bread, peace and well-being. The fact is that the Egyptian fellahs and the Indonesian boys, whom Western writers like to feature in their exotic novels, insist on taking their own destiny into their hands and refuse to play the role of an inert panorama that had been reserved for them.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Malley, *The Call from Algeria: Third Worldism, Revolution, and the Turn to Islam*, 131-132.

¹²⁰ Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*, 122-123.

¹²¹ Frantz Fanon, *El Moudjahid*, No. 27, July 22, 1958.

Although his critique of the leaders of the Third World movement here is not as vociferous as that directed at Francophone intellectuals who supported federalism, Fanon makes it clear that even the leaders of the Third World bloc could only offer a feeble opposition to Western imperialism, in comparison to the steadfast determination, clarity and resoluteness of the masses of the Third World. This lengthy quotation is telling because he shifts political agency away from leaders of the Third World movement (Nehru, Sukarno, Nasser) to re-center it on the masses of Third World. Although, the West may manipulate, allure, malign, and prevail over the nationalist leaders of the Third World, Fanon warns that these leaders are buoyed by the insurrectionary and enraged political energy of the masses, which he asserts cannot be curbed or devitalized as it is grounded in the basic demand for survival. It is this basic warning of the power Third World masses that receives scant attention in the secondary literature.

Taking stock, there were two roads towards decolonization in the Francophone sphere, which captured the political imagination of elites and the masses alike. The first path advocated for a federalist structure that would redefine the relationship between colony and metropole on more egalitarian terms. Frederick Cooper and Gary Wilder retrieve the complexities of the federalist path in their detailed account of how a Franco-African political structure was envisioned to replace the imperial structure of exploitation. Because Cooper and Wilder engage Fanon primarily as a nationalist who understood federalism as an unacceptable compromise with colonialism, they miss aspects of his thought that articulated forms of intercontinental affiliations that connected newly independent nations across the Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

Fanon's intercontinental solidarity found its expression in the second path towards decolonization. This path energized anti-colonial activists in France and its colonies towards the ideology and project of Third Worldism. The struggle for independence in Algeria threw open a new vista on decolonization, which advocated for national independence without forgoing the possibility of sustaining independence through international political affiliations between Third World nations. Third Worldism was in this sense an alternative path to federalism, which made it possible to conceive of the end to imperialism by forging solidarities between formerly colonized nations. Robert Malley and Vijay Prashad's account of the Third World project bring to the fore the ways in which this movement was conceptualized on ideological and geopolitical terms.

The historiography on postwar transnationalism is overwhelmingly saddled with the problem of privileging elite actors as the principal agents who imagined and acted on behalf of the people in newly liberated nations. Despite their engagement with Fanon as a figure whose ideas on postwar transnationalism had to be reckoned with, these works nevertheless miss the populist currents in Fanon's writings. Fanon, like many activists and thinkers of the Third World, represented the oppressed subject in direct opposition to the Marxist category of class. The imperialist exploitation of nations on the periphery had created a revolutionary subject in the Third World that differed from the proletariat of European cities. Fanon's later writings describe this subject as the peasantry, as this class had become the principle target of economic exploitation in the rural and undeveloped parts of the Third World. However, as later sections of this paper show, Fanon understood the peasantry as a much more expansive category which extended

beyond socio-economic class to articulate a notion of the people.¹²² In that sense, a primary aim of thinkers of the Third World was to give voice to the people, and give form to the ways in which the popular masses acted collectively. Fanon was no exception as his work is rich site for conceptualizing how a notion of “the people” was articulated in the Third World. The range of scholars who engage Fanon on the question of postwar transnationalism and internationalism overlook aspects of his work that empower the people as the basis for an intercontinental solidarity between Africa, Asia and the Americas.

As I argue in the remaining parts of the chapter, Fanon articulates a notion of the people that was not bound to the confines of the nation-state, but rather based on a conception of intercontinental populism. He conceives of the people as a category that could animate a global and democratic body that stretched between between Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Doing so, he shifts the locus of political action and mobilization around postwar transnationalism and internationalism to the masses of the Third World, and thus decenters the exclusive focus on political elites as the main protagonists who struggled to unseat imperialism and institute a more democratic and egalitarian global order. In the next three sections, I give more concrete shape to how Fanon is conceptualizing intercontinentalism as a form of political community that emerges out of dialectical tension and conflict, which is crucial to ensuring that intercontinentalism does

¹²² Fanon’s expansive conception of the peasantry as a class correlates with earlier debates on the “Agrarian Question” before and after the Russian Revolution. The Bolshevik leadership was made up mostly of urban intellectuals and professionals who were faced with the challenge of organizing a large agrarian population living off subsistence agriculture. The central question they faced was whether the peasantry would act as allies in the struggle to achieve socialism or whether the peasantry were ultimately a reactionary, counter-revolutionary element of Russian society? Fanon takes up this question in the context of decolonization struggles in the postwar era, reflecting broadly on the possibilities of class formation in the Third World and makes a case for the revolutionary consciousness of the peasantry. See “Fanon and Revolutionary Class” in Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World Economy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 250-267.

not ossify into exclusionary forms of political affiliation. I begin, in the following section, by identifying the specificity of intercontinental solidarity, tracing its development out of the dialectical conflict between pan-ethnic/racial forms of solidarity and national consciousness.

II. THE DIALECTIC BETWEEN PAN-ETHNIC/RACIAL SOLIDARITY AND NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The ground for thinking about political community beyond the nation-state stems from a much-quoted line from *The Wretched*: “National consciousness, which is not nationalism, is alone capable of giving us an international dimension.”¹²³ Astute readers have dwelled on these lines to parse out the meaning of “national consciousness” in Fanon’s writings. In *Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau through Fanon*, Jane Gordon offers an insightful reading of national consciousness as a cognate of Rousseau’s general will, which expresses how the citizenry in postcolonial nations establish their commonality through their commitment to engage in active political action to challenge the relations of hierarchy and exploitation that re-establish itself in newly independent nations.¹²⁴ Thus Gordon argues that Fanonian national consciousness is grounded in the people’s authority to uphold the meaning of the laws and institutions of postcolonial nations when they have been violated by newly elect leaders for gaining personal power and wealth. Missing from Gordon’s reading of national consciousness, however, is a fuller analysis of the second part of Fanon’s statement that bring can attention to the international dimension

¹²³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2005), 179.

¹²⁴ Jane Anna Gordon, *Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau through Fanon*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 133-135.

of national consciousness. Gordon's reading of national consciousness as a creolization of Rousseau's general will ultimately limits it to the democratic sovereignty of the people within nation-states.

Others have read these lines to bring to the fore the ways in which Fanon understood national consciousness as the basis for developing forms of humanism that would inaugurate new ways of forging political community at the international level. Nigel Gibson in *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination* reads Fanon's statement on national consciousness as a declaration that the struggle for decolonization would commence a new world history that would be the basis for a renewed sense of human reciprocity at the international level. Crucially, Gibson argues that Fanon understood the humanism born of decolonization as breaking with degraded forms of European humanism and providing the footing for a fuller expression of the ideal.¹²⁵ Similarly, Ato Sekyi-Otu's important work *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience* contends that national consciousness, which Sekyi-Otu describes as the desire of postcolonial peoples for collective individuation, enlivens the consciousness of a common humanity and paves the way for the universalization of values.¹²⁶ As Fanon affirms "it is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and thrives."¹²⁷

The interpretations offered by Gordon, Gibson, and Sekyi-Otu open up a number of different avenues through which to approach Fanon's statement on the relationship between national and international consciousness. For the purposes of fully

¹²⁵ Nigel Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, (Malden, MA: Polity, 2003), 194.

¹²⁶ Ato Sekyi-Otu, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997), 154-155.

¹²⁷ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 180.

understanding this relationship, however, these interpretations are not sufficiently contextualized in the postwar debates about whether decolonization should take the route of federalism to form a union of Greater France, or that of national independence, which would open the way for a Third World movement of solidarity that can counter Cold War struggles for hegemony. As revealed through the historiography on postwar decolonization, Fanon's perspectives were an important counterpoint to dominant views on federalism and the Third World movement. He opposed the federalist path towards decolonization, and while he identified with and supported the Third World movement, a close reading of his writings indicate that he disagreed with the elitist internationalism that guided the direction of the movement. Interpreting Fanon's statement on the international dimension of national consciousness in light of this debate provides new and critical purchase on the statement, and the entire chapter "On National Culture."

Fanon's statement on the international dimension of national consciousness is situated in chapter four of *The Wretched*, which was originally an essay that he presented at the Second Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Rome, in 1959.¹²⁸ The Second Congress was a gathering of Black artists and writers from across the Atlantic who critically engaged the question of which path to take towards decolonization. As the proceedings from the Congress demonstrate, a major topic of debate was whether decolonization should take the form of supranational states, or that of an alliance between decolonized nation-states.¹²⁹ In that sense, Fanon's chapter "On National Culture" was originally written as an essay that was intended to be an intervention into this debate

¹²⁸ David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*, (New York: Verso, 2012), 370-371.

¹²⁹ Congress of Negro Writers and Artists and Société africaine de culture, eds., *The Unity of Negro African Cultures: Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, Rome, 26 March-1st April 1959*. (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959) 1-23; 45-54; 203-220.

about the most effective institutional framework that could achieve the decolonization goals of economic security, political stability, and cultural integrity in postcolonial states. Paying closer attention to original context of the chapter and essay makes it possible to bring into consideration the performative dimensions of text, which then opens up the possibility of reading the text as an appeal to the audience members of the Congress to consider a notion of political community that diverged from the transnationalism and internationalism that dominated the conference.¹³⁰ In that space, transnationalism took either the form of a federation with France, or the establishment of a supranational institution of the African Legion. By contrast, the internationalism championed at the conference was inspired by the 1955 Afro-Asian meeting of Third World nation-states, where leaders advocated for a coalition between independent post-colonial states.¹³¹ Fanon appealed to his audience to break out of these two dichotomous modes of imagining political community. He articulated transnationalism and internationalism as conflicting oppositions, which expressed contradictory desires to transcend and reify the nation-state at the same time. Throughout his address to the Congress, Fanon deepens these dialectical contradictions to press towards a more open articulation of “we” that was grounded in an intercontinental populism of the Third World.

¹³⁰ My understanding of the “performative dimension” of *The Wretched* draws on Quentin Skinner, who has argued for the importance of writing and researching the history of political thought through a study of the intellectual, political, and social contexts in which texts are produced. Doing so makes it possible to consider the performativity of the text, by which he means the framework of discourse that a political thinker is seeking to affirm, disrupt, or challenge. Thus in this chapter, I recover the historical context of postwar decolonization to bring attention to how the discourse around transnationalism and internationalism was challenged by Fanon's writings. Specifically, I demonstrate how Fanon's writings and speeches break out of these prevalent modes of thinking about political community, and how he calls upon his listening and reading public to imagine a more open and less state-centric conception of the “we”. See, Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics : Regarding Method*, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2002) 82-85.

¹³¹ Congress of Negro Writers and Artists and Société africaine de culture, *The Unity of Negro African Cultures* 45-54; 203-220.

Whether in the original form of the paper titled “The Reciprocal Foundation of National Culture and Liberation Struggles,” or in the form of a chapter in his final work *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon’s repeated use of the personal pronoun “we” persistently evokes the political community to which he was appealing. His use of “we” is most evocative in the opening lines of the essay, where he clearly sets the boundaries of the community to which he was appealing:

Now that we are in the heat of combat, we must shed the habit of decrying the efforts of our forefathers or feigning incomprehension at their silence or passiveness. They fought as best they could with the weapons they possessed at the time, and if their struggle did not reverberate throughout the international arena, the reason should be attributed not so much to a lack of heroism but to a fundamentally different international situation. More than one colonized subject had to say “we’ve had enough,” more than one tribe had to rebel, more than one peasant revolt had to be quelled, more than one demonstration to be repressed, for us today to stand firm, certain of our victory.¹³²

Here, Fanon not only points to the urgency of the moment of postwar decolonization, but also calls forth a community that is connected inter-generationally through their shared history in struggle: “we must shed the habit of decrying the efforts of our forefathers.” He then goes on to point out that the pitfalls of the earlier generation of anti-colonial activists were that their struggles were limited to national interests, demands, and aspirations. Their struggles did not reverberate throughout the international arena. Finally, he implores to his audience: “More than one colonized subject had to say “we’ve had enough,” more than one tribe...., one peasant revolt...one demonstration ...for us to stand firm, certain of our victory.” Here, the community that says “we’ve had enough” is no longer national, but rather he appeals to the strength of an expansive political community that cannot be reduced to merely single acts of resistance at the level of geography, culture, or the individual. Instead, he calls for an internationalization of their

¹³² Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 145.

struggles against colonialism, which he argues is a crucial strategy to be “certain of our victory,” or to put it plainly, to effectively attain permanent decolonization.

If the community to which he appealed at the Second Congress is not national, the language of “internationalization” needs to be interrogated further in order to get a full picture of how Fanon is conceptualizing political community beyond the nation-state. Undoubtedly, Fanon argues that the nation-state is indispensable to proceed on the path towards liberation from colonialism. However, he contends that nationalism was not the first stage that anti-colonialists embarked on to build an oppositional movement against colonialism. Rather, he argues that first stage of anti-colonialism is expressed as a form of pan-ethnic/racial identity articulated at the continental scale. As he writes, “The colonized intellectual...is fated to journey deep into the very bowels of his people. This journey into the depths is not specifically national. The colonized intellectual who decides to combat these colonialist lies does so *on a continental scale*.”¹³³ With this opening sentence, Fanon commences his critique of premature forms of pan-African, pan-Arab and pan-Asian expressions of anti-colonialism, which articulate too broad of a cultural identity and consequently papers over the specificities of the socio-economic reality at the national level. As he writes, “every culture is first and foremost national...the problems for which Richard Wright or Langston Hughes had to be on alert were fundamentally different from those faced by Léopold Senghor or Jomo Kenyatta.”¹³⁴ In fact, Fanon argues that the inability of pan-ethnic and racial movements to adequately identify and specify problems at the local and national level was related to their

¹³³ Ibid., 149-150.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 154.

preoccupation with the project of recovering a pre-colonial past. Colonialism's denigration of the colonized is carried out at the level of race and ethnicity. Consequently, the resistance built in response remains trapped within that framework: "Colonialism's insistence that "niggers" have no culture, and Arabs are by nature barbaric, inevitably leads to a glorification of cultural phenomena that become continental instead of national and singularly racialized."¹³⁵

This would have been a provocative argument to advance at the Second Congress given that the congress was a gathering of pan-Africanists who were proponents of political associations that were grounded in a pan-ethnic or racial identity, either through the creation of the African Legion, or through the formation of federal supranational state, which transformed the framework of imperial rule. As with his speech at the First Congress for Black Writers and Artists in Paris in 1956, Fanon had every intention to provoke and challenge the audience at the Second Congress so that they consider the practicality and wisdom of pan-ethnic and racial solidarity as the basis for decolonization.

It is important to note that Fanon's critique of pan-ethnic and racial forms of identity is not a repudiation of such identification, but rather his critique is better understood as an insistence that the moment of pan-ethnic identity had passed, despite being a necessary stage of anti-colonialism. In fact, he emphasizes at several instances in the address to the congress that this first stage of anti-colonialism had done the work of opening up a larger field of vision and identification, which made it possible for colonized people to unite against a common form of oppression – colonialism. This is particularly true of pan-Africanism, which Fanon commends for moving beyond Africa

¹³⁵ Ibid.

as the primary locus of political struggle to develop an intercontinental consciousness of colonial oppression. As he says in moments of disguised and pithy praise: “The bards of negritude did not hesitate to reach beyond the borders of the continent.”¹³⁶ Indeed Fanon’s argument was that work of pan-African artists and writers provided the basis for an intercontinental understanding of the experience and workings of colonialism by subjugated peoples. For instance, after reciting a famous poem “African Dawn” by the Guinean playwright and poet Keita Fodeba on how colonial powers used colonial subjects as soldiers to fight their wars, only to discard them later or use them again in the colonies to break up the independence movement, Fanon writes:

There is not one colonized subject who will not understand the message in this poem....this is Sétif in 1945, Fort-de-France, Saigon, Dakar, and Lagos. All the “niggers” and all the “filthy Arabs” who fought to defend France’s liberty or British civilization will recognize themselves in this poem by Keita Fodeba.¹³⁷

Keita Fodeba’s poem is a quintessential work of pan-African poetry and it represents the continent wide experience of colonial exploitation. Yet his words also reverberate far beyond the continent of Africa to the Americas, and Asia. Thus, Fanon points out that the first stage of anti-colonialism in the form of pan-African, pan-Arab, and pan-Asian consciousness and solidarity, was not always an insular and retrogressive moment in the dialectic of political community, but rather an expansion of experience, analysis and understanding of the workings of colonialism.

Fanon depicts national consciousness as arising out of pan-ethnic and racial identity, as its anti-thesis, contradicting this form of political affiliation to give birth to a new political reality. Thus, despite being a binding force that produces vital linkages

¹³⁶ Ibid., 151.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 166..

between colonized peoples, the pan-ethnic/racial phase of anti-colonialism gives way to national consciousness so that oppression can be understood at the specificity of the nation-state, and political actions organized to effectively dismantle structures of oppression at the national level. As Fanon points out,

The principle and purpose of the freedom rides whereby black and white Americans endeavor to combat racial discrimination have little in common with the heroic struggle of the Angolan people against the iniquity of the Portuguese colonialism...once the initial comparisons had been made and subjective feelings had settled down, the black Americans realized that the objective problems were fundamentally different.¹³⁸

Although one can dispute Fanon's claim that there was little in common between the freedom rides that sought to desegregate the United States and the struggle for independence in Angola, his more noteworthy assertion is that white supremacy in the form of apartheid, colonialism, and imperialism had to be dealt with in its particular national permutations. Thus, national consciousness, or what Fanon calls "the will to particularity"¹³⁹ arises for strategic reasons, but its foundation was always pan-ethnic and racial forms of identification.

Anti-colonial national consciousness for this reason is distinctive for Fanon. It arises out of an expansive form of solidarity that coalesces at the continental scale between Africa, Asia, and the Americas. Solidarity at the national level is built on the consciousness of shared oppression between peoples of the colonized world. For this reason, Fanonian anti-colonial national consciousness is not grounded in the forms of exclusive and often retrogressive varieties of cultural nationalism that found a footing in many parts of the colonized world. National consciousness also has built into the

¹³⁸ Ibid. 153-154.

¹³⁹ Ibid. 173.

ideology the possibility for its own transcendence. There are strong echoes of Hegel's philosophy of history throughout Fanon's works, and they are particularly striking in his arguments about national consciousness. Pan-ethnic/racial identities are the ground upon which national consciousness, its opposing force, develops. Furthermore, the dialectical clash between pan-ethnic/racial identities and nationalism consciousness gives birth to a new foundation for political community. Fanon concludes his paper, and chapter in *The Wretched* with open-endedness, providing some sketches of the political community that would emerge from the conflict between pan-ethnic/racial identities and national consciousness: "Far from distancing it from other nations, it is national liberation that puts the nation on the stage of history. It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and thrives."¹⁴⁰ National liberation is conceptualized here as launching the national community into the movement of history, where it gives birth to international consciousness, transforming its original form as a bounded community established on the basis of national identity.

At this point it is necessary to return to the quotation that opened this section, which has received much consideration from scholars as the basis for Fanon's conception of political community at the nation and international level: "*National consciousness, which is not nationalism*, is alone capable of giving us an international dimension."¹⁴¹ The distinction between national consciousness and nationalism is much clearer when the dialectical structure of Fanon's thinking is made transparent. National consciousness is

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 180.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 179.

the ideological basis of anti-colonialism.¹⁴² It is born in tension with pan-ethnic/racial affiliations, the mode of community that national consciousness negates in order to give birth to international consciousness. In contrast to European expressions of nationalism, which are developed in tension with regional identities grounded in monarchic or imperial control, Fanonian national consciousness emerged out of expansive and robust forms of solidarity based on intercontinental linkages between colonized peoples. To that end, Fanonian international consciousness, born out of the conflict between pan-ethnic/racial identity and national consciousness, is also considerably different from the forms of liberal internationalism that European nationalisms gave birth to at the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁴³ Namely, for Fanon, international consciousness was not merely an alliance between nation-states constructed to bolster their self-interests in an anarchic international order. For this reason, he was critical of both the federalist and Third World movement's approach to decolonization. Both tendencies were ultimately compelled to reify the Westphalian system of states grounded in the respect of territorial sovereignty. Rather, Fanon's conception of international consciousness was born out of the dialectical struggle between pan-ethnic/racial affiliations and national consciousness,

¹⁴² The argument I make here about the different ideological basis of anticolonial nationalism is in line with the analysis offered by postcolonial theorists who have made important distinctions between nationalisms, which emerge in the metropole and colony. See for instance Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1993).

¹⁴³ For instance Fanon's understanding of international consciousness diverges considerably from the Wilsonian internationalism that established principles of self-determination in the interwar period. As with many anti-colonial activists, Fanon imagined different possibilities for self-determination and internationalism that those which Woodrow Wilson first articulated. See Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, (Oxford University Press, 2009); The liberal internationalism which emerged from the United States and Europe in the postwar era simply reconfigured the structure of imperialism, which many anti-colonial activists rejected for more emancipatory forms of internationalism. For the connections between liberal internationalism and empire see Jeanne Morefield, *Covenants without Swords: Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire*, (Princeton University Press, 2016); and Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).

generating a form of political community that was not predicated on the spatial order of Westphalian territorial sovereignty, and one which could challenge the logic of coloniality that continued to shape the postwar era.¹⁴⁴

Against the federalist and Third Worldist paths of decolonization that dominated the Second Congress, Fanon put forward a vision for political community that could effectively challenge and transcend the postwar configurations for a neocolonial international world order. The ground for this conception of political community is located in his articulation of international consciousness, which is best understood as a form of intercontinentalism that arises from the dialectical conflict and synthesis of pan-ethnic/racial affiliations and national consciousness. Taking stock then, Fanon argued that the first phase of resistance to colonialism and imperialism materialized in the form of pan-ethnic and racial forms of identification. National consciousness negated this form of political community to give specificity to the struggles for decolonization and embraced the nation-state as a necessary framework to establish sovereignty authority. Yet, there is never an ossification of political community into an absolute and final form in Fanon's dialectic of political community. New identities and new modes of living in political community are constantly being created. Thus the clash between pan-ethnic/racial identity and national consciousness gives birth to international consciousness. Fanon articulates international consciousness in much vaguer and more open-ended terms than the preceding two stages of decolonization, but if we return to the last two chapters of *The Wretched* ("The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness" and "On

¹⁴⁴ Walter D. Mignolo defines the logic of coloniality as the processes of land appropriation and massive exploitation of labor that gave birth to modern capitalism. For Mignolo these processes do not terminate with formal decolonization but continue to shape the postcolonial era. See Walter D. Mignolo "The Logic of Coloniality and the Limits of Postcoloniality" in eds. Revathi Krishnaswamy and John Charles Hawley, *The Postcolonial and the Global* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008) 109-121.

National Culture”) with the clearer understanding of the dialectical conflict and movement of the decolonization struggle in the twentieth century, a more concrete conception of Fanon’s articulation of international consciousness emerges.

In the next section, I develop Fanon’s account of *international* consciousness as a form of *intercontinental* populism that reconciles the tensions between pan-racial/ethnic identities and national consciousness. Intercontinental populism articulates a more open “we” than that of the bounded community of the nation-state grounded in a critical and emancipatory form of national consciousness. It draws on the experience and lessons of pan-ethnic and racial forms solidarity that emerged between Africa, Asia, and the Americas during the first stages of decolonization to establish a form of popular sovereignty that is expansive in its reach, but ultimately not dependent on reifying national, transnational, and international institutional structures, which often reproduced the colonial architecture of the pre-independence era.¹⁴⁵ To this end, I center intercontinental populism as the mode of political community that Fanon articulated to push elite led forms of transnational and international political community toward more democratic configurations that fully incorporated mass participation in the building of a decolonized world.

Fanon is generally read as only gesturing to the contours of intercontinental populism in open-ended and abstract terms towards the end of the last two chapters in *The Wretched*. In the next section, I read these chapters as already fully embodying

¹⁴⁵ For instance Antony Anghie traces the origins and development of international law to four periods (three which preceded and one that followed decolonization) to argue that international law was never concerned with the relations between nation-states who were considered to be on an equal footing, but rather between civilization and peoples, which resulted in new forms of indebtedness and dependence in the postcolonial era. According to Anghie institutions of international law in the name of security reproduces new forms of imperialism. See Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 245-250.

Fanon's conception of intercontinental solidarity. I argue that the chapters stage multiple scenes of dialectical conflict between pan-ethnic/racial and national forms of community where Fanon evokes intercontinentalism not only at the end, but also throughout the chapters as the emergent potentiality of pan-ethnic/racial solidarity and anti-colonial nationalism. In this sense, there are two aspects of intercontinental solidarity that will be explicated in the next section: a) intercontinental populism is the collective and democratic subjectivity of the masses that arise across newly liberated nations in Africa, Asia, and the Americas to oppose political elites who collaborate to undermine the promise of national liberation by inviting the forces of neocolonial capitalism b) intercontinental populism, being born out of Fanon's dialectical conception of community, is also defined by its critical and revising nature when grounded in and subject to the political struggles of the masses. This is the populist component of his insights that make it possible to forestall and diminish the persistent threat of exclusion, which he anticipated as the problematic legacy of European ideals of political community founded on the practice of racial exclusion.

III. INTERNATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AS INTERCONTINENTAL POPULISM

Fanon concludes the last two chapters of *The Wretched* by calling for national consciousness to transform into international consciousness. Specifically, the final paragraphs of "The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness" and "On National Culture" sketch the broad outlines of a form of political solidarity that is expressed at the international level. However, the meaning of Fanonian international consciousness is open-ended and not clearly defined. Yet, it is evident when tracing the dialectical

development of international consciousness out of the conflict between pan-ethnic/racial identity and national consciousness that Fanon is not using the term international consciousness to refer to the forms of liberal internationalism that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century to bolster the interests of imperial nation-states. The question then becomes how to understand the contours of Fanonian international consciousness. In this section, I argue that international consciousness has two defining features. First, it is best understood spatially as an intercontinental political community forged between the Third World regions of Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and second, intercontinentalism is grounded in a form of populism that expands beyond nation-states to articulate a collective democratic subjectivity of the Third World.

In order to articulate international consciousness as intercontinental populism, it is necessary to develop an interpretive method that can help to specify the meaning of international consciousness. As with many of Fanon's writings, *The Wretched* can be read as a series of dramatic scenes where he brings together stark oppositions that are held in dialectical tension throughout the work. In the last chapter, I demonstrated the illuminatory possibilities of this reading method with *Black Skin, White Masks*, where a number of scenes throughout the text disclose the contradictions of a political community that was structured by the ideology of race and the ideal of fraternity, such that colonial subject-citizens were simultaneously included into and excluded from French citizenship. I also began to identify the dialectical tensions in *The Wretched* by focusing my attention on chapter four of the text, "On National Culture," which was adapted from his speech to the Second Congress for Negro Writers and Artists. As demonstrated in the last section, Fanon stages a conflict between pan-ethnic/racial identity and national consciousness, out

of which emerges a political community grounded in international consciousness. Given this, it is productive to read Fanon's works in the dramaturgical form, such that we view him as directing a drama, which has an overarching narrative arc that is strung together by a number of scenes.¹⁴⁶ Each scene of the drama is expressive of the conflicts he stages at the higher level of the text such that the scenes are specific instances of the dynamic dialectical tensions the text brings to the foreground. In this sense, the scenes at the level of the chapter or paragraph can usefully be understood as staging a form of micro-dialectics that add complexity and depth to the larger dialectical conflict posed by the text.¹⁴⁷ The method of dramatization thus reveals the multiple inflections of dialectical conflicts, which upon closer inspection form pieces of the larger conceptual development of the text. Thus, Fanon's arguments on international consciousness, which are posed towards the concluding sections of *The Wretched*, can be re-articulated with more specificity as intercontinental populism if we assemble the various scenes that give expression to international consciousness throughout the text.

The conflict between national leaders and the oppositional energy of the masses is one of the main scenes of dialectical conflict at the heart of Fanon's chapter "The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness." The postwar era of decolonization made it necessary for Fanon to centralize this conflict. The debates during the 1950s and 1960s over whether to follow the path of federalism or Third Worldism centralized political

¹⁴⁶ Ato Sekyi-Otu made this hermeneutical move in his work *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*. He argues that each utterance and representation in Fanon's writings are not a discrete or conclusive event, but rather a strategic and self-revising act set in motion by changing circumstances and perspectives. See Sekyi-Otu, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 25-30.

¹⁴⁷ The term "micro-dialectics" is introduced by George Ciccariello-Maher in *Decolonizing Dialectics* to describe the contested nature of social struggles. See Ciccariello-Maher, *Decolonizing Dialectics*, (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2017), 6.

elites from the former colonies and the newly liberated nations as the main protagonists guiding the direction of decolonization. Given that sovereign authority was being re-constituted by these political elites through the formation of transnational and international institutions that were removed from the influence or participation of the masses, Fanon saw it as imperative to articulate a counter-hegemonic power that could oppose the myriad ways in which the logic of coloniality was being transformed into modern capitalist relations in postcolonial states. Although federalism and Third Worldism were supported by national leaders who were either critical or compliant to the emerging world order, Fanon criticized both movements for their inability to remain connected with the masses. The general tenor of this critique is captured in the opening lines of the chapter three “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness”:

Over a long period of time the colonized have devoted their energy to eliminating iniquities such as forced labor, corporal punishment, unequal wages, and the restriction of political rights.But the unpreparedness of the elite, the lack of practical ties between them and the masses, their apathy and yes, their cowardice at the crucial moment in the struggle, are the cause of tragic trials and tribulations.¹⁴⁸

Here, Fanon contends that the oppositional energy of the colonized masses is at risk of becoming recolonized by national elites who capitulate to the emerging neocolonial capitalism of the Cold war era. Throughout the chapter, he expands on this line of critique to underscore the powerlessness, apathy, elitism and betrayal of the national bourgeoisie as imperial powers re-align themselves to extend the process of resource extraction and labor exploitation well into the post-independence era.

In this sense, the conflict between national leaders and the oppositional energy of the masses in the chapter three “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness”

¹⁴⁸ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 97.

is one the micro-dialectical scenes that constitute the larger drama of decolonization. Specifically, the chapter maps the difficult routes through which postcolonial nationalism travels as it attempts to establish sovereignty. In his characteristic endeavor to specify the nature of capitalist relations in societies subject to colonialism, Fanon puts forth the argument that a true bourgeoisie class does not exist in postcolonial societies. The nature of capitalist and imperialist development is such that the bourgeoisie class, which was supposed to foment production, invention, and creativity simply becomes an accumulative and rapacious class prostrate to Western capitalist interests:

The national bourgeoisie discovers its historical mission as intermediary. As we have seen, its vocation is not to transform the nation but prosaically serve as a conveyor belt for capitalism, forced to camouflage itself behind the mask of neocolonialism.¹⁴⁹

Acting as an intermediary to Western capitalist interests, Fanon contends that the national bourgeoisie of postcolonial nations betray the promise of independence and become merely instruments that reproduce the economic and political relations of colonialism into the postwar era. Thus for Fanon, the bourgeoisie serve no purpose in postcolonial nations other than enable the continuation of older structures of exploitation.

Not only do the national bourgeoisie continue the relations of colonialism by genuflecting to the interests of Western capitalists, they also continue the logic of coloniality by reproducing the exclusionary dynamics of French colonialism born out of the contradiction between race and the ideal of fraternity. Consider Fanon's remarks on this problem:

The national bourgeoisie...who have assimilated to the core the most despicable aspects of the colonial mentality, take over from the Europeans and lay the foundations for a racist philosophy. Through its apathy and mimicry it encourages the growth and development of racism that was typical of the colonial period. It is

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 100.

hardly surprising then in a country, which calls itself African to hear remarks that are nothing less than racist and to witness paternalistic behavior bitterly reminiscent of Paris.¹⁵⁰

Fanon contends that the racial exclusion and paternalism that defined the relationship between white and non-white citizens under French colonialism is reproduced in postcolonial nations. Rather than breaking with the Western bourgeoisie's practices of racial discrimination and paternalism towards its compatriots, the national bourgeoisie of postcolonial nations uncritically inherit and sustain these practices. Thus the political communities founded in the aftermath of the colonial experience continue to be deeply structured by the contradictions between ideology of race and the ideal of fraternity, such that the language of citizenship which extends protection and recognition to all citizens regardless of race, gender, class, religion, or caste, is subverted by practices of exclusion which the national bourgeoisie cannot relinquish.

It is against these conditions of postcolonial governance that the masses cultivate their anger and resistance. Fanon is quick to remind the reader that every misstep and blunder is closely observed and remembered by the masses, for their conditions of existence do not improve in the postcolonial nation, but rather deteriorate even further. As he puts bluntly: "The masses are hungry...The masses begin to keep their distance, to turn their backs on and lose interest in this nation which excludes them."¹⁵¹ Against the corrupt power structure established by the national bourgeoisie, an undercurrent of popular discontent and anger begins to brew, and gradually gives rise to political struggles that seek to steer the course of national consciousness to dismantle

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 108.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 114.

neo-colonial power structures that curtail the promise of national liberation. Thus, a new combative moment arises in the dialectic of decolonization. The national bourgeoisie who uphold the architecture of colonial rule in the postindependence period meet their steadfast opposition from the masses. Fanon sums up these dialectical oppositions that confront each other in postcolonial societies cogently : “It is both this wretchedness of the people and this dissolute enrichment of the bourgeois caste, the contempt it flaunts for the rest of the nation, that will harden thoughts and attitudes.”¹⁵² In other words, the sustained immiseration of the masses in relation to the unrestrained enrichment of the national bourgeoisie deepen the contradictions of postcolonial nation-states to such an extent that a new set of social struggles surges forth to reconstitute postcolonial societies on more egalitarian terms.

However Fanon is clear that the national bourgeoisie cannot be challenged at the level of the nation-state. For one, Fanon persistently calls attention to the “cosmopolitan mentality” of the national bourgeoisie.¹⁵³ This cosmopolitanism is empty and enabled by the rapaciousness and greed of the national bourgeoisie, which it shares with its Western counterparts. Fanon writes, “In its decadent aspect the national bourgeoisie gets considerable help from the Western bourgeoisies who happen to be tourists enamoured of exoticism, hunting and casinos.”¹⁵⁴ Thus, the cosmopolitanism of the national bourgeoisie is developed through its collusion with, and mimicry of the Western bourgeoisie. Its loyalties and affiliations are not circumscribed to the nation-state,

¹⁵² Ibid., 113.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 98.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 101.

but are rather based on experiencing a common lifestyle of luxury and decadence with the Western bourgeoisie. For this reason, Fanon argues that the struggle to transform the neocolonial structures of the post-independent states must extend beyond the nation-state and must be pitched at an intercontinental level :

If we really want to safeguard our countries from regression, paralysis, or collapse, we must rapidly switch from a national consciousness to a social and political consciousness. The work of the masses, their determination to conquer the scourges that for centuries have excluded them from the history of the human mind, must be connected to the work and determination of all the underdeveloped peoples. There is a kind of collective endeavor, a common destiny among the underdeveloped masses. The peoples of the Third World are not interested in news about King Baudoin's wedding or the affairs of the Italian bourgeoisie. What we want to hear are the case histories in Argentina or Burma about the fight against illiteracy or the dictatorial behavior of other leaders.¹⁵⁵

This lengthy quote is taken from the concluding paragraphs of the “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness.” Here, Fanon makes clear that the empty cosmopolitanism of the bourgeoisie must be matched on scale by a virulent intercontinental populism of the Third World. The masses in this quotation are not defined by or attached to national identities but rather they are engaged in what Fanon says is “a collective endeavor formed between underdeveloped peoples.”

In this sense, the dialectical conflict between the national bourgeoisie and the oppositional energy of the masses ultimately gives rise to a form of critical international consciousness. However, the form of solidarity Fanon envisions is between underdeveloped peoples, rather than a general internationalism that traverses the racial and imperial borders of the postwar world. Fanon's argument is that political interests were tied not only to one's class position in a global capitalist system, but also to one's geographical position in the imperialist and racialized political economy of the postwar

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 142-143.

era.¹⁵⁶ Given this, he calls for solidarity between underdeveloped peoples who are forced to establish political sovereignty and economic stability in a global capitalist, imperialist, and racialized political economy. The geographical regions which constitute the underdeveloped world span across Africa, Asia, and the Americas in Fanon's writings. Africa is persistently the geographical point from which Fanon begins to imagine political solidarity in *The Wretched*. As he writes, "The Africans and the underdeveloped peoples, contrary to what is commonly believed, are quick to build a social and political consciousness."¹⁵⁷ It is evident here that Africa is the location from which Fanon speaks to other underdeveloped nations in his call to transform national consciousness to a broader social and political consciousness. In fact, he persistently centers the African continent throughout his writings as the epicenter of struggles against neocolonialism. However, Fanon is quick to remind his readers that the defeat of neocolonial powers will only come through the establishment of solidarity with other underdeveloped nations "The underdeveloped peoples behave like a starving population – which means that the days of those who treat Africa as their playground are strictly numbered."¹⁵⁸ In other words, the liberation of the African continent from the fetters of neocolonialism is only possible when underdeveloped peoples as a whole have arrived at a social and political consciousness about their conditions of economic and political domination.

Thus, Fanon's understanding of international consciousness is best understood as a form of political solidarity articulated at an intercontinental scale between Africa,

¹⁵⁶ See Andre Gunder Frank, *Dependent Accumulation*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979); Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London: Verso, 2012); Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 143.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

Asia, and the Americas. When he evokes the notion of the people of the Third World, he makes this invocation from Africa towards the other two continental spheres which are produced at the nexus of global capitalism, imperialism, and a racialized political economy, making their social and political conditions comparable to those in postcolonial African nations. As he writes, “The people of the Third World are not interested in news about King Baudoin’s wedding or the affairs of the Italian bourgeoisie. What we want to hear are case histories in Argentina or Burma about the fight against illiteracy or the dictatorial behavior of other leaders.”¹⁵⁹ It is telling that the two nation-states which he chooses to highlight in this quotation are situated in Asia and the Americas, indicating that his geopolitical imaginary stretches from Africa towards Asia and the Americas. Thus, for Fanon the people of the Third World constitute the masses of the three continental spheres of Asia, Africa, and the Americas who share the common predicament of being subject to neocolonial capitalism after achieving national liberation.

Furthermore, the intercontinentalism born out of the dialectical struggle between the national bourgeoisie and the masses is expressed through a form of populism that transcends national boundaries. As already mentioned, Fanon argues that the self-seeking and exploitative bourgeoisie of newly independent nations is met with resistance from the masses who refuse to be blindly led by their national leaders. Describing the nature of the resistance he witnesses, Fanon writes “The driver of the people no longer exists today. People are no longer a herd and do not need to be driven. The party is not an instrument in the hands of the government. Very much to the contrary, the party is an

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

instrument in the hands of the people.”¹⁶⁰ Here, Fanon minimizes the role of political elites as leaders, while bolstering the power of the masses to guide and direct the postcolonial nation towards its social and political goals. Doing so, he underscores the populist nature of mass resistance in so far as it is the agency of the masses which steers the direction of the political party and its leaders in postcolonial nations. This is a distinctive aspect of Fanon’s conception of Third World populism where horizontal relationships between ordinary people build populist power rather than demagogic appeals from charismatic leaders or loyalties to party organizations.¹⁶¹ Fanon’s Third World populism is rooted in building the capacity of the people to lead political organizations collectively in order to pursue the social and political goals that make national self-determination a reality beyond formal decolonization.

Moreover, Fanon is also clear that Third World populist struggles for political and economic freedom cannot remain at the national level. As he writes, “The national effort must constantly be situated in the general context of the underdeveloped countries. The work of the masses, their determination to conquer the scourges that for centuries have excluded them from the history of the human mind, must be connected to the work and determination of all the underdeveloped peoples.”¹⁶² In other words, the populism that germinates at the national level must expand to the intercontinental scale of

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 127.

¹⁶¹ Guy Martin's distinctions between the different types of African populism that emerged in the twentieth century are helpful for distinguishing Fanon's conception of populism. Martin argues that populism was characterized nationalism, the exaltation of the peasantry, anti-capitalism, and an adherence to forms of indigenous socialism that rejected orthodox Marxism. These strands of socialism took authoritarian forms as well as more radically democratic forms, which espoused that the people should be the main actor and beneficiary of national liberation. Martin places Fanon in the latter group of African socialist-populists. See Martin, *African Political Thought* (Palgrave Macmillan US, 2012), 106-110.

¹⁶² Ibid., 143.

underdeveloped nations in order to fundamentally transform the structure of capitalist and imperialist relations that continue to shape the decolonized postwar world. Given the overwhelming power of the global economy to shape and limit the political agency of postcolonial nation-states, popular sovereignty must be expressed at an intercontinental level in order to counter the forces of transnational capitalism that undermine national goals of economic and political development. To state it differently, popular power of the masses can only become a truly effective form of political power when the linkages between the three continental spheres of Asia, Africa, and the Americas articulate a political subjectivity of the people at an intercontinental level. Thus, anti-colonial struggles for national liberation must advance to an intercontinental solidarity between peoples of the Third World in order to form a counter-hegemonic power that can challenge and abolish the imperialist ordering of the global capitalism.¹⁶³

Fanonian international consciousness is therefore best understood as a form of intercontinental populism that sought to challenge the spatial order of postwar imperialism and capitalism. Fanon first articulates international consciousness in the final chapter of *The Wretched*, as being born out of the dialectical conflict between pan-ethnic/racial and national forms of political community. Pan-ethnic/racial affiliations were the modes of community that national consciousness negated in order to give birth to international consciousness. Born out of the dialectical tension between pan-

¹⁶³ A note about how counter-hegemony is used in the dissertation. Gramsci's discussion of hegemony and counter-hegemony is concerned with the nation-state. However political hegemony is best described today as extending globally to describe a process by which it is possible to dominate other nations without direct colonial occupation, but rather through the control of markets and globalizing a permanent state of war. Counter-hegemony is used to describe the social movements that arise in resistance to the re-constitution of empire. See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000) 383-385; Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004) 107-113.

ethnic/racial and national forms of political community, Fanonian international consciousness has a different genealogy to the forms of liberal internationalism that reified the imperialist underpinnings of the global state system. To specify the contours of international consciousness, this section took up a scene of micro-dialectical conflict between the national bourgeoisie and the masses of newly independent nations from the third chapter “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness.” Here, Fanon argues that in order to defeat the national bourgeoisie, the masses of postcolonial nations had to stage their resistance as a form of intercontinental populism. In the final section, I conclude by underscoring the critical and revising nature of Fanon’s dialectics of political community when grounded in and subject to the political struggles of the masses.

IV: CONCLUSION: CRITICAL AND REVISING DIALECTICS

A central problematic that defined Fanon’s first work *Black Skin, White Masks* was the practice of racial exclusion that characterized modes of political community formed under French colonialism. Specifically, he diagnosed that the French imperial state was held together by a form of social solidarity that persistently excluded racialized subject-citizens while simultaneously enacting a gesture of inclusion. Thus in chapter one of the dissertation, I argued that Fanon’s diagnosis and critique of how social solidarity operated in the French imperial sphere is best understood as a form of racialized fraternity. Racialized fraternity established a form of social solidarity where every act of inclusion was followed by an act of exclusion. Given this, a question that arises is how to build alternative forms of social solidarity that can break out of the ceaseless dynamic of

inclusion and exclusion that defined the racialized fraternity, which held together the de-territorialized political community of the French imperial state.

Social solidarity generally describes the cohesion of a political community on the basis of historical memory, language(s), traditions, and shared political ideals. When race becomes a primary mode through which the characteristics of social solidarity are defined (memory, language, traditions, political ideals), the ties of social solidarity become structured through racial distinction and the dynamic of exclusion becomes central to how social solidarity is sustained and reproduced. Political solidarity arises in opposition to social solidarity. It emerges through the forms of collective action taken in social movements in response to a situation of injustice. Social movements such as the decolonization movements that emerged throughout the twentieth century articulate forms of political solidarity which sought to pressure, expand, and transform the narrow and limited forms of racialized social solidarity that held together national and transnational political communities in the colonial and postcolonial era.¹⁶⁴ In this sense, the decolonization movements, which were the focus of Fanon's writings, are counter-hegemonic social movements that made it possible to imagine and practice new bonds of political community between colonized peoples that could ultimately transform the narrow forms of social solidarity produced by nation-states founded at the nexus of racism, imperialism, and capitalism. To this end, the political solidarities fostered within social movements gestate new bonds of political community that sought to ultimately transform the narrow and ossified expressions of social solidarity established at the national and international level.

¹⁶⁴ Sally J. Scholz makes this argument in "The Social Justice Ends of Political Solidarity" in *Political Solidarity*, (University Park, Pa: Penn State University Press, 2008), 189-230.

Since *Black Skin, White Masks* is predominantly doing the work of diagnosing the problem of racialized social solidarity, Fanon's reconstructive work of imagining an emancipatory form of political solidarity is developed in his writings produced after this first monumental text. This second chapter focused on *The Wretched of the Earth* to recover his conception of political solidarity as a form of intercontinental populism. It becomes apparent through the process of recovering Fanon's conception of intercontinentalism that the dialectical conflict and struggle between opposing social forces are what give birth to new forms of political solidarities between postcolonial nation-states in the postwar era. Given this, the racialized fraternity established during the colonial period is only one form of social solidarity, which will be subject to transformation and change as struggles for freedom from colonial rule and imperialism emerge throughout the colonized world. Fanon is a master dialectician for whom there is never an absolute closure of political community, but rather new forms of social solidarities are made possible as political struggles imagine and experiment with new relations of political solidarity.

In this sense, the racialized fraternity of French colonialism is challenged by more the expansive forms of political solidarities that emerge in decolonization struggles throughout the twentieth century. Specifically decolonization struggles, which pushed towards a populist solidarity between the continents of Africa, Asia, and the Americas in order to stage a united effort to combat the dual forces of imperialism and capitalism, articulated a new expression of political solidarity, which sought to break with the inclusion/exclusion dynamic of racialized fraternity. Under the false universalism of racialized fraternity, non-white citizens of the French colonies were always impossible

subjects, who could never receive full inclusion as a French citizen. Against this universalism of French republicanism, Fanon insists on a form of intercontinental populism, which abandons the question of universal inclusion temporarily to establish clear lines of conflict and struggle between capital and labor, colonizer and colonized, exploited and exploiter, national bourgeoisie and the masses. As he writes:

Challenging the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of viewpoints. *It is not a discourse on the universal*, but the impassioned claim by the colonized that their world is fundamentally different. For the colonized, to be a moralist quite plainly means silencing the arrogance of the colonist, breaking his spiral of violence, in a word ejecting him outright from the picture. The famous dictum which states that all men are equal will find its illustration in the colonies only when *the colonized subject states he is equal to the colonist*.¹⁶⁵ (my emphasis)

The dictum that all are equal is the foundation for establishing social solidarity between citizens. However, when equality masquerades as a false universal in a society founded on the perpetuation of racial violence and exploitation, it becomes necessary to break the bonds of social solidarity that hold together and sustain unequal power relations. As Fanon urges, it becomes necessary to “silence the colonist, break his spiral of violence, and eject him outright from the picture.”

Political solidarities that emerge from resistance to colonialism and a commitment to unseat the imperialist and racist order of global capitalism make it possible to envision and bring into being forms of political community grounded in a more universal conception of citizenship, where exploitation and domination of regions of the world produced at the nexus of global capitalism, imperialism, and racialized political economy do not fundamentally undermine the possibilities for producing a truly inclusive set of rights and protections for citizens of postcolonial nations. The argument of this dissertation is that Fanon’s conception of intercontinental populism articulated a

¹⁶⁵ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 6.

form of regional political solidarity between formerly colonized nations in order to break with and ultimately obliterate the bonds of racialized fraternity that defined colonial relations, and continued to define core and periphery relations in the postcolonial era. The racialized bonds of fraternity that determined the relations between France and its colonies during the colonial era were recreated and reproduced in the postcolonial era through transnational and international institutions that ultimately did not eliminate the imperialist foundations of the global state system. Thus the social solidarity of the international community in the postcolonial era continued to be racialized through reconfigurations of imperial power, and had to be met with challenges from counterhegemonic movements in the Third World.

Fanon envisioned that the counterhegemonic movements of the Third World would ultimately give birth to a new form of social solidarity that would be the basis for a truly decolonized international community. It is this vision that Fanon expresses when he concludes *The Wretched* with the now widely cited line “It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and thrives.”¹⁶⁶ In other words, Fanon anticipated that the political consciousness that arises through the decolonization of social solidarity at a national level would expand to transform the racialized social solidarity of the international community.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 180.

CHAPTER 3 – VIGILANCE AND INTERCONTINENTAL SOLIDARITY

Intercontinentalism as a practice of regional political solidarity between Africa, Asia and the Americas is a major theme in Fanon's later speeches and writings (1954-1961), although largely overlooked in the secondary literature on Fanon's works.¹⁶⁷ Fanon advanced this form of political solidarity through his political activism and in his writings in order to establish a regional counterhegemonic power that could contest and ultimately abolish the racialized social solidarity that existed between colonizing and colonized nations. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon draws out the specific ways in which racialized social solidarity constituted the relations between France and its colonies such that there was never full inclusion into the universal ideal of fraternity. As he widens his analysis in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon contends that the international community as a whole is bound together through a form of racialized social solidarity from the colonial era through to the postwar era of decolonization. For instance, Fanon writes the following on postwar imperialism:

There is, of course, the political and diplomatic aid of the progressive countries and their peoples. But above all there is the competition and the pitiless war waged by the financial groups. The conference of Berlin was able to carve up a mutilated Africa among three or four European flags. Currently, the issue is not

¹⁶⁷ The secondary literature on Fanon is vast, and yet there are few works that provide sustained attention to the post-national dimensions of his account of anti-imperialist political solidarity. There are chapters, sections of chapters and an article, which briefly addresses the post-national contours of how Fanon imagines resistance to colonial-imperialism. For instance Ato Sekyi-Otu, *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997), 167-178; Nigel Gibson, *Fanon: The Postcolonial Imagination*, (Cambridge, U.K. : Malden, MA: Polity, 2003)113-117; 192-200; Anthony Bogues, *Empire of Liberty: Power, Desire, and Freedom* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College Press : Published by University Press of New England, 2010), 98-120; James Yaki Sayles, *Meditations on Frantz Fanon's Wretched of the Earth* (Kersplebedeb, 2010); Robert J. C. Young, "Fanon and the Turn to Armed Struggle in Africa," *Wasafiri* 20, no. 44 (March 1, 2005); Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2008), 52-122.

whether an African region is under French or Belgian sovereignty but whether the economic zones are safeguarded.¹⁶⁸

Fanon's contention is that even after formal decolonization, full inclusion into the international community of sovereign nation-states was not possible for newly independent nations. Rather they were excluded as equal participants in the international community of nation-states through the re-entrenchment of new forms of racialized social solidarity, which espoused respect for the economic freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity of newly independent nations, while perpetuating their dependency through economic aid and resource exploitation.¹⁶⁹

Thus the Westphalian principles of territorial integrity, national sovereignty and non-interference in another nation's affairs, never generated the social solidarity necessary to produce a stable and egalitarian international order. These principles were not a reality for formerly colonized nations because they were applied on racialized terms and were thus not extended to non-European territories during the colonial era or the postcolonial era. Indeed, in the latter, these principles continued to be breached even after formal decolonization. Beginning with Napoleon's armed intervention against the colonial and slave revolutions in the French colony of Saint-Domingue in 1802, colonial powers rarely respected the demand for independence and sovereignty from colonized and enslaved peoples. The social solidarity of the Westphalian order was thus always racially determined; Fanon believed it could only be reconstituted through political struggle.

¹⁶⁸ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 27.

¹⁶⁹ For the exclusionary foundations of the postwar international society see Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*, (Princeton Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013) 29-65; and Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015) 121-158.

Namely, Fanon sought to reconstitute sovereign power at the international level by constructing a form of counterhegemonic power that could undermine Euro-American imperialism in the postwar era. In chapter two of the dissertation, I took up the essays “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness” and “On National Culture” from *The Wretched* to show the ways in which Fanon articulated counterhegemonic popular power at an intercontinental level. In this chapter, I develop in more detail the concrete practices of political solidarity that undergirded intercontinentalism by returning to and building on these chapters through a close reading of the essays “On Violence” and “Grandeur and Weakness of Spontaneity” from *The Wretched*; and “This is the Voice of Algeria” from *Year V of the Algerian Revolution* (hereafter, *Year V*). For Fanon, intercontinental solidarity was not a practice of connections and political support, which elites from newly independent nations cultivated amongst each other.¹⁷⁰ In fact, Fanon did not think that it would be possible to abolish the racialized social solidarity of the international order of nation-states without mass participation from below. For this reason, his writings are essentially a series of testimonies on the ways in which the masses of the Third world struggled to defeat undemocratic governments nationally, and imperialism at the international level. As the Argentine journalist Adolfo Gilly writes in the introduction for the English translation of *Year V*:

Fanon’s preoccupation was not to document the facts of exploitation...All this was demonstrated in passing. But his main interest has been to go to the essentials: the spirit of struggle, of opposition, of initiative of the Algerian masses; their infinite, multiform, interminable resistance; their daily heroism; their capacity to learn in weeks, in days, in minutes, all that was necessary for the

¹⁷⁰ For works that emphasize the political connections between the leaders of newly independent nations as the basis of Third World Solidarity see: Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World*, (New York: The New Press, 2008); Robert Malley, *The Call from Algeria : Third Worldism, Revolution, and the Turn to Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); Nigel Harris, *The End of the Third World*, (New York: New Amsterdam Books, 1998).

struggle for liberation; their capacity and decision to make all the sacrifices and all the efforts, among which the greatest was not giving one's life in combat, perhaps, *but changing one's daily life*, one's routines, prejudices, and immemorial customs insofar as these were a hindrance to the revolutionary struggle.¹⁷¹ (my emphasis)

Gilly's introductory remarks are telling in how they re-orient the reader to pay attention to Fanon's account of how the masses built and expressed their power from below. Gilly asks that readers not be sidetracked by Fanon's vivid descriptions of the brutality of the colonialism, but that we direct our attention on the big and small ways in which the masses transform themselves into political agents as they struggled to end colonialism and imperialism.

In this chapter, I take up Gilly's invitation to direct our attention to Fanon's account of the masses of the Third World, who he describes as engaging in a range of political activities to resist colonial imperialism. By focusing on the ways in which Fanon describes the mass political work of the "people" in a number of national contexts across the colonized and decolonized world, I ask:¹⁷² What commonality existed in the social and political conditions of colonized and decolonized nations across Asia, Africa and the Americas that made it possible for Fanon to articulate collective political practices that Third World peoples engaged in at an intercontinental level? And importantly, how did these political practices authorize an intercontinental body of the Third World peoples whose aim was to pressure and transform the racialized social solidarity of the international state-system? I develop a response to these questions in three parts. First, I

¹⁷¹ Adolfo Gilly, "Introduction" in Frantz Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 2.

¹⁷² For a study of the mass political work of the people in the national context of Venezuela, see: George Ciccariello-Maher, *We Created Chávez: A People's History of the Venezuelan Revolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013) 8-20.

underscore the significance of Fanon's argument of the political practices that constitute intercontinental solidarity by showing how Marxist and liberal perspectives that articulate collective political subjectivity at the international level do not take into account the material conditions that exist in colonized and decolonized nation-states, which Fanon made central in his articulations of intercontinental solidarity. Therefore these two dominant ideologies on internationalism miss the crucial political practices through which Third World peoples seek to liberate themselves internally from undemocratic authoritarian rule, and externally from imperialist control of over land and resources.

In the second and third parts of the chapter, I develop Fanon's account of the political practices that constitute intercontinental solidarity. Political solidarity is broadly understood as the unity that social movements need to develop when responding to a particular situation of injustice, oppression, or social vulnerability, even if this unity is short-lived.¹⁷³ However, there always remains the thorny question of whether the unity arises out of a shared political purpose, or out of a shared experience of oppression. For Fanon, political solidarity is a bond that forms between racially oppressed and colonized peoples in response to the domination of the colonizer. Thus a Fanonian conception of political solidarity is rooted in the shared experience of racial and colonial oppression, which gives rise to political practices that articulate, clarify, challenge and resist the shared system of oppression.¹⁷⁴ The political practices that colonized people engage in simultaneously reveal and contest their shared experience of oppression in order to

¹⁷³ Sally J. Scholz, *Political Solidarity*, (University Park, Pa: Penn State University Press, 2008), 192-193.

¹⁷⁴ The chapter "Algeria's European Minority" is an interesting exception to how Fanon generally conceives of political solidarity as emerging between those who share a common experience of racial oppression. In this chapter, Fanon demonstrates the ways in which certain members of the white European minority in Algeria were willing to take up armed struggle to defeat colonialism in Algeria, making solidarity across racial lines a real possibility for Fanon. Frantz Fanon, *L'an V de la révolution algérienne*, (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), 138-145.

ultimately forge a political community that resists racial subjugation and imperialist domination. To that end, I argue that one of the central political practices, which constitute Fanon's conception of intercontinental solidarity, is that of political vigilance. The practice of political vigilance is form of "watching over from below," which the masses of the Third World cultivate in response to the political predicament of being vulnerable to undemocratic rule internally, and being subject to imperialist imposition and control externally.¹⁷⁵ Given these dual political challenges at the national and international scale, Fanon offers a number of arguments in his writings of how the masses of the Third World cultivate a political comportment of vigilance in order to transform both the national and international context, which imperil their economic and political freedom.

To develop Fanon's account of vigilance more substantively as a practice of intercontinental political solidarity, I first demonstrate the influence of Jean Paul Sartre's concept of seriality from *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (hereafter, *Critique*) on Fanon's understanding of colonialism. According to Sartre, colonization reduces the colony to the status of seriality where the colony becomes an inert territory of human labor and material resources ready for exploitation. Throughout his writings, Fanon identifies a range of political practices through which the colonized resist the structure of seriality, including the use of violence to dismantle and abolish the colonizer's world. In other words, he identifies among the colonized the deep desire to negate and transcend the structure of seriality by reasserting their humanity through violent and non-violent

¹⁷⁵ The phrase "watching over from below" is taken from contemporary studies on sousveillance, where citizens monitor the power of authorities through technological devices such as cellphone cameras. It is often referred to as a form of inverse surveillance by the people. See Steve Mann and Joseph Ferenbok, "New Media and the Power Politics of Sousveillance in a Surveillance-Dominated World," *Surveillance & Society*; *Newcastle upon Tyne* 11, no. 1/2 (2013): 18–34.

political struggle. In the final sections of the chapter, I turn to essays from *The Wretched* and *Year V* to underscore a range of political practices that Fanon identifies as acts of vigilance, which free the colonized from the torpor, fear and skepticism produced by the structure of seriality. Namely, he identifies three stages through which the colonized practice vigilance in the context of increasing authoritarian rule and imperialist domination: 1) the acquisition of more knowledge and insight about the social and political situation of colonialism 2) the active distrust of the postcolonial government's claims of progress from the colonial era and 3) the resistance of imperialist control and imposition into the economic and political spheres of postcolonial politics.

Fanon identifies these practices of political vigilance not just among the people of Algeria, but he speaks of vigilance as a widespread political practice across the colonized world in Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Fanon is most certainly speaking in aspirational terms here, but the more important point is that these practices of political vigilance arise out of the shared condition of being reduced to the status of seriality, making Third World peoples vulnerable to undemocratic rule internally, and imperialist domination externally. To that end, the political practices which Fanon sketches in his writings point to the possibility of forging an intercontinental practice of political solidarity against undemocratic structures of government at the national and international level, structures which betray the interests of the vast majority of the population in colonized and decolonized parts of the globe. Thus, the political solidarity between the peoples of the Third World is based on their shared experience of racial and colonial oppression through the structure of seriality; a structure which creates their vulnerability to the dual threats of internal and external domination by governmental structures at the national and

international level. What is of interest to us in this chapter and the next, is how political solidarity is galvanized at the intercontinental level through citizenship practices that contest this dual structure of domination.¹⁷⁶

I. INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SOLIDARITY IN LIBERALISM AND MARXISM

Liberalism and Marxism both provide robust possibilities for conceptualizing political solidarity beyond the nation-state. Although the nation-state is an important political unit for both of these political ideologies, prominent strains within them persistently push its politics to consider forms of political solidarities that take on an international dimension. The ground for thinking about international political solidarity in liberalism and Marxism are substantially different, and a careful consideration of the basis for building political solidarity in these ideologies reveals some of the shortcomings in their current conceptualization, and furthermore highlights the ways in which an anti-colonial practice of intercontinental political solidarity differs significantly from both liberal and Marxist internationalism. In this section, I consider how contemporary theorists of liberalism and Marxism galvanize international political solidarity to respond to problems that are global in scale and intensity, specifically the host of political crises that stem from capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination. Such crises include incessant war and weapons proliferation; persistent violations of human rights; over-extraction and use of natural resources; labor exploitation; ecological disaster; racism and sexual domination. Many

¹⁷⁶ For works which consider the forms of resurgent politics that Third World citizens produce by simultaneously tackling undemocratic structures at the national level and imperialism at the international level see Mark Q. Sawyer, *Racial Politics in Post-Revolutionary Cuba* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Ciccariello-Maher, *We Created Chávez*; Tianna S. Paschel, *Becoming Black Political Subjects: Movements and Ethno-Racial Rights in Colombia and Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); Zachariah Mampilly and Adam Branch, *Africa Uprising: Popular Protest and Political Change* (London: Zed Books, 2015).

liberals and Marxists acknowledge that there can be no national remedies to these global political crises. Thus, they draw on the resources within liberalism and Marxism to provide philosophical support for the international practices of political solidarity that have emerged in the past two decades to combat the onslaught of even more intensely globalized forms capitalist imperialism. However, these theoretical endeavors often overlook the historical successes through which the West constituted the modern world in order to secure the stability and prosperity of its own societies. Fanon's anti-colonial conception of intercontinental political solidarity is built on the recognition that the current world order was constructed through centuries of European domination, and thus brings to the fore practices of political solidarity that fundamentally sought to challenge and recreate this world order on more egalitarian terms. This section will draw out the basis for building political solidarity in liberal and Marxist internationalism in order to underscore how these two theoretical frameworks are much more prone to overlook the imperial foundations of the international order. Thus, such expressions of political solidarity cannot address the unequal distribution of political power and wealth at the international level.

Contemporary liberal theorists turn to a long lineage of cosmopolitan thinking in the history of Western political thought to provide philosophical support for the emerging practices of political solidarity and citizenship that extend beyond the nation-state. They draw inspiration from diverse sources, such as ancient Stoicism or the philosophical writings of Immanuel Kant, in order to articulate the institutional and moral components of liberal cosmopolitanism.¹⁷⁷ Martha Nussbaum, for example, develops the moral aspect

¹⁷⁷ For the moral aspects of liberal cosmopolitanism see Gillian Brock and Harry Brighouse, eds., *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005);

of this tradition of thought through her short essay “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism” in the *Boston Review* and her more extended article “Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism.” In these two pieces, Nussbaum recovers a long lineage of cosmopolitan thinking from Greco-Roman political thinkers such as Zeno, Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, to Rabindranath Tagore and finally Immanuel Kant. She argues that these thinkers bequeath to us the grounds for cultivating a cosmopolitan moral disposition on the basis of human reason.¹⁷⁸ Nussbaum contends that the Stoic philosophers in particular maintained that human beings should build moral and legal obligations towards each other without concern for local or national identity by recognizing that reason and the capacity for moral deliberation are common to each and every human being. Although the Stoics acknowledged the powerful pull of familial, local and national loyalties and identifications, they nevertheless insisted that we consider our communities as concentric circles with our family being the closest circle to us. The task is to use our moral reason to draw the outermost circle of humanity towards the center.¹⁷⁹ This in essence is the core challenge that liberal cosmopolitanism identifies for building international forms of solidarity.

Jeremy Waldron, “What Is Cosmopolitan?,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (June 1, 2000): 227–43; Andrew Dobson, “Thick Cosmopolitanism,” *Political Studies* 54, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 165–84; Raimond Gaita, *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love and Truth and Justice* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2002); Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (Columbia: Univ of South Carolina Pr, 1998); For the institutional aspects of liberal cosmopolitanism see Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2001); David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1995); Kok-Chor Tan, *Justice without Borders: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and Patriotism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Hans-Herbert Kögler, “Constructing a Cosmopolitan Public Sphere: Hermeneutic Capabilities and Universal Values,” *European Journal of Social Theory* 8, no. 3 (August 1, 2005): 297–320.

¹⁷⁸ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 5, no. 1 (1997): 7.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 9-10.

Nussbaum further takes up this challenge in her book *Cultivating Humanity: A Classic Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*. The argument in this book is simply that the purpose of liberal education is to cultivate humanity. In order to do this, Nussbaum argues that we need to develop three capacities, which will enable us to draw our multiple circles of identification (family, local community, nation, and humanity) inwards so that the largest circle of identification - humanity – can be the primary locus of our moral deliberation. The first capacity necessary to cultivate humanity in this way is that of self-examination and critical thinking about one's own culture and traditions; the second is the capacity to see oneself not just as a member of a local region or group, but as a human being who is bound to all humans by ties of recognition and concern; and the third is the capacity for narrative imagination, which is the ability to empathize with others and to put oneself in another's place.¹⁸⁰ All three of these capacities are closely connected and therefore each is enhanced when a single one of these capacities is put into practice.

Although Nussbaum does not use the language of solidarity to theorize about the capacities necessary for cultivating humanity, the underlying hope and promise of developing these capacities is that they will broaden and enhance the practice of building international political solidarity. In other words, without cultivating a rigorous moral framework, individual citizens will not have the necessary capacities to act in ways that offer their political solidarity to alleviate injustice, oppression and social vulnerabilities at the international level. For instance, citing Cicero's work on international duties Nussbaum writes,

¹⁸⁰ Martha C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, Reprint edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 9-11.

The duty to treat humanity with respect requires us to treat aliens on our soil with honor and hospitality. It requires us to never engage in wars of aggression, and to view wars based on group hatred and wars of extermination as especially pernicious. In general, it requires us to place justice above political expediency, and *to understand that we form part of a universal community of humanity whose ends are the moral ends of justice and human well-being.*¹⁸¹

Nussbaum elaborates her moral framework with clarity here, and she provides a set of moral precepts, which citizens can use to decide when the demands of political solidarity need to be galvanized to address a particular situation of injustice. Thus, although not explicitly framed as a theory of political solidarity, Nussbaum's theorization of the capacities required for cultivating humanity result in the creation of a moral framework for mobilizing political solidarity.

In this sense, the basis for thinking about international political solidarity in liberal cosmopolitanism is grounded in the equal endowment of reason in all. Reason is the moral faculty that allows citizens to develop the capacities necessary to cultivate humanity. These capacities enable citizens to overcome local and national identifications in order to center humanity as the locus of their moral deliberation, and therefore forge practices of political solidarity that can attend to and raise political consciousness to address injustice and oppression in political communities that are not within immediate their proximity.

A number of efforts have focused on the possibility of deploying the liberal cosmopolitan framework of political solidarity to address the unequal distribution of power and wealth at the international level. To put it another way, liberal cosmopolitans contend that they have a strong moral framework through which to galvanize political solidarity to address the inequalities created by imperialism and global capitalism.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 59.

For instance, in *Democracy and the Global Order*, David Held draws on the moral framework of liberal cosmopolitanism to defend the need to institute a cosmopolitan democracy, which establishes democratic public law at the local, national, regional and global level. For Held, democratic institutions must be created at multiple scales so that citizens can counter and keep in check the economic and political problems brought on by contemporary economic globalization.¹⁸² Similarly, in *The Postnational Constellation* Jürgen Habermas calls for the expansion and multiplication of public spheres within which citizens can shape the rules, policies and decisions that govern their lives at the local, national and international level. In effect, Habermas insists on the need to delink citizenship from its sole association with bounded communities and national institutions to form the “postnational constellation.”¹⁸³ Finally, Seyla Benhabib argues that between international law and the national democratic legislature, multiple democratic “iterations” are possible and desirable, but this to a large extent depends on delinking citizenship from an iteration exclusively determined by national community.¹⁸⁴

As these examples show, the moral foundation of liberal cosmopolitanism provides the basis for a political project, in which liberal cosmopolitans seek to build complex affiliations of political solidarity at multiple scales of politics in order to redress the hierarchical arrangement of the global state system. However, the leading advocates of cosmopolitan democracy fail to take into consideration some very real limitations of their model of cosmopolitan democracy. The most serious limitation concerns that of the

¹⁸² David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995), 232.

¹⁸³ Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2001), 61.

¹⁸⁴ Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens*, (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 172-173.

distribution of economic and political power in the international state system. Given that the United States and its Western allies dominate the current international order, it is not clear that this imperial configuration of power holders will be persuaded by moral arguments about the equal endowment of reason in all, or concede to democratic innovation which will challenge its power and interests in any meaningful manner. As is often the case, democratic spaces that build political solidarity across national contexts will be permitted to exist at the margins of empire without engendering any substantial changes that result from the democratic deliberation of subaltern communities of the Third World. The key question in this context is how to advance international forms of political solidarity that can truly transform imperialist structures of power.

In response to this problem, Marxist critics of liberal cosmopolitanism point to the disconnection between the moral and political dimensions of liberal ideology.¹⁸⁵ They call attention to the fact that the moral commitments of liberal cosmopolitans to develop our capacity to center the moral equivalence of all human beings cannot be realistically sustained in a world structured by global capitalism and imperialism. Namely, the moral principles of liberal cosmopolitanism are undermined by material conditions defined by hierarchy and inequality in the global state system, which make it difficult to realize the capacities of “cultivating humanity.”¹⁸⁶ In that sense, Marxists criticize the cosmopolitan moralization of politics, which evaded crucial questions of political power and economic inequality in international relations. Accordingly, the political institutions built to

¹⁸⁵ For Marxist criticisms of liberal cosmopolitanism see Robin Blackburn et al., *Debating Cosmopolitics*, ed. Daniele Archibugi (London ; New York: Verso, 2003).

¹⁸⁶ For instance, David Harvey argues that neoliberal capitalism creates uneven geographical development and universalizes this project as a cosmopolitan ideal, although this has nothing to do with the well-being of humanity but rather everything to do with enhancing its own dominant forms of class power. See Harvey, *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 65.

propagate the moral principles of liberal cosmopolitanism fall short because dominant powers instrumentalize these institutions to advance their interests and impose their conception on the world on weaker and formerly colonized nation-states.

Thus, against liberal cosmopolitanism, Marxists advance a form of internationalism that can tackle the structural imbalance of political and economic power in the global state system. The most well-known and early expression of Marxist internationalism is in *The Communist Manifesto*, which stood in stark contrast to the liberal cosmopolitanism of Kant. Marx championed the emergence of proletariat internationalism as a form of global political solidarity that would undermine the capitalist system of economic organization. Doing so, he critiqued liberal cosmopolitanism for centering abstract moral ideals of universal reason as the basis for developing a global collective political subjectivity when the common experience of exploitation under global capitalism provided the material basis for thinking about a global collective subjectivity. For Marx, the moralism of liberal cosmopolitanism masked the unequal economic and political relations within and between nations-states, which he argues is not simply misguided idealism, but rather a pernicious ideological structure that maintains the interests of dominant classes. As Marx writes in his 1848 speech on free trade “To call cosmopolitan exploitation universal brotherhood is an idea that could only be engendered in the brain of the bourgeoisie.”¹⁸⁷ Here, Marx scrambles the political ideals deployed to articulate the liberal cosmopolitan position by associating exploitation with the lofty ideals of cosmopolitanism and universal brotherhood. As a result, he calls attention to the ways in which dominant classes misapprehend the root causes of global

¹⁸⁷ Karl Marx, *Free Trade: A Speech Delivered Before the Democratic Club, Brussels, Belgium, Jan. 9, 1848. With Extract from La Misère de La Philosophie* (Lee & Shepard, 1888), 40.

inequality and exploitation when they pose moral solutions that do not fundamentally transform economic and political relations. Marx's contention is that this misapprehension arises from the positionality of the dominant classes – the bourgeoisie – within a social system that secures their political power and economic interests, making them prone to offer abstract moral arguments for international political solidarity based on the equality and unity of humanity, rather than through a consideration of the material conditions of their possibility. In other words, the bourgeoisie's position is a liberal cosmopolitan one.

Consequently, Marx advocated for a proletarian internationalism that was rooted in the common experience of the working classes, for whom labor exploitation and the impoverishment that results from it would be the ground for building international political solidarity. Thus, unlike the liberal cosmopolitanism of the bourgeoisie, which espoused that the universality of reason would be the collective glue that founds an international political solidarity, the internationalism of the proletariat builds political solidarity from the common experience of being subject to labor exploitation under capitalism. In this sense, although Kant and Marx both understood internationalism as an inevitable feature of economic globalization, Marx did not consider proletariat internationalism to be a normative horizon of world history as Kant did, but rather saw it as a form of solidarity that emerges to challenge and transform capitalism's increasing imperative to globalize the conditions of labor exploitation and immiseration.

Yet, as many anti-colonial thinkers have pointed out, the uneven character of capitalist development and the racial ideology that undergirds its formation and reproduction created disparities in the experience of labor exploitation between the

working classes of colonized and colonizing nation-states.¹⁸⁸ Not only were the forms of labor exploitation experienced by the colonized more intensified through regimes of slavery and indentured servitude, much of the wealth that the working classes in the colonies produced was appropriated to improve the living conditions of the proletariat of colonized nations. Thus, the global conditions of labor exploitation were considerably varied due to the reach and expansion of colonialism and imperialism, making the formation of an international alliance between working peoples of the world a complex and challenging endeavor. For colonized peoples, building international political solidarity with the working classes of colonizing nations was not as feasible or efficacious as forging national and regional forms of political solidarity between colonized nations in order to build an effective counter-power that could challenge the dual forces of capitalism and imperialism.¹⁸⁹ Even after the formal end of the colonial system of capitalist imperialism, Third World nations remained more vulnerable to the predatory imperatives of capitalist globalization than nation-states in the North, such that the value of Third World labor diminished and was expropriated at a higher rate.¹⁹⁰ For these reasons, working class solidarity even today is not the inexorable phenomena that

¹⁸⁸ For instance, Walter Rodney argued that the uneven character of capitalist development posed obstacles for the formation of a global proletarian consciousness or world community based on labor exploitation. See Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Black Classic Press, 2011), 2-31; Whereas Amílcar Cabral argued that imperialism determines the primary shape of struggle for (neo)colonized people because the vast majority of people in the Global South could have access to products of their labor without first becoming independent from imperialist exploitation. See *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings of Amilcar Cabral* (Monthly Review Press, 1979), 119-130.

¹⁸⁹ The clearest accounts for a Third World practice of international solidarity, which simultaneously tackled capitalism and imperialism came from Cuba during the Cold War era. See Ernesto “Che” Guevara, *Message to the Tricontinental* (Havana: Organization of the Solidarity of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, 1967); and Fidel Castro “Cuba and Africa” in *Fidel Castro: My Life: A Spoken Autobiography* (New York, N.Y.: Scribner, 2009), 308-334.

¹⁹⁰ For instance Zak Cope argues that imperialism divides the global working classes so radically that workers of the Global North largely consume the surplus value generated by workers of the Global South. See Cope, *Divided World Divided Class* (Montreal, Quebec: Kersplebedeb, 2012), 50-64.

Marx described, as uneven development remains a major obstacle for building international solidarity between the working classes of different nation-states.

Despite this, Marx's vision of proletariat internationalism has been re-conceptualized in a number of ways to fit the contemporary political context defined by the emergence of financial capitalism; the reign of supranational institutions; the global war on terror; the diminished economic sovereignty of nation-states; and the growth of an information and knowledge economy. Notably, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri re-imagine how proletariat internationalism could become a transformative political force in this new context with their three works: *Empire*, *Multitude* and *Commonwealth*. In *Empire*, Hardt and Negri take stock of the changes to contemporary capitalism to argue that the economic system functions as a de-territorialized form of rule with no center of power, and as a form of biopower that increasingly regulates the most intimate spheres of life.

To elaborate, Hardt and Negri contend that Empire is a new form of imperial rule that emerges as nation-states lose their ability to control the primary factors of economic exchange, and political power gets re-distributed to corporations and supranational organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank and International Monetary Fund. These institutions constitute Empire in political and juridical terms, and thus become the legitimating force of its authority. Hardt and Negri also make a second claim that power has become thoroughly biopolitical in modern society and consequently, sovereign rule functions through a regime of biopower. They explain, "when power becomes entirely biopolitical....mechanisms of command become ever more "democratic," ever more immanent to the social field and distributed through the brains and bodies of the

citizens.”¹⁹¹ Here, Hardt and Negri understand biopolitics in the Foucauldian sense, where life(the brains and bodies of citizens) is an object of concern for state power.¹⁹² The important point to note here is that centrality of biopolitical production in Hardt and Negri’s account of capitalist development results in a redefinition of labor. As they argue, “When the powers of production become entirely biopolitical, the entire context of reproduction and the vital relationships that constituted it, are subsumed under capitalist rule.”¹⁹³ Thus, the activity of laboring becomes less about producing a material and durable good, and more about creating the products of “immaterial labor” such as a service, a cultural product, knowledge or communication.¹⁹⁴ This radical transformation of labor power expands the category of the proletariat to include all those who produce and reproduce social life, and are in the process exploited by capital.

De-territorialized sovereignty, the regime of biopower and the predominance of “immaterial” labor in the realm of production are the three main components of Empire that call forth a new collective political subjectivity which Hardt and Negri call the “multitude.” The multitude is a more expansive conception of collective political subjectivity than the proletariat in Marxism. In comparison to the Marxist notion of

¹⁹¹ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), 23.

¹⁹² Foucault first elaborates his view of biopolitics in volume one of *The History of Sexuality*. In this work, he put forward the thesis that the stakes of political strategies have become the life of the human species, marking a “threshold of biological modernity.” At issue for Foucault is how the biological processes affecting populations and individual bodies have become a principle object of concern for modern power. It is this re-orientation of energies which Foucault terms “biopower” – “the power to “make” live and “let” die”. Specifically, he argues that biopower is involved with the processes of birth, death, illness, production, fertility, and longevity of the population as a whole. It is concerned with man-as-species, as opposed to man-as-individual (242). Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley, (New York: Vintage, 1990), 142-150.

¹⁹³ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 365.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, 290.

proletariat internationalism, which only included the industrial working classes of the world, the multitude is now composed of more expansive category of workers, which include service sector workers, IT professionals, intellectuals, unwaged laborers and all those who contribute to the production and reproduction of social life. Hardt and Negri also contend that the multitude is different from the political category of “the people” or “the masses.” It is different because social differences are not reduced into the single identity of the “people” or the “masses”. Instead, Hardt and Negri argue, “The multitude is composed of a set of singularities - social differences which cannot be reduced to sameness. Yet, although multiple and internally different, the multitude is able to act in common and thus rule itself.”¹⁹⁵

It is important to note that productive labor and its exploitation are still the basis for building international political solidarity in Hardt and Negri’s re-configuration of Marxist internationalism. The unifying force of this internationalism is still a common interest in the transformation of capitalist society, and thus differs from the Kantian vision of liberal cosmopolitanism, which seeks to cultivate among citizens a cosmopolitan subjectivity grounded in the common possession of human reason in order to galvanize popular support to institute international laws that create the conditions for establishing an enduring peace between nation-states.¹⁹⁶ Rather, Hardt and Negri re-conceptualize Marxist internationalism through the multitude’s resistance to the capitalist expropriation of labor. They argue that the multitude seek to re-appropriate the products

¹⁹⁵ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004), 100.

¹⁹⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), 111-113.

of collective labor in order to democratically direct, manage and organize this wealth for collective ends. This deepening of democracy receives its clearest elaboration in *Commonwealth* where Hardt and Negri offer their most detailed account of how the cosmopolitan community of the future would be organized in economic and political terms. They contend that the multitude will re-appropriate wealth from capital and construct a new form of wealth, articulated by the powers of science and social knowledge through cooperation. This form of cooperation will ultimately annul the title of property. The tools of production will be to be recomposed in the collective subjectivity, intelligence, and affect of the workers. Entrepreneurship will be to be organized by cooperation of subjects in general intellect.¹⁹⁷ Thus, a fundamental organizing principle of the coming cosmopolitan society are the powers of cooperation set in motion by the hegemony of immaterial labor or the biopolitical mode of production. In other words, the multitude remains bound together as a collective political subjectivity by the powers of cooperation set in motion by new forms of communicative and collaborative labor.¹⁹⁸

The arguments and claims in *Empire*, *Multitude* and *Commonwealth* on the transformations to imperialism and capitalism sparked passionate disagreement among scholars of the global political economy. The most important line of critique questioned the extent to which the global division of labor between First and Third world nations had become effaced by a more thorough expansion and circulation of capitalist production into formerly colonized parts of the world so that the global economy was no longer

¹⁹⁷ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth*, (Belknap Press, 2011), 176-180.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. 132.

defined by a structure of hierarchy in wages and production.¹⁹⁹ In other words, although Hardt and Negri do not depict uniformity in capitalist production and labor between the First and Third world, they did make the claim that that the informational and financial phase of capitalist development had so intensely destabilized the economic and political geography of the world that the boundaries among various zones of global production were had become much more fluid and mobile. In this scenario, the Third World enters the First in the form of the shantytown or favela, and in turn the First world is transferred into the Third in the form of stock exchanges, banks, transnational corporations and skyscrapers of money and command.²⁰⁰ The end result of this level of mobility of capital and labor is that imperialism as an extractive structure that was founded on and perpetuated by European dominance of the world becomes less consequential for understanding the relationship between First and Third world nations, and the global exploitation of labor. Instead, the new imperialist analysis put forward by Hardt and Negri locate political power with corporations and supranational institutions, making nation-states largely insignificant for developing an imperialist analysis of global capitalism.

Undoubtedly, the movement and diffusion of capital in the post-colonial context of neoliberal globalization has flattened out some of the stark economic differences that existed between colonizing and colonized nations during the capitalism's phase of colonial imperialism. However, a properly materialist analysis of the contemporary political economy would reveal that far from ironing out wealth differentials and

¹⁹⁹ For an overview of the major debates around Hardt and Negri's first book *Empire*, see *Debating Empire*, ed. Gopal Balakrishnan (London ; New York: Verso, 2003).

²⁰⁰ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 254.

contradictions between the First and Third world, the informational and financial phase of capitalism has only exacerbated these inequalities, making it necessary to formulate a neo-imperialist analysis of the postwar capitalist economy that re-centers nation-states to fully understand the nature of contemporary inequality and exploitation.²⁰¹ Consider that at the time that Hardt and Negri published their first book *Empire* in 2001, the American economy made up thirty-one per cent of the world economy and spent nearly as much on its military as its NATO partners, Russia and China combined.²⁰² Furthermore, gaps in income between First and Third world nations have continued to widen. Whereas in 1960, twenty per cent of the world's population in the richest nations had 36 times the income of those in the world's poorest twenty per cent – in 1997, this had become seventy four times as much.²⁰³ Although some Third World nations showed an increase in national incomes and GDP in the post-war period, the second oil crisis and 1980s debt crisis saw the fortunes of these developing economies plateau. By the end of the twentieth century, inequality between First and Third World nations had become deeply entrenched.²⁰⁴ Neither are poverty-stricken areas of the globe so widely dispersed across both First and Third worlds as Hardt and Negri argue. The vast majority of the world's slums, shantytowns, and favelas are disproportionately located in Asia, Africa and Latin America with

²⁰¹ For recent analyses of imperialism which re-center the nation-state see Utsa Patnaik and Prabhat Patnaik, *A Theory of Imperialism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); John Smith, *Imperialism in the Twenty-First Century: Globalization, Super-Exploitation, and Capitalism's Final Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2016).

²⁰² William I. Robinson, "Social Theory and Globalization: The Rise of a Transnational State," *Theory and Society* 30, no. 2 (2001): 158.

²⁰³ Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London ; New York: Verso, 2014), 234.

²⁰⁴ Branko Milanovic, *Worlds Apart: Measuring International and Global Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 61-70.

Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Nigeria and Peru having some of the highest concentrations of the urban population living in slums.²⁰⁵

Thus, even though capitalism has been deeply re-structured by the increased circulation of capital and mobility of labor, the experiences of Third World nations continue to be defined by the initial colonial division of labor, which has narrowly determined their trajectory of economic development. In fact, as many have argued, the neoliberal phase of capitalism only exacerbated the violence and exploitation of capitalist modernity by heightening economic inequalities between First and Third world nations even further, rather than bringing about a radical break from the colonial phase of capitalism.²⁰⁶ Far from effacing the economic divisions between the First and Third world, the transformations to the capitalist mode of production in the postwar era were grounded in the colonial ordering of the global state system, which European nations established when they embarked on a massive project to expropriate land, labor, and resources from other parts of the world. Hardt and Negri are too quick to relinquish the significance of this colonial ordering of the globe to emphasize how the de-territorialization of capital has created increased uniformity in labor exploitation, which in turn constructs how they conceptualize resistance to contemporary transformations to capitalist imperialism. Just as the proletarian internationalism of early Marxism developed inadequate responses to the problem of uneven development, Hardt and Negri's revised twenty first century

²⁰⁵ Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums*, (London ; New York: Verso, 2007), 24.

²⁰⁶ On the adverse impact of neoliberal structural adjustment policies on African nations, see James Ferguson, "De-Moralizing Economies: African Socialism, Scientific Capitalism, and the Moral Politics of Structural Adjustment" in *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*, (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press Books, 2006), 69-88; For a case study of Mexico see, Gerardo Otero, ed., *Mexico in Transition: Neoliberal Globalism, the State and Civil Society* (New York: Zed Books, 2004).

manifesto for anti-capitalist struggle is based on forgetting that five centuries of European domination, which dramatically shaped the formation of the global economy and its political institutions through the hierarchical distribution of political power and economic wealth. Thus, in their attempt to map some of the crucial transformations in contemporary capitalism, namely the passage from imperialism to Empire, Hardt and Negri too hurriedly paper over the ways in which hierarchies and inequalities of power and wealth continue to shape the global order of nation-states, which is most clearly brought into view when capitalist exploitation, expansion and extraction are understood to take the political form of imperialism.

In this sense, neither liberal cosmopolitanism nor Marxist internationalism - either in its original conception or in the reconstituted form put forward by Hardt and Negri - adequately address how the founding of a European imperialist world order from the fifteenth century onwards curtailed the possibility of living in free and self-determining societies for the vast majority of the world's population. Instead, both of these theoretical frameworks address contemporary hierarchy and inequality between nation-states by constructing a philosophical foundation through which to galvanize international political solidarity between the peoples of First and Third world nations. Liberal cosmopolitans center human reason and our capacity for moral deliberation as the basis for overcoming narrow local and national identifications to build practices of international political solidarity, which they argue can form a democratic groundswell in civil society and governmental structures to alleviate the gross inequalities between rich and poorer nations. Marxists critique liberal cosmopolitans for being unduly sanguine about the willingness of economically privileged nations and classes to forgo their

political power and economic advantages to radically redistribute the world's wealth. Underscoring that the economic and political structure that sustains global inequality is capitalist and imperialist in form, Marxists propose that practices of international political solidarity, which can have a transformative impact must derive from a consolidation of class interests. Thus, jettisoning human reason as the universal ground for solidarity, Marxists put forth a materialist basis for building international political solidarity, which they contend is the common experience of labor exploitation between the working classes of the First and Third world.

Despite emphasizing the centrality of imperialism in sustaining and reproducing global inequality, Marxists who maintain the importance of building international political solidarity between the working classes underestimate the degree to which nineteenth century European imperialism was constituted by structures of colonialism, racism and sexism to produce crucial differences in how the working classes experienced the condition of labor exploitation within and between First and Third world nations.²⁰⁷ As many have pointed out, class identity is constituted at the intersection of a number of axes of oppression, which mean that there are no easy and automatic solidarities based on material interests alone.²⁰⁸ Hardt and Negri responded to these set of problems facing Marxist internationalism with their renewed analysis of the nature of capitalist evolution

²⁰⁷ For an overview of Marxist theories of imperialism see Tony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism: A Critical Survey*, 2 edition (London ; New York: Routledge, 1990).

²⁰⁸ See for instance Gloria Joseph, "The Incompatible Menage à Trois: Marxism, Feminism and Racism," in Lydia Sargent, ed., *Women and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, (Boston: South End Press, 1981) 91-107; Joan Acker, *Class Questions: Feminist Answers* (Lanham, Md: AltaMira Press, 2005); Deborah K. King, "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14, no. 1 (October 1, 1988): 42-72; and Angela Y. Davis, *Women, Race, & Class*, 1st Vintage Books ed edition (New York: Vintage, 1983).

and development in the postwar era through processes of de-territorialization and biopolitical production. They argue that these changes in capitalist production and circulation create new possibilities for forging international solidarities between the proletariat of the First and Third worlds as their conditions become equally precarious and labor exploitation becomes the unifying basis for their solidarity.

Although the authors track some crucial transformations in global capitalism, their conception of international political solidarity is similar to their predecessors in that they must ultimately downplay the significance of imperialism as a structure of capitalist expansion, extraction and exploitation in order to describe the emergence of a new form of proletarian solidarity between the “multitude,” who replace the industrial working class as the universal figure of labor. Although capitalist circulation has certainly diversified the regimes of production around the world, and made the wage-relation almost universal, Hardt and Negri over-estimate the extent to which these processes have homogenized the conditions of labor exploitation and unified the working classes by outmoding imperialism a structure of power that perpetuates geographic divisions between rich and poor nations. As many of the studies on global inequality in the twenty first century have shown, the division between First and Third world remains in place in economic and political terms, and is moreover sustained and reproduced by a form of Western imperialism that dominates without colonizing territory, monopolizes market rules and takes control of international political institutions.²⁰⁹

Although, not all strands of liberal cosmopolitanism and Marxist internationalism treat the question of imperialism alike, this section sought to show that prominent strands of these theories conceptualize the possibility of international political solidarity by either

²⁰⁹ See David Harvey, *The New Imperialism*, (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2005), 26-87.

evading or depreciating the question of how imperialist domination has historically structured the global economy and its political institutions; and continues to shape the possibilities for freedom and self-determination for the vast majority of Third World nations. In part, this problem results from a common tendency in liberal cosmopolitanism and Marxist internationalism to remedy the problems of global inequality by positing a universal subject grounded in human reason, or in labor exploitation. This universal figure of labor, or of reason, form the basis for building practices of international solidarity, which lend support to political institutions and social struggles that either work to reform or radically transform global capitalism. Unfortunately, this approach to global inequality makes imperialism an ancillary problem that will be abolished through the formation of cosmopolitan liberal institutions that empower citizens of poorer nations, or through engaging in international class struggle. In neither of these approaches is imperialism considered to be a central axis of political struggle that must be challenged independently through specific political practices, tactics and strategies.

Fanon's anti-colonial conception of intercontinental political solidarity directly targets Western imperialism as the political structure that needs to be dismantled to realize the goals of economic freedom and political self-determination for Third World peoples. He rejects the liberal category reason, and moves away from the Marxist imperative to center labor exploitation as the foundation for building international practices of political solidarity.²¹⁰ Instead, Fanon articulates practices of political

²¹⁰ A quote towards the end of *Black Skin, White Masks* captures Fanon's dissatisfaction with liberalism and Marxism as frameworks to understand the condition of the colonized: "We would not be so naïve as to believe that the appeals for reason or respect for human dignity can change reality. For the Antillean working in the sugarcane plantations in Le Robert, to fight is the only solution. And he will undertake and carry out this struggle not as the result of a Marxist or idealistic analysis but because he simply cannot conceive his life otherwise than as a kind of combat against exploitation, poverty and hunger. See Frantz

solidarity that emerge from the shared condition of being subject to racial and colonial oppression in colonized and decolonized parts of the world. Racial and colonial oppression diminished colonized peoples' capacity to reason and labor in ways that were recognizable to dominant political ideologies such as liberalism and Marxism. Thus Fanon, like many anti-colonial thinkers, drew on the shared condition of racial and colonial subjugation under Western imperialism to develop a common ground for fostering political solidarity between the peoples of Asia, Africa and the Americas. For Fanon, this shared condition was not simply being subject to external imperial domination and imposition, but also being vulnerable to internal domination from elites who collaborated with imperialist forces. In the second half of chapter, I show how Fanon offers an account of how this difficult political predicament produced practices of political solidarity among the colonized that were expressed as a political comportment of vigilance. Fanon's contention is that this political comportment of vigilance formed the basis for an intercontinental solidarity between Asia, Africa and the Americas that sought to transform the national and international context by simultaneously casting off imperial rule, while remaining acutely aware of the ways in which national leaders could betray the goals of national liberation by bowing to the pressures of Western imperialism. I first elaborate on this shared condition of being subject to internal and external domination through Jean Paul Sartre's concept of seriality from *Critique of Dialectical Reason*

Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox, (New York : Berkeley, Calif.: Grove Press, 2008), 199.

(*Critique*), a text that Fanon was deeply influenced by when he composed *The Wretched*.²¹¹

II. SERIALITY AND COLONIZATION

Fanon read the *Critique* as soon as it appeared in May 1960 and met with Sartre in early 1961 for the express purpose of discussing the text's utility for understanding the colonial situation. As a result, when Fanon composed *The Wretched* in the spring and summer of 1961, he was deeply influenced by the theoretical language of the *Critique*, particularly when it came to considering how Sartre's analysis of class formation, conflict and dissolution could be translated into the colonial context for a clearer understanding of the possibilities and limitations of anti-colonial resistance. Specifically, there are many echoes in *The Wretched* of Sartre's concept of seriality, which shapes Fanon's analysis of how the colonized are disciplined, subjugated and exploited through the material structures of colonial rule. The most significant insight Fanon's text offers readers stems from the way he deploys the concept of seriality to demonstrate how the colonized are made passive and depoliticized by external imperialist domination and by internal elite domination. This section will elaborate on seriality as colonized people's experience of being reduced to an anonymous mass subject to external and internal domination. In so doing, the section establishes seriality as the basis for a Fanonian conception of intercontinental solidarity, in contrast to how international solidarity is imagined through the Marxian conception of labor exploitation, or the liberal conception of human reason.

²¹¹ For the influence of Sartre's *Critique of Dialectical Reason* on Fanon's conception and writing of *The Wretched* see David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*, (London ; New York: Verso, 2012), 479-480.

Sartre formulated the concept of seriality in order to build on the Marxian understanding of social class. He argued that belonging to the working class or to the capitalist class often meant that one was living in a series with other members of that class without an awareness of the meaning or political power of being a member of that class. To illustrate his point about what it means to live a serialized existence, Sartre describes a group of people waiting for a bus. He contends that they form a collective in so far they are unified by the common objective to use public transportation and thus engage in the practices necessary for using this mode of transport, such as queuing in line or purchasing a ticket. However, Sartre argues that the unity of this collective is serialized, because they are brought together by nothing more than their relationship to the material objects they hope to use - the bus, the streets, the buildings - and the social practices that involve using these material objects.²¹² Furthermore, Sartre argues that serialized collectivities such as these are composed of atomized individuals who forge a passive unity with each other that originate from their desire to make use or participate in some aspect of the material world.²¹³ In this way, the passivity and isolation of serial existence are determined by the pratico-inert structure of the world, which is the built environment that either enables or constrains the desires and actions of individuals. A serialized group, such as the one waiting for a bus, only becomes a class or a “group-in-fusion” when people organize themselves in response to a problem in the material world, such as delayed bus service or discrimination against certain transit users. Thus, there is always the latent potential that a series can transform to social class when individuals break

²¹² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason: Theory of Practical Ensembles*, trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith (Verso, 2004), 221.

²¹³ Ibid, 265.

down relations of passivity and isolation in order to forge new relations defined by reciprocity.²¹⁴

In chapter seven, section five of the *Critique* titled “Racism and Colonialism as Praxis and Process,” Sartre extends his analysis of the formation and politicization of serial collectivities to the context of racism and colonialism. In this section Sartre focuses on Algeria to argue that colonization reduced the nation to the status of a serial. He shows the ways in which the processes of conquest, military presence and expropriation produced the material structures of the colonial world, which ossified relations in Algeria to those between of colonizer and colonized; settler and dispossessed. The colonizing settlers increasingly became instruments of the colonial system, while the colonized became anonymous and interchangeable units of labor power ready for exploitation. Sartre argues that these colonial relations are serialized in so far as individuals passively act out their roles in response to material structures that are arranged to enable processes of exploitation and extraction through violent means.²¹⁵ Sartre elaborates further on the serialization of the colony:

The repressive practices, the divide and rule politics and especially the dispossessions rapidly liquidate feudal structures and transform this backward but structured society into an “atomized crowd”....Muslim society’s new form is an expression of the violence itself; its objective meaning is the violence inflicted on each of the serial Others it has produced.²¹⁶

Here, Sartre describes the processes through which a pre-colonial community becomes a serialized collective. The bonds of community that existed in pre-colonial society are obliterated when new material structures are implemented to rule over and subjugate the

²¹⁴ Ibid, 258-259.

²¹⁵ Ibid.713.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 672.

native population. Importantly the process of establishing a serialized colony is violent, and those who are reduced to serial Others in the colony become positioned to reproduce this original violence. Doing so, relations of absolute alterity are established such that one section of the population becomes reduced to sub-human. Sartre explains how relations of alterity reduce the colonized to a subhuman status by introducing the concept of “Other-Thought,” writing that,

It is in fact Other-Thought (*Pensée-Autre*) produced objectively by the colonial system and by super-exploitation: man defined by the wage and by the nature of labor, and therefore it is true that wages, as they tend towards zero, and labor, as an alternation between unemployment and “forced labor,” reduce a colonized person to the sub-human, which he is for the colonialist.²¹⁷

The important point to note here is that alterity, which arises as a thought process, cannot be understood apart from the material relations of the world, such as wages or the nature of labor exploitation, which are ultimately the basis for sustaining colonial relations through the human-subhuman dyad.

There are deep affinities between Fanon’s *The Wretched* and the conceptual vocabulary that Sartre develops in the *Critique*. The most important Sartrean import to Fanon’s conceptualization of colonialism is the notion that serialized collectivities, defined by passive and othering relations, come into existence as a result of how the material world is arranged physically and spatially. This insight from the *Critique* shifted the focus of Fanon’s understanding of colonialism from one that focused on the psychological dimensions of colonial-racism (*Black Skin*) to its material structures (*The Wretched*). Although Fanon avoids much of the technical philosophical language of Sartre’s *Critique*, it is clear from examining a small passage in *The Wretched* describing colonialism in Algeria that Sartre’s thinking left a deep impression on how Fanon thought

²¹⁷ Ibid., 714.

about colonialism. Consider for instance Fanon's emphasis on the spatial structuring of the colonial world as,

A world compartmentalized, Manichaeic and petrified, a world of statues: the statue of the general who led the conquest, the statue of the engineer who built the bridge. A world cocksure of itself, crushing with its stoniness the backbones of those scarred by the whip. This is the colonial world. The colonial subject is a man penned in; apartheid is but one method of compartmentalizing the world. The first thing the colonial subject learns is to remain in his place and not overstep its limits.²¹⁸

Here the colonial world is portrayed as spatially constrictive. It is compartmentalized, Manichean, petrified and frozen in place through statues that serve as reminders of the colonizer's power. The deliberate arrangement of material space in this way sets in motion an ensemble of social relations. The colonized learn to inhabit the material relations of this world through a set of routine practices, which demarcate where they can and cannot move and dwell. The colonized are effectively "penned in." In this sense, Fanon's emphasis on the spatial characteristics of colonialism bring out the ways in which colonization transformed a pre-colonial society grounded in relations of reciprocity, into a serialized collective, characterized by alterity, passivity and violence between the colonizer and colonized on the one hand; and between colonized peoples on the other.²¹⁹

Fanon also emphasizes that colonization establishes the most extreme form of serialized collectives, because the colonizers organize the material relations of colonial society for their economic benefit and the colonized are forced to exist in a passive and

²¹⁸ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 15.

²¹⁹ On the spatial order created by colonialism see Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) 63-95; and "Geographies of State Transformation: The Production of Colonial State Space" Manu Goswami, *Producing India: From Colonial Economy to National Space*, (Chicago : University Of Chicago Press, 2004) 31-73.

alienated manner in this society, which is arranged to maximize their exploitation. As Fanon says,

The colonist and the colonized are old acquaintances. And consequently, the colonist is right when he says he “knows” them. It is the colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject. The colonist derives his validity, ie., his wealth from the colonial system.²²⁰

Here, the important point to note is that when a colony exists as a serialized collectivity, there is such an asymmetry in power that the colonized are completely stripped of their agency.²²¹ The colonizers found and set in motion the serialized nature of the colony.

They do so by studying the colonized closely, in order to develop the knowledges that are necessary to construct a material world in which formerly free peoples can be rendered passive, inert and alienated from one another, and therefore “penned into” a position where they can be readily exploited.²²² In other words, the colonizers deny the colonized their capacity for self-fashioning, and doing so enables them to construct the colony as the most extreme form of serialized collectivities. As Fanon emphasizes, “It is the

²²⁰ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2.

²²¹ For instance, Sartre’s examples of serialized collectives include people waiting in line for a bus, and individuals listening to the radio. In the case of those listening to the radio, Sartre claims that as individuals the listeners are isolated but are aware of being a part of a series of radio listeners, see Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, 276-277. In this sense, the various serialized collectives are differentiated by how power relations are established, and the serialized colony sets up one of the most asymmetrical power structures as the colonizer determines initiation and reproduction of its serialized structure. For works that draw on Sartre to discuss gender and class as seriality see Iris Marion Young, “Gender as Seriality: Thinking about Women as a Social Collective,” *Signs* 19, no. 3 (1994): 713–38; and Mark Boyle and Audrey Kobayashi, “Metropolitan Anxieties: A Critical Appraisal of Sartre’s Theory of Colonialism,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 36, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 408–24.

²²² For instance James Hevia makes an argument about the epistemological project at the heart of British colonialism. He shows the ways in which “British military intelligence not only framed imperial strategies vis-à-vis colonized areas to the East, but also produced the very object of intervention : Asia itself” See Hevia, *The Imperial Security State: British Colonial Knowledge and Empire-Building in Asia* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 16-17. In this way, techniques of colonial governmentality are crucial to producing a serialized colony where subjects can be rendered ready for rule.

colonist who fabricated and continues to fabricate the colonized subject.”²²³ Therefore seriality, which for Sartre designated the ways in which social collectivities arise from and are unreflectively reproduced by the arrangement of material structures, takes on a very specific meaning in the colonial context. Fanon’s contention is that the colonizing powers found and constitute the material structures of the colony to perpetuate such severe forms of exploitation and oppression that all the features of serialized existence are exacerbated to the point of producing a relationship of absolute passivity and alienation between the colonized and colonizer on the one hand, and among the colonized themselves on the other.

In this sense, Fanon portrays the serialized colony as a formidable predicament for the colonized. They are faced with external domination from the colonizer, who found and constitute the material structures of a serialized colony in order to entrench the passivity and alienation of the colonized. However, they are also faced with internal domination from their colonized counterparts who are so deeply ensconced in the serialized colony that they also reproduce the ideological and material structures of colonialism. Thus, the colonized confront domination of a double nature, making it necessary to bring to life new modes of political solidarity and resistance that can simultaneously challenge these dual faces of domination that arise from the colonizers, but also from colonized elites who reinforce the structures of the serialized colony by occupying the position of the colonizer.

Fanon characterizes the external domination stemming from the colonizer as a violent intervention into, and ordering of, colonial society. Unlike the capitalist cities of Europe where citizens are subject to a multiplicity of social and political structures that

²²³ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2.

lull them into a serialized existence, Fanon argues that it is primarily institutions which exercise force that are implemented in the colonies. Specifically, he observes that the police and the military play a commanding role in disciplining, subjugating and enabling the exploitation of the colonized:

In capitalist countries a multitude of sermonizers, counselors, and “confusion-mongers” intervene between the exploited and the authorities. In colonial regions, however, the proximity and frequent, direct intervention by the police and the military ensure the colonized are kept under close scrutiny, and contained by rifle butts and napalm. We have seen how the government’s agent uses a language of pure violence. The agent does not alleviate oppression or mask domination. He displays and demonstrates them with the clear conscience of the law enforcer, and brings violence into the homes and minds of the colonized subject.²²⁴

Here capitalist countries are directly contrasted to colonial regions, indicating that Fanon means to compare the different methods of rule used in the metropole and colony. He describes the wide array of methods used to control and subdue the exploited class of the metropole as primarily instruments of ideology. Specifically, Fanon locates the “sermonizers, counselors, and confusion-mongers” in between “the exploited and the authorities” as the groups who perform the ideological work of state by shaping and winning over the consent of the exploited classes without the use of direct force. However in the colonial regions, the police and military are the primary agents of the state that contain and subjugate the colonized masses through the use of brute force and violence.²²⁵ The contrast Fanon draws between how the European capitalist classes

²²⁴ Ibid., 4.

²²⁵ Although Fanon does not cite Antonio Gramsci’s work in his writings, it is clear that Fanon is using the distinction between hegemony and dominance to articulate the difference between state power in the metropole and colony. His argument is that state power in the metropole is established through hegemony, or the consent of various strata of civil society. Whereas state power in the colony is not established through Gramsci’s class formulation of “hegemony protected by the armor of dominance.” Instead, Fanon’s contention is that the colonies are ruled through pure dominance, or through the use of coercive branches of the state such as the police and military. See, Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, (New York: International Publishers Co, 1971), 263.

maintain their power in the colony and the metropole is important because it clearly underscores the different methods used to dominate the exploited classes of each region. The colonized are forced to confront and live through the violence of external intervention into their societies by the colonizer's police and military forces. Moreover, it is through this external intervention that serialized collectives are instituted in public and private spheres of the colony to engender passivity, disunity and alienation in colonial society. To put it another way, violent external interventions through the branches of police and military obliterated pre-colonial forms of community and association in order to set up serialized collectives that enabled the extraction of labor and resources from the colonized. As Fanon says, "The arrival of the colonist signified syncretically the death of indigenous society, cultural lethargy, and petrification of the individual."²²⁶

In the postwar context of imperialism, newly emancipated nation-states continued to be subject to external domination from Western powers. However, the serialization of the political community in the newly emancipated nation-states was achieved less by violent means than through instruments of economic and political control. For instance towards the end of Fanon's famous chapter "On Violence," he writes:

Currently the issue is not whether an African region is under French or Belgian sovereignty but whether the economic zones are safeguarded. Artillery shelling and scorched earth policy have been replaced by an economic dependency....[Matters have become more subtle, less bloody]; plans are quietly made to eliminate the Castro regime. Guinea is held in a stranglehold, Mossadegh is liquidated. The national leader who is afraid of violence is very much mistaken if he thinks colonialism will "slaughter us all." The military, of course, continue to play tin soldiers dating back to the conquest, but the financial interests soon bring them back to earth.²²⁷

²²⁶ Fanon, Sartre, and Bhabha, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 50

²²⁷ Ibid., 27.

Despite having been written in the early 1960s, Fanon's description of postwar imperialism is incisive and foretells the experiences of nation-states in Asia, Africa and the Americas for the remaining decades of the twentieth century. Indeed, matters had become more subtle, and less bloody. The colonizer's police and military forces had officially departed from the colonies, but external domination by colonizing nations continued to thwart the economic and political freedoms of newly independent peoples. When national leaders who sought to break from the fetters of colonial dependency were democratically elected to power, they were summarily deposed by Western powers who wanted to secure control over the nation's resources in the postcolonial era. In this way, Western powers continued to have an interest in maintaining a serialized colonial society in the newly emancipated nation-states of the Third World. In other words, Western powers benefited from instituting external political and economic constraints, which prevented the burgeoning of political consciousness in the Third World so that the largely serialized collectives from the colonial era could be re-established in the postcolonial era. It was crucial to have a passive, unresisting, de-politicized and alienated population in the Third World to maintain the hegemonic position of the emerging powers in the West.

However, it was not easy to re-establish seriality in the newly emancipated nations of the Third World after colonized peoples underwent decades of political mobilization in the struggle against colonialism. Anti-colonial movements broke with the serialized colony in a number of ways. They raised national and global consciousness; built a new civil society and public sphere; and created and drew on a deep reservoir of public memories relating to the political struggle for national liberation. In all these ways, colonized people forged a political community out of their struggle against colonial

oppression. To re-establish seriality in this context, imperial powers had to seek the aid of national leaders who were willing to betray the promises of national liberation. They had to find colluders among the national bourgeoisie who could enforce internal domination and thus revive the forms of serialized collectives that existed during the colonial era. For instance, Fanon accuses Léon M'ba, the newly elected president of Gabon, of colluding with Western imperialism and forfeiting the political opening provided by national independence to break with colonial dependency:

From the negotiating table emerges then the political agenda that authorizes Monsieur M'ba, president of the Republic of Gabon, to very solemnly declare on his arrival for an official visit to Paris, "Gabon is an independent country, but nothing has changed between Gabon and France, the status quo continues." In fact the only change is that Monsieur M'ba is the president of the Republic of Gabon and he is the guest of the president of the French Republic.²²⁸

Fanon's tone is sarcastic here as he boldly accuses his contemporaries of conspiring to maintain the colonial status of independent nations in Francophone Africa. Indeed, he intimates that Léon M'ba has taken up the helms of political power to rule over Gabon in close collusion with the president of the French Republic.

Fanon's criticisms of national leaders who forge close ties with the former colonial powers are elaborated in greater detail as *The Wretched* progresses. He elaborates on the ways in which national leaders fail to govern to best interests of Third World peoples, and in fact attempt to re-establish the forms of serialized collectives that existed during the colonial era. For instance, he writes,

The leader pacifies the people. Years after independence, incapable of offering the people anything of substance, incapable of actually opening up their future, of launching the people into the task of nation-building... Today he repeatedly endeavors

²²⁸ Ibid., 28.

to lull them to sleep and three or four times a year asks them to remember the colonial period and to take stock of the immense distance they have covered.²²⁹

Instead of being the instruments through which an emancipated people sustain their independence and sovereignty in a hierarchical global order, Fanon argues here that national leaders exercise internal domination through the pacification of the population and doing so they reproduce colonial methods of governing through serialization. As Fanon suggests through out *The Wretched*, these knowledges of governance are acquired through their close collusion with the colonizing powers, who provide them with a set of crucial lessons about how to govern populations whose demands are not being met, but rather betrayed on a consistent basis.²³⁰ However, a serialized postcolonial society performs different functions to that which existed during the colonial era. As indicated from the quote, serialization enables national leaders to exercise internal domination by pacifying and lulling the population so that they are not critically minded citizens who question the national government's metrics of progress and development in the postcolonial era. Effectively, the postcolonial government must transition to setting up a serialized society where citizens are depoliticized, and where their consent of the ruling classes is manufactured through instruments of ideology. For instance, in this passage Fanon contends that the national bourgeoisie take control of the national narrative of liberation, and doing so, they snuff out the radical promise of the story of national

²²⁹ Ibid. 114.

²³⁰ For instance in Mahmood Mamdani's widely cited work *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, he argues that there are important continuities between colonial and postcolonial forms of rule. Namely, postcolonial governments in Africa took over a bifurcated state in which a rural and urban divide was instituted by colonial government. By seeking to operate within the domain of a bifurcated state, postcolonial governments reproduced colonial despotism by ruling over rural areas from the center. In other words, colonial knowledges of governance meant that authoritarian indirect rule was replaced by authoritarian direct rule. See Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996), 8-12.

liberation that raised the political consciousness of colonized peoples. Instead, they deploy the memory of national liberation as an ideological tool that distracts from the social and political problems that riddle the postcolonial nation-state, opening the way for serialized collectives to determine the nature of postcolonial politics.

Colonized people were thus forced back into a serialized existence in the postcolonial era by external domination from imperial powers and internal domination from political leaders who readily sacrificed national interests for the acquisition of personal wealth and political power. In this sense, seriality is the shared condition of domination, which the colonized experienced in colonial and postcolonial era. Throughout *The Wretched*, Fanon utilizes Sartre's concept of seriality to explicate the ways in which the colonized are made to be passive and depoliticized subjects of the colony, and the liberated nation-state. Namely, he shows the ways in which the material structures of the colonial and postcolonial state were organized as serialized collectives through external and internal domination. It is this experience of persistently being forced into seriality that forms the basis of a Fanonian conception of intercontinental solidarity. Unlike Marxian and liberal conceptions of internationalism which do not focus on imperialism as a foundational problem that needs to be theorized robustly in order to clearly outline the stakes for anti-capitalist struggle, Fanon's writings unequivocally center imperialism and its colluders as a primary political problem that must be addressed independently to secure the freedom of colonized peoples. As a result, he provides a theoretically robust account of how seriality takes root in the colony and postcolony so that it can be the basis for anti-imperialist political solidarity. Importantly, it is seriality, rather than the Marxian conception of labor exploitation, or the liberal conception of

human reason, that bring to life new modes of political solidarity and resistance, which seek to simultaneously challenge the dual faces of imperialist domination arising from the colonizers and the colonized.²³¹ The next section of the chapter will substantiate vigilance as a political practice that arises from the experience of seriality, and as one that constitutes intercontinental solidarity between Asia, Africa and the Americas.

III. CONTESTING SERIALITY THROUGH VIGILANCE

For many scholars of democratic theory, healthy and functioning democracies require a measure of trust between citizens and the institutions of government.²³² They contend that without a degree of confidence in the political actors who act on our behalf in the institutions of government, representative democracies would become unstable. However, for Fanon, citizens of Third World nations face an unusually difficult predicament where the stability and integrity of their national democracies are constantly endangered by external imperialist imposition and internal authoritarian rule, forcing citizens into serialized collectives that compromise their political freedoms and rights. Given that imperialism reconstituted itself in the postcolonial era, there is never a full break with the serialized colony, but only a re-creation of seriality through new modes of rule that pacify

²³¹ Grounding seriality as the basis for intercontinental solidarity does not preclude the formation of political solidarity on the basis of labor exploitation, but rather makes it possible to think about the common ground for building anti-imperialist solidarity between formerly colonized nations of the Global South. For a recent work that centers labor exploitation as the basis for solidarity between formerly colonized nations of the Global South see Immanuel Ness, *Southern Insurgency: The Coming of the Global Working Class* (London: Pluto Press, 2015).

²³² For instance see Ronald Inglehart “Trust, Well-being and Democracy” in Mark E. Warren, ed., *Democracy and Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 88-120; Marc J. Hetherington, *Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism* (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2006) 62-74; Jan-Willem van Prooijen and Paul A. M. van Lange, eds., *Power, Politics, and Paranoia: Why People Are Suspicious of Their Leaders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

and depoliticize the citizens of the postcolonial state. In this context, Fanon identifies among the colonized political practices that disclose a comportment of vigilance towards the political institutions and authorities of the colonial and postcolonial state. In other words, the colonized suspend political trust towards institutions of government, and engage in practices of political vigilance that contest the seriality imposed by external and internal domination.²³³ Specifically, Fanon identifies vigilance as a practice that develops in three stages: 1) the acquisition of more knowledge and insight about the social and political situation of colonialism; 2) the active distrust of the postcolonial government's claims of progress from the colonial era; and 3) the resistance of imperialist imposition and control into the economic and political spheres of postcolonial politics.

Importantly, for Fanon these practices of vigilance cannot be circumscribed to the national level, but rather they emerge in contexts throughout the Third World where the social and political structures of society are serialized by the dual pressures of imperialist domination and authoritarian rule. As he writes, "The colonized, underdeveloped man is today a political creature in the most global sense of the term."²³⁴ In other words, the political practices of the colonized cannot only be understood as attempts to contest national power structures, but rather they must be understood as broader attempts to contest and remake international structures of imperialism. In this sense, political

²³³ Fanon's works (particularly *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*) persistently evoke dialectical oppositions, which make his works vivid portraits of the dynamic conflicts which arise from social struggles. In this instance, the seriality of colonial society is opposed by the colonized through their practices of vigilance, which opens up the possibility of imagining new forms of political solidarity and association that was not limited to the nation-state model, often imposed by former colonizing powers. In this sense, for Fanon, the immanent struggles within colonial and postcolonial societies deepen the contradictions that press towards different futures.

²³⁴ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 40

vigilance, which expresses an attitude of suspicion rooted in the judgment that a given national leader or institution could betray the public interest, emerges as an intercontinental practice of solidarity aimed at creating a regional, counter-hegemonic populist movement that targeted the imperialist powers that dominate the international scene in the postwar era.²³⁵ In essence, Fanon called for the need to create a Third World front that contested imperialism from below. He identified the political practice of vigilance as an expression of solidarity by the Third World front, which emerged as Third World peoples struggled against the common predicament of being reduced to the status of seriality by imperialist powers and national governments which conceded to the pressures of external domination.²³⁶

Fanon describes the practice of vigilance as developing through three stages. In the first stage, vigilance is activated among the colonized through the heightened consciousness of their social and political conditions. His first explicit reference to vigilance as a political practice that colonized peoples engage in is from chapter three of *The Wretched* “The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness”:

²³⁵ As mentioned in Chapter 2 (p.44, footnote 69), the use of the term counter-hegemony in this dissertation refers to the power constituted by social movements that extend beyond the nation-state, rather than the political power formed by social movements within the civil society of a nation-state. Just as hegemony has been increasingly organized on a transnational basis, counter-hegemony also takes on transnational features in its organization.

²³⁶ Since the early 1990s, a range of social movements opposed to neo-liberal globalization have mounted concerted struggles to oppose global capitalism’s accumulation by dispossession, and to reclaim the commons from privatization and commodification. The anti-globalization movement has also been described through Gramsci’s language of counter-hegemony as building self-consciousness and organizational capacity across several Northern and Southern nation-states. See, William Carroll, “Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony in a Global Field,” *Studies in Social Justice* 1, no. 1 (March 5, 2007): 36–66. However, the use counter-hegemony to elucidate Fanon’s understanding of intercontinental solidarity has a different meaning. For instance Fanon asserts, “Every peasant revolt, every insurrection in the Third World fits into the framework of the cold war.” Thus, for Fanon, counter-hegemony is consolidated across the nation-states of the Third World that have been, and continue to be subject colonial and imperialist rule. See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 35. It is in this sense that Fanon belongs to the lineage of Third World Marxists for whom counter-hegemony was a war of position that could contest the imperialist structure of the international state-system.

The more people understand, the more vigilant they become, the more they realize in fact that everything depends on them and that their salvation lies in their solidarity, in recognizing their interests and identifying their enemies.²³⁷

In other words, vigilance first arises as an outgrowth of gaining a greater understanding of social and political conditions which the colonized face. When colonized peoples gain greater clarity and understanding of the conditions of oppression they face, they become cognizant of the centrality of their labor to the stability and sustenance of both colonial regimes and moreover come to recognize the lines of political solidarity that are required to transform their oppressive conditions. In this way, vigilance is activated as a political practice and directed towards authorities when the colonized achieve a heightened political consciousness of their social and political condition. As Fanon goes on to write,

The people understand that wealth is not the fruit of labor but the spoils from an organized protection racket....They very quickly realized that work is not a simple notion, that slavery is the opposite of work, and that work presupposes freedom, responsibility and consciousness.²³⁸

By coming to a greater understanding of the centrality of their position to the colonial regime, and the ways in which their labor is routinely exploited, the colonized become more self-assured of their revolutionary position among the classes that can dismantle the capitalist imperialist system. Thus, at its most basic level, the political consciousness of colonized people is heightened when they increase their understanding of the material conditions of their oppression. Furthermore, it is their increased awareness of the material arrangements of colonial society which train the colonized to be vigilant of the ways in which the colonizing power attempt to pacify and depoliticize them into serialized collectives. Thus, Fanon contends that the heightened political consciousness of the

²³⁷ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 133.

²³⁸ Ibid.

colonized spurs practices of vigilance, which make it more difficult to lull the colonized into serialization.

The most concrete example of how practices of vigilance are spurred through attaining a heightened political consciousness arise from the second chapter of *Year V of the Algerian Revolution (Year V)* “This is the Voice of Algeria.” In this chapter, Fanon provides insights into the impact of introducing the radio to colonial society in Algeria. He argues that the radio initially fortified the racial and class divisions set up by settler colonialism. Fanon writes:

The radio reminds the settler of the reality of colonial power and, by its existence, dispenses safety, serenity. Radio-Alger is a confirmation of the settler’s right and strengthens his certainty in the historic continuity of the conquest...Radio-Alger sustains the occupant’s culture, marks it off from non-culture, from the nature of the occupied.²³⁹

Here, Fanon portrays the radio as a technology that symbolized the power of the settler, and as constituting one of the material structures of colonialism that sustained the settler’s culture while marking it off from that of the colonized. Thus, when settlers passively and often unreflectively listened to the radio, they took part in an activity that established an exclusionary public sphere that signified the power and privilege of being of the French settler class in Algeria. In other words, the radio was one of the key technological instruments that enabled and reinforced the seriality of colonial society by reproducing relations of alterity.

However, the Algerian attitude towards the radio changed dramatically with the emergence of pan-Arabism. The formation of national broadcasting stations in Syria, Egypt and Lebanon aroused interest in the radio among Algerians, which led to the increase in radio ownership among the colonized population. As Fanon writes,

²³⁹ Frantz Fanon, *L’an V de la révolution algérienne*, (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), 55.

It was in 1951-1952, at the time of the first skirmishes in Tunisia, that the Algerian people felt it necessary to increase their news network... The Algerian who read in the occupier's face the increasing bankruptcy of colonialism felt the compelling and vital need to be informed.²⁴⁰

The radio satisfied this compelling and vital need for news about anti-colonial struggles in Algeria and abroad. By gaining a deeper understanding of the battles being waged across the Arab world, Algerians heightened their political consciousness of being part of a wider network of struggles against colonialism, which consequently activated practices of vigilance among the colonized. For instance, Fanon observes that the colonized population in Algeria became acutely aware of the ways in which their reality was fabricated by the colonizing forces. Their rejection of this reality by listening to a wide radio network of news from abroad was a practice of vigilance:

The Algerian found himself having to oppose the enemy news with his own news. The "truth" of the oppressor, formerly rejected as an absolute lie, was now countered by another, an acted truth. The Algerian's reaction was no longer one of pained and desperate refusal. Because it avowed its own uneasiness, the occupier's lie became a positive aspect of the nation's new truth.²⁴¹

Thus, radio listening was not a passive or depoliticized activity among the colonized. It became an activity through which the colonized scrutinized the veracity of the information disseminated by the colonizer, and in this sense, radio listening activated practices of vigilance which made transparent the lies and deceptions the colonizer perpetuated to sustain colonialism.²⁴² In other words, the radio became an instrument through which ordinary Algerians could monitor the "truth" produced by the colonizer

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 59.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 76.

²⁴² For radio-listening as a practice of political solidarity in *Year V of the Algerian Revolution* see Ian Baucom, "Frantz Fanon's Radio: Solidarity, Diaspora, and the Tactics of Listening," *Contemporary Literature* 42, no. 1 (2001): 15-49.

and in this way, it was crucial in enabling practices of vigilance from below. To this end, radio listening also broke with the seriality of colonialism. As Fanon writes, “the old monologue of the colonial situation, already shaken by existence, disappeared completely..”²⁴³ and a proliferation of anti-colonial voices that took over the airwaves, making it impossible to institute the propagandistic voices which lulled a desperate and oppressed people back into the mechanical slumber of labor and toil. In all these ways, radio listening produced a subaltern counter-public where information was not only circulated and consumed about anti-colonial struggles in Algeria and abroad, but this information was actively re-interpreted to form a counter-discourse that opposed the dominant narrative disseminated by colonizer.²⁴⁴

In the postcolonial era, Fanon contends that these practices of vigilance do not atrophy, but are rather intensified. Thus, in the second stage of its development, practices of vigilance are directed towards the national bourgeoisie of liberated nations as the masses begin to cultivate an active distrust of their claims of progress from the colonial era and maintain their suspicion of the postcolonial government’s collusion with the former colonizing power. The distrust and suspicion of the leadership of the national bourgeoisie is rooted in the heightened political consciousness that colonized peoples achieved during the colonial era. The practices of vigilance that grew out of being

²⁴³ Fanon, *L’an V de la révolution algérienne.*, 95

²⁴⁴ When thinking of the political practices that constitute counter-hegemonic solidarity, it is helpful to think about Nancy Fraser’s argument that “subaltern counter-publics” are central to counter-hegemonic strategy. Fraser argues that counter-publics consist of “parallel discursive areas where members of the subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs.” Thus, practices of vigilance which often involve the acquisition of more knowledge and the re-interpretation of this knowledge to formulate new political interests constitute counter-hegemonic practices that undermine the legitimacy of the colonial regime. See Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy” in Francis Barker, Peter Hulme and Margaret Iversen, eds. *Postmodernism and the Re-Reading of Modernity* (New York: Manchester Univ Pr, 1992) 84.

immersed in the anti-colonial struggle are intensified and redirected in the postcolonial era. Instead of being targeted at the colonial regime, they were now aimed at the postcolonial government's persistent attempts to re-establish the seriality of colonial society:

During the struggle for liberation the leader roused the people and promised them a radical, heroic march forward. Today he repeatedly endeavors to lull them to sleep and three or four times a year, asks them to remember the colonial period and to take stock of the immense distance they have covered. We must point out, however, that the masses are quite incapable of appreciating the immense distance they have covered..... No matter how hard the bourgeoisie in power tries to prove it, the masses never manage to delude themselves. The masses are hungry and the police commissioners, now Africans, are not particularly reassuring. The masses begin to keep their distance, to turn their backs on and lose interest in this nation which excludes them.²⁴⁵

In this passage, Fanon speaks to the conditions of postcolonial nations, and he stresses that "the masses are hungry." Their state of material deprivation make them turn their backs on the postcolonial government, and distrust the government's claims of progress and improvement from the colonial era. In this sense, the masses remain vigilant towards the tactics deployed by the national bourgeoisie to manipulate and subjugate them.

Despite the national bourgeoisie's steadfast attempts to pacify the masses of liberated nations into a state of seriality with a heady and intoxicating nationalism, which glorified and harkened back to the anti-colonial struggle as a distraction from the problems that pervaded the postcolonial state, Fanon affirms that the basic condition of material deprivation revive in the postcolonial polity the practices of vigilance that the masses first cultivated in opposition to the colonial regime, and now direct towards the postcolonial government.

²⁴⁵ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 114.

Fanon draws on his experiences from Algeria to make a case for how the masses re-integrated themselves into the political activities of the postcolonial nations, despite the concerted efforts to exclude them through mechanisms that induced political passivity. After explaining in some detail the shortages of food, which the liberated parts of Algeria experienced, Fanon recounts the ways in which the masses engaged with this problem facing the postcolonial society:

The people were not content merely to celebrate their victory. They asked theoretical questions. For example, why did certain regions never see an orange before the war of liberation, whereas thousands of tons were shipped abroad annually; why had so many Algerians never seen grapes, whereas millions of grapes were dispatched for the enjoyment of Europeans. Today the people had a very clear notion of what belongs to them. The Algerian people now know they are the sole proprietor of the country's soil and subsoil.everyone should remember that the Algerian people are now adult, responsible, and conscious. In short, the Algerian people are proprietors.²⁴⁶

Here, Fanon portrays the Algerian masses as rejecting the postcolonial government's promises of prosperity and wealth. Instead he brings to light their capacity to interrogate and understand the failures in the distribution of food as larger structural problem, which the postcolonial government has proven incapable of solving in the years following independence. Fanon makes clear in this short excerpt that the masses do not fall victim to national leaders who want to inebriate them with the continuous celebration of the nation's liberation from colonialism. Instead, he contends that the Algerian masses are deeply aware of what national liberation means beyond the departure of the colonizer. Namely, they understand that they have won the right to bread and land. As Fanon asserts in the opening pages of *The Wretched*, "the people take a global stance..from the start. Bread and land: how do we go about getting bread and land?"²⁴⁷ It is in this sense that

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 134.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 14.

their questions have become theoretical because they are grounded in the universal understanding that national freedom is only achieved through the re-appropriation of land from the colonizer and the collective re-distribution of the fruits of that land. Moreover, the masses understand that this is not solely a national question, but one that concerns the entire postcolonial world. Thus, when the national bourgeoisie attempt to lull them into a renewed seriality with the intoxicating ideology of nationalism, the masses remain vigilant. They remain vigilant of the ways in which the national bourgeoisie attempt to divert attention away from their inability to secure national freedom by taking back control over the land and resources of the newly independent nation. Consequently, their stance towards the national bourgeoisie is one of distrust and suspicion.

During the third stage of its development, Fanon contends that the masses of the Third World expand their practices of vigilance to target the postwar structure of imperialist power, which re-establishes the hierarchy of the international state system by disempowering newly independent nations in the political and economic realm. The renewed structure of international hierarchy endangers the political sovereignty and economic freedoms of newly independent nations, instigating among liberated peoples practices of vigilance, which resist the re-imposition of new forms of seriality on the postcolonial society. Fanon argues that the seriality established by postwar imperialism is not carried out through blind domination, but rather newly independent nations are considered to be expansive and exploitable consumer markets where imperialist powers can promote their material and cultural industries.²⁴⁸ Thus, imperialist powers use the

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 26, 27. "A blind domination on the model of slavery is not economically profitable for the metropolis. The monopolistic fraction of the metropolitan bourgeoisie will not support a government whose policy is based solely on the power of arms. What the metropolitan financiers and industrialists expect is not

inequality of the international system to dominate without colonizing, which often involved monopolizing market rules; controlling international political institutions; and recreating relations of dependency through debt and the reproduction of unbalanced economic growth in postcolonial nations. Consider how Fanon describes the economic situation of newly independent states:

Independence does not bring a change of direction...the traffic of commodities goes unchanged. No industry is established in the country. We continue to ship raw materials, we continue to produce for Europe and pass for specialists of unfinished products.The economic channels of the young state become irreversibly mired in a neocolonial system. Once protected, the national economy is now literally state controlled. The budget is funded by loans and donations. The former colonial power multiplies its demands and accumulates concessions and guarantees. The people stagnate miserably in intolerable poverty and slowly become aware of the unspeakable treason of their leaders.²⁴⁹

Here, Fanon accounts for the different political and economic mechanisms through which former colonial powers re-assert control over postcolonial nations to subjugate them through new relations of neocolonial dependency. Importantly, it is significant that Fanon opens his analysis of neocolonial dependency with the claim that “Independence does not bring a change of direction” to emphasize the continuity in economic relations with Europe. Doing so, he makes clear that seriality is not only imposed on political terms, through instituting material structures that pacify and depoliticize the population, but also in the economic sphere by extinguishing the routes through which postcolonial nations could diversify and revitalize their national economies. Instead, the imperialist appetite for the resources of Third World nations lock them into economic agreements where they are forced to produce unprocessed raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods of

the devastation of the colonial population but the protection of their “legitimate interests” using economic agreements”

²⁴⁹ Ibid. 100 & 112.

higher value.²⁵⁰ In this sense, post-war imperialism stagnated the economies of newly independent nations by reproducing the economic structures from the era of colonization, and thus paved the way for the serialization of productive sphere. Seriality in the productive sphere meant that the material structures of the economy were set up to discourage and restrain economic change, innovation and dynamism in postcolonial nations. Instead, Third World citizens were for decades after independence forced into a serialized existence where they produced the same raw materials and goods for the world economy.

Although the economic lethargy of a serialized productive sphere had severe consequences on the capacity of citizens to imagine economic self-sufficiency and independence, Fanon contends that they were quick to understand the workings of the imperialist control and exploitation in the postcolonial era. For instance, the passage above concludes with the warning, “the people...slowly become aware of the unspeakable treason of their leaders,” and in numerous other instances, Fanon emphasizes that the masses have a clear understanding that the hunger and poverty they experience in the postcolonial nations derive from the incompetence of their leaders in the face of imperialist imposition and control.²⁵¹ Fanon goes on to elaborate on the nature of this understanding that the masses develop by describing the Cold War context of imperialist conflict:

This threatening atmosphere of violence and missiles in no way frightens or disorients the colonized. We have seen that their entire recent history has prepared them to “understand” the situation...People are sometimes surprised that instead of buying a dress for their wife, the colonized buy a transistor radio. They shouldn’t be. The

²⁵⁰ See for instance Samir Amin, *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure* (Fahamu/Pambazuka, 2011), 23-70.

²⁵¹ Fanon, Sartre, and Bhabha, *The Wretched of the Earth*. For instance, see 112-117.

colonized are convinced their fate is in the balance. They live in a doomsday atmosphere and nothing must elude them. This is why they fully understand Phouma and Phoumi, Lumumba and Tshombe, Ahidjo and Moumié, Kenyatta and those introduced from time to time to replace him. They fully understand all these men because they are able to unmask the forces behind them. The colonized, underdeveloped man is today a political creature in the most global sense of the term.²⁵²

Fanon begins this passage by describing the knowledge and understanding of postwar imperialism that the Third World masses acquire as a natural outgrowth of their experience of colonial-imperialism. In other words, the practices of vigilance they developed to resist and dismantle colonial regimes prepares them to not only understand the violence of postwar imperialism, but also prepares them to renew these practices of vigilance for the Cold War era of imperialist domination. Thus, the citizens of the Third World re-invest in the information outlets that will allow them to develop a greater understanding of the ways in which the former colonial powers seek to contain and limit their newly won freedoms. As a result, the masses continue to be the self-conscious group that resisted the seriality of colonialism, and sought to reverse the new configurations of seriality established in the postcolonial era. It is in this sense that Fanon asserts that “the colonized, underdeveloped man is a political creature in the most global sense of the term,” for the object of their resistance is not only the national government, but the imperialist forces which steer the course of the national governments by using their political clout to shape the international system in which newly independent nation-states forge their economic and political freedoms. Thus, their practices of vigilance are

²⁵² Ibid. 40. When Fanon uses the term “the colonized” in this passage, he is referring the masses of postcolonial nations rather than those of colonized nations. The larger context of this passage is a description of the Cold War era where he speaks of the situation of nation-states, which have achieved national liberation by the late 1950s and early 1960s. 30-42

targeted at the imperialist powers who attempt to re-impose serialized collectivities in the economic and political spheres of postcolonial nations.

This section elaborated on how colonized peoples developed practices of vigilance through three stages. Vigilance was first cultivated as a political practice to combat the serialization of colonial society. It was first activated as a practice when colonized peoples gained greater clarity and understanding of the conditions of oppression they face, and became cognizant of the centrality of their labor to the stability and sustenance of colonial regimes. Fanon uses the example of the radio to show how it became an instrument through which ordinary Algerians could monitor the “truth” produced by the colonizer and in this way, it was crucial in enabling practices of vigilance from below. To this end, radio listening also broke with the seriality of colonialism. In the second stage of its development, practices of vigilance are directed towards the national bourgeoisie of liberated nations as the masses began to cultivate an active distrust of their claims of progress from the colonial era and maintained their suspicion of the postcolonial government’s collusion with the former colonizing power. As an example of the second stage, Fanon brings to light the capacity of the masses to interrogate and understand the failures in the distribution of food as larger structural problem, which the postcolonial government has proven incapable of solving in the years following independence. In the final stage of its development, Fanon contends that the masses of the Third World expand their practices of vigilance to target the postwar structure of imperialist power, which re-establishes the hierarchy of the international state system by disempowering newly independent nations in the political and economic realm.

IV.CONCLUSION: PRACTICES OF VIGILANCE AS PRACTICES OF FREEDOM

This political practice of vigilance, which the masses initially cultivate in the colonial era, and then exercise with greater vigor and intensity in the postcolonial era, is essential to maintaining liberation from colonialism. Fanon understands the promise of national liberation as threatened under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie, because throughout the postcolonial world they reintroduce colonial relations of dependence by being beholden to European economic and political powers. At this juncture, it is helpful to consider Michel Foucault's distinction between "practices of liberation" as the struggle against domination and "practices of freedom" as the care of self and others. This distinction helpfully illuminates the political practices of the masses, which Fanon portrays as necessary to sustaining sovereignty and freedom in the postcolonial era. Consider how Foucault uses this distinction between practices of freedom and practices of liberation to comment on decolonization in one of his 1980s interviews:

I am not trying to say that liberation as such, or this or that form of liberation, does not exist: when a colonized people attempt to liberate itself from its colonizers, this is indeed a practice of liberation in the strict sense. But we know very well, and moreover in this specific case, that this practice of liberation is not in itself sufficient to define practices of freedom that will still be needed if this people, this society and these individuals, are to be able to define admissible and acceptable forms of existence or political society.²⁵³

Foucault's distinction here between the two phases of decolonization as involving practices of liberation and practices of freedom illuminates how Fanon's analysis unfolds in *The Wretched*. Fanon's first chapter "On Violence" articulates the practices of liberation that hastened the process of decolonization at the subjective level of the colonized individual, and at the objective level of the society, economy and politics of the

²⁵³ Michel Foucault, *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-84*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (New York: Semiotext, 1996), 433.

colony. However, these practices of liberation remain as modes of resistance and do not necessarily form the critical democratic practices that give rise to a positive vision of a free and democratic life. Thus the chapters that follow “On Violence,” focusing particularly on the revolutionary subjectivity of the masses, explicate the practices of freedom necessary to build and sustain a democratic society in the aftermath of colonization. Specifically, the practices of vigilance, which the masses cultivate in the postcolonial era are practices of freedom that Fanon articulates as necessary to build a flourishing postcolonial democracy. As Foucault argues, “liberation paves the way for new power relationships, which must be *controlled* by practices of freedom.”²⁵⁴ Indeed, a political practice of vigilance aims precisely to control and keep in check the new forms of domination that emerge in postcolonial societies.

Latent in practices of freedom are positive visions of a collective subjectivity that emerge from new modes of thinking of political community and solidarity. For instance, Fanon identifies these practices of freedom not just among the people of Algeria, but he speaks of these practices as widespread across the colonized and decolonized world in Asia, Africa and the Americas. Although Fanon was mostly likely speaking in aspirational terms, the importance of his argument stems from the fact that these practices of freedom arise out of the shared condition of being reduced to the status of seriality, making Third World peoples vulnerable to authoritarian rule internally, and imperialist domination externally. To that end, the political practices which Fanon sketches in his writings point to the possibility of forging an intercontinental practice of political solidarity against undemocratic structures of government at the national and international

²⁵⁴ Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, vol 1. ed. Paul Rabinow. (New York: New Press, 1997), 284.

level, which betray the interests of the vast majority of the population in colonized and decolonized parts of the globe. Thus, the political solidarity between the peoples of the Third World is built on the basis of their shared experience of racial and colonial oppression through the structure of seriality; a structure which creates their vulnerability to the dual threats of internal and external domination by governmental structures at the national and international level. The next chapter will articulate another dimension of securing freedom from internal and external domination as involving risk and sacrifice.

CHAPTER 4 – SACRIFICE, POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND INTERCONTINENTAL SOLIDARITY

Fanon composed the vast majority of his works between the years 1952 and 1961. He wrote a number of journalistic articles and reports for the Algerian newspaper *El Moudjahid* between 1952-1959, which are published in the volume *Towards the African Revolution (African Revolution)*. His political essays, written between 1959-1961, are now collectively published in *The Wretched* and *Year V*. During this decade when Fanon wrote prolifically on decolonization, imperialism and capitalism, many parts of the Third World were either in the midst of a liberation struggle from colonialism or were beginning to build up resistance to the reassertion of imperial power as the world was being reconstituted on bipolar terms with the United States and the Soviet Union vying for economic and political hegemony. As the Algerian War of Independence from France was beginning to coming to a slow and painful end toward the end of 1960, resistance movements in South Vietnam were building against American intervention. Fanon wrote furiously during these politically unsettling and volatile years between 1952-1961 when colonized peoples had successfully struggled to birth a new global order freed from European imperialism. While at the same time, it was also becoming increasingly clear that their hard-won rights to political sovereignty and economic independence could not be secured without continued struggle against imperial domination.

For this reason, when Fanon addressed the Second Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Rome in 1959, he made it clear that the struggle against imperialism would go on even after formal decolonization. For instance, he opened his address by declaring:

“Each generation must discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it. For us, who are determined to break the back of colonialism, our historic mission is to authorize every revolt, every desperate act, and every attack aborted or drowned in blood.”²⁵⁵ Despite the fact that his paper was supposed to take up the issue of anti-colonial nationalism, and was in fact titled “On National Culture,” he begins by emphasizing the inter-generational and international dimensions of the anti-imperialist struggle. Specifically, he makes clear with his opening lines that the struggle against imperialism was inherited from an earlier generation and that it was necessary to prepare for its continuation into the postcolonial era. Moreover, he underscores to his audience that the next phase of the anti-imperialist struggle could not be confined to the national sphere. Although, he attended the conference as a delegate and representative from Algeria, it is not just the Algerian struggle for independence that he was interested in drawing attention to, but rather, “every revolt, every desperate act” that was beginning to emerge in a world that was being re-organized by new hegemons. As the anti-imperialist struggle expanded beyond the struggle for national independence from colonialism, Fanon proposed that the political sacrifices that were made for liberation from colonialism must not be confined to the national sphere, but rather must broaden out toward the international domain. Thus, he concluded his address to the Second Congress by declaring, “It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and thrives.”²⁵⁶

As I have argued throughout this dissertation, Fanon articulates international consciousness as a form of intercontinental political solidarity, which he identifies as a concrete political practice that exists between the peoples of Asia, Africa and the

²⁵⁵ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 145-146.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 180.

Americas. In the previous chapter, I developed political vigilance as one of the central practices that constitute Fanon's conception of intercontinentalism. In this chapter, I draw attention to the politically tumultuous decade in which Fanon was writing in order to track how his articulation of the political practices necessary to win the anti-colonial struggle transformed as there was a shift in this decade from the national struggle for political independence to the global struggle against anti-imperialism from the late 1950s onwards.²⁵⁷ To this end, I ask two inter-related questions to help steer the analysis and interpretation of Fanon's writings from this era: Which political practices of the national anti-colonial struggle had to be re-imagined in order to form an anti-imperialist political solidarity at the intercontinental scale? In what ways did these political practices transform as they expanded to meet the demands of an intercontinental anti-imperialist movement? I take up these questions by turning to Fanon's conception of sacrifice as a political practice that colonized peoples engage in at the national and intercontinental scale. In fact, sacrifice is an enduring theme in Fanon's writings. Fanon frequently wrote of his admiration for the self-sacrificing spirit of the Algerian people. For instance, he writes, "During the course of recent years I have had the opportunity to witness the extraordinary examples of honor, self-sacrifice, love of life and disregard for death in an Algeria at war."²⁵⁸ Given that sacrifice is an important political act that citizens engage in

²⁵⁷ It should be noted that the global struggle against anti-imperialism has its roots in the late nineteenth century. However, there was a marked shift from a national focus to a global focus in the postwar period, even though the international dimensions were always present from the beginning of the 20th century. For early nineteenth century and interwar roots of anti-imperialism, see Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015); Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, (Oxford University Press, 2009); Jonathan Derrick, *Africa's 'Agitators': Militant Anti-Colonialism in Africa and the West, 1918-1939*, (Oxford University Press, 2008).

²⁵⁸ Fanon, Sartre, and Bhabha, *The Wretched of the Earth.*, 221

to bind, repair and renew the solidarity of political communities, the persistence of this theme in Fanon's writings make it an important starting point to develop his conception of political solidarity.

Sacrifice is typically understood to be a political act that citizens are asked to make for the national interest. In fact, the nation-state is often the assumed framework for understanding the types of sacrifices that citizens make for a larger political community. I begin this chapter by underscoring how the discussion of sacrifice in political theory tends to assume that national identification is the only loyalty powerful enough to overcome the competing loyalties that citizens have related to race, political beliefs, or a commitment to the broader community of humanity. As a result, the questions posed in political theory related to sacrifice and democratic citizenship have a tendency to wind up in a difficult and seemingly unresolvable knot. The central problem that political theorists are troubled by relate to the question of whether oppressed citizens can survive the demands of sacrifice asked of them. In the first section of the chapter, I bring out these debates with more clarity in order to ultimately show that the unresolvability of these discussions of sacrifice as a practice of democratic citizenship result from their narrow understanding of the political communities to which oppressed citizens identify with. In fact the political communities that oppressed citizens identify with are always expansive and plural.²⁵⁹ Fanon himself is exemplary of a black citizen of the French republic whose loyalties and identifications evolved dramatically during the course of his short life.

²⁵⁹ The literature on the international dimensions of black political organizing in the Atlantic world is immense and continues to grow. A number of the key works include Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black Is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005); Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature*,

In the second part of the chapter, I turn to Fanon's writings to argue that he offers an important intervention into the question of sacrifice and democratic citizenship. First, I track in his account the evolution of sacrifice as a political practice that colonized peoples engage in at the national level to hasten their liberation from colonial oppression. Then, I track the expansion of sacrifice in the postcolonial era as an intercontinental practice of political solidarity that the masses of the Third World offer each other. Fanon's articulation of the relationship between sacrifice and political violence as involving sacrificial victims and agents will be central to tracking how sacrifice enters into his writings as a central practice of political solidarity. The masses practice sacrifice as an expression of political solidarity to collectively deal with their common experience of being vulnerable to internal domination from undemocratic rulers and external domination from imperialist powers. In the third and fourth sections of the paper, I argue that sacrifice as a practice of political solidarity transforms in significant ways as it shifts from an expression of national consciousness to intercontinental solidarity between the masses of the Third World. Specifically, I argue that sacrifice transforms in two ways 1) The demands of national sacrifice which are usually grounded in a narrow conception of racial/ethnic identity are transformed to encompass a multi-racial coalition 2) The burdens of sacrifice are dispersed from resisting national populations to an intercontinental body of people in order to effect change at the global scale. For this reason, a Fanonian conception of political solidarity demands more than just words of support for the struggle against imperialism but rather, it demands concrete political actions that help to share the burden of building a struggle against imperial superpowers

Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2003); Robin D. G. Kelley, "'But a Local Phase of a World Problem': Black History's Global Vision, 1883-1950," *The Journal of American History* 86, no. 3 (1999): 1045-77.

who have the political, economic and military capacity to crush resistance struggles across the Third World.

I. SACRIFICE AND DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

Citizens are often called upon to make sacrifices for the defense or liberation of a national community from tyranny and oppression. The narratives of heroic individuals who rise to the occasion to sacrifice their safety, material comforts or their own lives in order to protect the nation from external domination, or to make the national community more egalitarian and inclusive by engaging in social struggles, form an important part of the story of the nation-state as the product of collective sacrifices of courageous individual citizens. Sacrifices also occur at a quotidian level where being a member of a liberal democracy often entails that one has to accept loss of power, privilege and status in order to facilitate the redistributive efforts to create a more egalitarian democracy. These are the more ordinary but indispensable demands of sacrifice imposed on individual citizens of liberal democracies. Thus, democratic citizenship involves not just extraordinary sacrificial acts, which involve personal risk and heroism, but also more ordinary forms of sacrifice such as the ability to relinquish one's social position in order to abolish ossified structures of privilege and inequality.

It is precisely the relationship between ordinary and extraordinary forms of sacrifice that Danielle Allen takes up in *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*. Through a reading of the disagreement between Hannah Arendt and Ralph Ellison over the battle to desegregate the Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas, Allen argues that the sacrifices of all citizens are not equally

weighted and in fact, the extraordinary sacrifices of some citizens are rendered completely invisible by the racial dynamics that permeate the national popular culture. As a case in point, she underscores how Arendt, like many others, could not properly comprehend the political decision of African-American parents to send their children to Little Rock Central High in order to challenge the segregation laws, which had been pronounced unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Relying heavily on the philosophically rigid distinctions between the social, political, and the public, Arendt criticized the African-American parents for politicizing realms of the social world that involved children and the schools they attend. Ellison wrote a response to Arendt's analysis arguing that she did not have a conception of the extraordinary sacrifice that was necessary for black Americans to survive the racial violence, denigration, and discrimination in the United States. In other words, the burdens of sacrifice fall disproportionately on an oppressed group when privileged citizens refuse to take on more ordinary forms of sacrifice that require them to relinquish their privileges. In the case of the Little Rock Central High, white Americans who refused to obey desegregation laws failed to make the necessary democratic sacrifices in their power and privilege in order to abolish white supremacy in the form of racial apartheid. Their failure to reckon with and make ordinary sacrifices to their power and privilege meant that black Americans had to take on the burden of committing more extraordinary forms of sacrifice that risked their lives and the lives of their family members.²⁶⁰ Doing so, they also take on a larger proportion of the loss involved with transforming racially structured societies. Importantly, the exchange between Arendt and Ellison make clear that the losses and

²⁶⁰ Danielle S Allen, *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 25-32.

extraordinary sacrifices that black Americans have had to make are either misunderstood or unrecognized until these political actions get taken up and re-narrated through black counter-publics.

Most recently, Juliet Hooker argues that Allen and Ellison are forced to accept an unequal economy of political sacrifice where black Americans continuously make extraordinary sacrifices to realize the nation's founding ideals. Hooker's contention is that both Allen and Ellison operate within a liberal democratic framework that prioritizes rule of law and democratic stability, which make it necessary for them to soberly accept that racially subordinated groups will inevitably have to suffer the larger proportion of democratic loss necessary to transform unjust aspects of the political system. In other words, their valorization of the founding principles of the liberal democratic system means that racially subordinated groups must acquiescence to their democratic loss with non-violence and civility in order to preserve the stability and legitimacy of a liberal democracy. Moreover, in the liberal democratic economy of political loss and sacrifice, Hooker charges that Allen and Ellison are forced to transform the sacrifice of racially subordinated groups into a form of democratic exemplarity in order to protect the stability of a political system over the well-being and survival of racially subordinated peoples. In other words, Hooker's claim is that extraordinary sacrifices that do not ultimately shake the foundations of a political system that is rigged against the interests of racially subordinated groups will only result in the consecration of more political heroes and more lives lost in the struggle for racial justice. Given this, she calls attention to a different lineage of political struggle for black equality and freedom. Drawing on an alternative historiography of the civil rights movement that centers on political agitation

rather than non-violent civil disobedience, Hooker argues that the more aggressive methods of political protest arose in response to the awareness of the unequal and racialized economy of democratic sacrifice. Black power activists, as well as contemporary political activists in the Black Lives Matter movement, recognize that integrating into a political system where the gears and pulleys are operated by the logics of white supremacy is a losing battle.²⁶¹

At first glance, Fanon is an unusual political thinker to help navigate this difficult political question of whether oppressed citizens can survive the demands of extraordinary sacrifice needed to re-found racially constituted nation-states on a more just and egalitarian basis.²⁶² After all, Fanon's response to this question was seemingly uncomplicated. Early on in his writings, Fanon rejected the possibility that white French citizens could recognize their non-white compatriots as free and equal citizens without a struggle that involved sacrifices of life. For instance, he emphasizes the importance of risking one's life to achieve liberation from racial and colonial oppression:

Only conflict and the risk it implies can, therefore, make human reality, in-itself-for-itself, come true. This risk implies that I go beyond life toward an ideal which

²⁶¹ Juliet Hooker, "Black Lives Matter and the Paradoxes of U.S. Black Politics: From Democratic Sacrifice to Democratic Repair," *Political Theory* 44, no. 4 (August 1, 2016): 448–69.

²⁶² For works which take up the question of how oppressed minorities can survive the demands of sacrifice required to repair a democratic polity in the context of racial justice struggles in the United States see Alexander Livingston, "The Cost of Liberty: Sacrifice and Survival in Du Bois's John Brown" in *A Politicla Companion to W.E.B Du Bois* ed. Nick Bromell (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, forthcoming) Accessed: https://www.academia.edu/28725781/The_Cost_of_Liberty_Sacrifice_and_Survival_in_Du_Boiss_John_Brown_forthcoming; Melvin L. Rogers, "The Fact of Sacrifice and Necessity of Faith: Dewey and the Ethics of Democracy," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy* 47, no. 3 (November 25, 2011): 274–300.

is the transformation of subjective certainty of my own worth into a universally valid objective truth.²⁶³

In other words, Fanon makes clear that the struggle against racial and colonial oppression demands that one pursue something other than the survival of one's own life (subjective certainty), and work toward building a new world that is deeply structured by the ideals of equality and freedom for all (universally valid objective truth). Thus for Fanon, the question is not so much whether oppressed peoples will survive the demands of extraordinary sacrifice asked of them because he contends that they may not and they must be "willing to feel the shudder of death, the irreversible extinction, but also the possibility of impossibility."²⁶⁴ The question for Fanon is whether the sacrificial actions of oppressed peoples can realize "the possibility of impossibility" or to put it another way, whether their sacrifices can bring into existence a world only promised and gestured to in proclamations of human equality and freedom. It is only through the birth of this new world that their extraordinary sacrifices are redeemed and their legacy memorialized.

Thus, Fanon relinquishes his faith that an oppressor class will make the ordinary sacrifices in power and privilege to transform the relations of an unjust social order. Instead, he accepts that there will be an unequal economy of sacrifice and loss in which the oppressed will have to shoulder the burden of making extraordinary sacrifices in their life and personal well-being to bring about a more just social order. However, Fanon also advocates for the use of a number of political tactics to ensure that the extraordinary sacrifices of the oppressed are amplified so that they have the strongest impact in reordering the social system of a nation-state. First, he unambiguously advocates for a

²⁶³ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox, (New York: Berkeley, Calif.: Grove Press, 2008), 193.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

form of sacrifice that extends beyond the nation-state. He argues that sacrifices of life and well-being should be contextualized within an international system of imperial rule. In other words, the political community for which newly liberated peoples take on sacrifices should not be limited to the nation-state, but rather extended to an intercontinental community of decolonized nation-states that was becoming increasingly subject to imperial domination and rule from emerging superpowers of the postwar era. In this sense, the sacrifices made for national liberation need to be re-articulated and re-oriented so that they were directed toward the re-assertion of imperial rule in the postcolonial era. Second, the form of sacrifices that Fanon calls for involve the use of political tactics, including armed resistance, which can re-order the imperial global order. Thus, he does not think that it would be realistic to face the enormous military capabilities of the United States or Soviet Union through non-violent civil disobedience. Such political tactics would demand extraordinary sacrifices from the oppressed without really empowering them in sufficient ways with resistance strategies that can transform the unequal foundations of the international system. For this reason, Fanon, who abhorred violence, advocated for its use to match the overwhelming military power of the newly re-aligned imperial system of the postwar era.²⁶⁵

In this sense, there are two important reasons why Fanon is an important political thinker to help navigate the problem of sacrifice and democratic citizenship that scholars have taken up in the context of racial justice struggles in the United States. First, although Fanon wrote from a considerably different context of decolonization struggles in the Third World, his works offer insights on how broadening the national struggle against

²⁶⁵ David Macey argues that Fanon was deeply distressed by violence throughout his life. See Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*, (London ; New York: Verso, 2012), 457.

racism and settler-colonialism to the intercontinental scale can bolster the resources of political solidarity available to the oppressed. Thus, it is not a coincidence that Black Panther Party co-founders Huey Newton and Bobby Seale held political education sessions, which prominently featured the works of Frantz Fanon. Newton declared that he sought to study “the literature of oppressed people and their struggles for liberation in other countries...to see how their experiences might help us understand our plight.”²⁶⁶ For Newton, Fanon’s writings demonstrated how confronting imperialism and racism was critical for creating a strategy to combat racial injustice in the United States, and Newton developed a conception of intercommunalism to capture the ways in which oppressed minorities in the United States were part of a global struggle against imperialism. In this sense, part of the problem with current discussions of sacrifice and democratic citizenship in the US relate to the fact that the political power of racial minorities are often overwhelmed by the pervasive and powerful structure of white supremacy. However, it is important to remember that an earlier generation of black radicals turned to thinkers of the Third World like Fanon to re-orient their political sacrifices away from U.S. nationhood and the rights of citizenship toward the larger political struggle against imperialism and racism at home and abroad.

Second, Fanon is also an important thinker to consider in this discussion of sacrifice and democratic citizenship because his political thought challenges many of the presuppositions of the liberal democratic framework. For instance, he accepts that oppressed citizens may not survive the demands of sacrifice asked of them in a liberal democratic context because he rejects the presumed reciprocity in democratic sacrifice

²⁶⁶ Huey P. Newton and Fredrika Newton, *The Huey P. Newton Reader*, ed. David Hilliard and Donald Weise, (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002), 50.

that undergirds the liberal democratic framework of racial justice. Instead, Fanon urges colonized people, who have suffered the psychological harm of racism and colonialism, to turn away from white citizens and build ties of mutual recognition and political solidarity with each other. In fact, Fanon contends that part of the problem with a nationally confined understanding of sacrifice is that the burden of the sacrifice falls disproportionately upon an oppressed group who are unable to really harness the powers of political solidarity within a racialized polity. This political position arose from his personal experiences of racial denigration and exclusion in France. He began his political career with a resolute commitment to the founding principles of republican France as the means to achieve racial inequality for all French citizens. His experiences in the Second World War and his confrontation with white citizens in France lead him to believe that racialized attitudes were too deeply embedded in their psyche for them to make the necessary democratic sacrifices of privilege and power to give birth to a truly egalitarian republic. Ultimately, this meant giving up his faith in the republican ideals of France, and building new foundations for political solidarity and mutual recognition in the struggles for Third World liberation.

Although Fanon is a revolutionary who rejects the liberal democratic framework, his conception of sacrifice as an intercontinental practice of solidarity between the Third World masses is important for making explicit some of the limitations of the liberal democratic conception of sacrifice, and for opening the path toward more radical conceptions of political sacrifice that ultimately work towards transforming the unequal structures of power within the nation-state by forging intercontinental connections of political solidarity. In the next section of the paper, I argue that Fanon's conception of

sacrifice is closely related to his arguments for the exercise of political violence within the national and international context. Moreover, this connection between sacrifice and political violence in Fanon's framework of intercontinental political solidarity is one of the ways in which his political thinking challenges the liberal-democratic economy of sacrifice as one guided by reciprocity and mutuality.

II. SACRIFICE AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Fanon's arguments for the necessity of armed struggle against colonialism have polarized readers to such an extent that he was either celebrated for his advocacy of the need to challenge colonial violence with violence by philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre,²⁶⁷ or he received sharp criticism from political theorists such as Hannah Arendt, who accused him of glorifying the use of violence without any caution.²⁶⁸ As a result, his arguments for armed struggle are rarely situated in relation to political practices such as sacrifice or political solidarity, which are ethical-political practices that bind political communities together. With few exceptions, rarely is the question raised about how the turn to violent resistance is a form of political sacrifice that distributes the immense burden of struggling against imperialist regimes across the colonized and decolonized world. Specifically, few studies on Fanon's conception of political violence explore the forms of political support and alliances made possible through the turn to violent political resistance.²⁶⁹ In this section, I articulate the relationship between sacrifice and political violence as having two

²⁶⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre "Preface" in Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, iv-xii.

²⁶⁸ Hannah Arendt, *On Violence*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich, 1970), 12-21.

²⁶⁹ For a recent exploration of the use of political violence to struggle against the undemocratic rule and domination of postcolonial states see Neera Chandhoke, *Democracy and Revolutionary Politics* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

dimensions in Fanon's writings: It is simultaneously a relationship that produces sacrificial victims and agents. Given this, I argue that violent armed struggle in Fanon's writings was not merely a means that was strategically necessary to end the greater violence of colonialism, but it was also a political practice that produced sacrificial agents who fortified intercontinental solidarity between Third World peoples in their struggle against imperialist rule and domination in the colonial and postcolonial era.²⁷⁰

At first glance, the connection between sacrifice and political violence in Fanon's writings is articulated as a victim-claiming relation that is specific to the national context. He describes sacrifice as inaugurating a foundational violence that claims the lives of a recalcitrant colonizing class who are unwilling to give up their rule and accept the process of decolonization. As he writes, "The work of the colonist is to make even dreams of liberty impossible for the colonized. The work of the colonized is to imagine every possible method for annihilating the colonist...For the colonized, life can only materialize from the rotting cadaver of the colonist."²⁷¹ These lines are representative of the charged and provocative language of *The Wretched*, which calls for the outright liquidation of the colonizing class through bloodshed if necessary. It also suggests that at the heart of Fanon's conception of decolonization is the logic of sacrifice asserting that lives must be slain in order to contain the otherwise potentially limitless violence of

²⁷⁰ For critical interpretations of Fanon's account of political violence see George Ciccariello-Maher, "To Lose Oneself in the Absolute: Revolutionary Subjectivity in Sorel and Fanon," *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5, no. 3 (June 21, 2007); Anthony C. Alessandrini, *Frantz Fanon and the Future of Cultural Politics: Finding Something Different* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014); Anthony C. Alessandrini, ed., *Frantz Fanon: Critical Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Gerald E. Tucker, "Machiavelli and Fanon: Ethics, Violence, and Action," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 16, no. 3 (September 1978): 397–415; Robert J. C. Young, "Fanon and the Turn to Armed Struggle in Africa," *Wasafiri* 20, no. 44 (March 1, 2005): 33–41; Messay Kebede, "The Rehabilitation of Violence and the Violence of Rehabilitation: Fanon and Colonialism," *Journal of Black Studies* 31, no. 5 (May 1, 2001): 539–62.

²⁷¹ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 50.

colonialism maintained through pure force.²⁷² As uncomfortable as Fanon was with violence throughout his whole life,²⁷³ he understood the killing of the colonizer as an act of sacrifice that was necessary to bring about the end of colonialism. The connection between political violence and sacrifice is thus initially a victim claiming relationship. The lives of the colonizing class are taken by the desperate and brutalized colonial subjects who are produced by the violent political order, which the colonizers themselves created. In this sense, Fanon understands the colonizers as victims of the violent political order that they themselves created, and some of their lives must now be sacrificed to give birth to a new political order. As Fanon writes, “The argument chosen by the colonized was conveyed to them by the colonist, and by an ironic twist of fate it is now the colonized who state that it is the colonizer who only understands the language of force.”²⁷⁴

The fact that a Fanonian practice of sacrifice deploys violence, which takes the lives of the colonizing class, is what makes it fundamentally incompatible with a liberal democratic conception of sacrifice. Fanon’s rejection of the possibility that the colonizing class can respond to racial injustice with reciprocity and a readiness to make sacrifices in their material and symbolic power drives him toward the conclusion that they will

²⁷² As Fanon argues in the chapter “On Violence,” “The relationship between the colonist and colonized is one of physical mass. Against the greater number the colonist pits his force. See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 17. The distinction between force and violence is important in *The Wretched*. Namely, Fanon’s call for violence is against the immense capacity of settler colonial regimes to deploy brutal force against the colonized. As Robert J. C. Young has argued, Fanon’s turn to armed struggle should be contextualized within the second phase of decolonization which involved resistance toward entrenched settler states throughout Africa and the overwhelming imperialist interferences of the Cold War era. See Young, “Fanon and the Turn to Armed Struggle in Africa.”

²⁷³ For instance, Simone de Beauvoir reflects that in her conversations with Fanon, he spoke with equal horror of the violence inflicted by the colonizing powers and the counter-violence that emerged in response to them. See David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography* (London ; New York: Verso, 2012), 457.

²⁷⁴ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 42.

inevitably be victims of the violence that they set in motion. It is because the connection between sacrifice and violence is a victim-claiming relation, that it becomes difficult to conceive of sacrifice and violence as generating ethical-political practices of solidarity that bind political communities together. In part, this is because violence is outside of politics in the liberal democratic conception of society and state. Violence is marginalized to the realm of punishment and defense of the state. In contrast, politics involves ethical-political practices of solidarity, compromise, deliberation, mutuality and recognition, all practices which respect the legitimacy and stability of the liberal democratic state. For Fanon, this liberal democratic distinction between politics and violence cannot hold in colonial and settler-colonial states.²⁷⁵ Politics is conducted through forms of violence that arise from external imperial domination and internal elite domination. Under these conditions, he argues that the ethical-political practices of the colonized masses emerge by appropriating the violence of colonialism to build a new form of polity without violence, and a new world for humanity free of rule by domination. As Fanon writes, “The colonized subject discovers reality and transforms it through his praxis, his deployment of violence and his agenda for liberation.”²⁷⁶

Therefore, although the conjunction between political violence and sacrifice produces sacrificial victims, Fanon also conceives of the relationship as producing sacrificial agents at the national and intercontinental level.²⁷⁷ For instance, Fanon

²⁷⁵ Elizabeth Frazer and Kimberly Hutchings make this point clearly in Frazer and Hutchings, “On Politics and Violence: Arendt Contra Fanon,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 7, no. 1 (February 1, 2008): 90–108.

²⁷⁶ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. 21.

²⁷⁷ On the distinction between sacrificial victims and agents see Susan L. Mizruchi, *The Science of Sacrifice: American Literature and Modern Social Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 352–354.

frequently lauds and reveres “...the people, who, as always, are prepared to sacrifice everything and soak the national soil with their blood.”²⁷⁸ The heroic acts that the colonized engage in are violent and bloody acts needed to accelerate the decolonization struggle. In this process, the colonized are most definitely victims of the violence unleashed by the colonial regime. Their lives are endangered by the violence perpetuated by the racial apartheid instituted by the colonial regime, and also by the brutality with which they are contained and kept under close scrutiny through rifle butts and napalm.²⁷⁹ However, Fanon wants to also emphasize the dimension of self-sacrifice, which essentially transforms the colonized from sacrificial victims to agents in their struggle for decolonization. The colonized do this by taking control of the violence inflicted on them and redirecting it toward their liberation. Fanon describes the violence of colonial Algeria as “atmospheric,” in that it permeates every aspect of the settler colony, from every day interactions at gunpoint, to the diversion of basic necessities and resources such as water, food, and transportation away from the “native” sector.²⁸⁰ Fanon’s argument is that the colonized who were constituted by the atmospheric violence of colonialism had to re-appropriate it and thus transform themselves from objects that could be sacrificed for the survival and perpetuation of the colony to sacrificial agents who risked their own lives by seizing the enabling violence of the colonial regime to abolish it.

The self-sacrificing work of the colonized was agentic at the national and intercontinental scale. At the national level, Fanon famously argued that violence was a

²⁷⁸ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 94

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 31 Fanon writes, “let us return to this atmospheric violence, this violence rippling under the skin.”

cleansing force. He writes, “It rids the colonized of their inferiority complex, of their passive and despairing attitude. It emboldens them, and restores their self-confidence.”²⁸¹ The conceptualization of violence as a cleansing force has frequently been read to mean that Fanon advocated for the cathartic benefits of violence.²⁸² In fact, this is a misreading that is rooted in the translation of “la violence désintoxique”²⁸³ to “violence is a cleansing force” by Richard Philcox. In fact, in the original French, Fanon speaks of violence as detoxifying, which is to suggest that the self-sacrificing act of engaging in armed resistance has the power to open the eyes of the colonized to the poisoning that has been done to them. Fanon writes on a number of occasions of the false reality set up by the colonizing class. For instance he says, “the supremacy of white values is stated with such violence, the victorious confrontation of these values with the lifestyle and beliefs of the colonized is so impregnated with aggressiveness.”²⁸⁴ In other words, the denigration of the colonized peoples’ way of life is accomplished with such totality that they are robbed of their sense of self worth and their ability to conceive of themselves as actors who can create their own reality. Through the process of revolutionary armed struggle, they risk

²⁸¹ Ibid., 51

²⁸² Yoweri T. Museveni, for example, uses the quotation “At the level of individuals, violence is a cleaning force” as the epigraph to his article exploring the relevance of Fanon’s “theory on violence” to liberated parts of Mozambique in the late 1960s. See Museveni, “Fanon’s Theory on Violence: Its Verification in Liberated Mozambique,” in *Essays on the Liberation of Southern Africa*, ed. by Nathan M. Shamuyarira (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1971), 1–24. Museveni argues that “not only is violence the only effective instrument of bringing about the real overthrow of colonial rule, it is also a laxative, a purgative, an agent for creating new men” (p. 4). Leaders of the Black Power movement in America foregrounded this aspect of Fanon’s writing in a similar way: Eldridge Cleaver, for example, argued that Fanon viewed violence as a way for colonial subjects to “achieve their manhood” and “experience themselves as men” see E. Cleaver, “Psychology: The Black Bible”, in *Eldridge Cleaver: Post-Prison Writings and Speeches*, ed. by Robert Scheer (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), 18–20.

²⁸³ Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*. Paris: La Découverte, 2004, 10.

²⁸⁴ Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 8.

and sacrifice their own lives, and by doing so, they both see and work toward a new reality, changing their understanding of themselves and their national culture. It is in this sense that violence is detoxifying at the national level, and the work of sacrifice involved in revolutionary struggle is imbued with agentic qualities.

The ability to see through the mystifications of colonialism cultivates “national consciousness” and readies colonized peoples to embrace the struggle against colonialism and imperialism at a larger, intercontinental scale. In other words, as Fanon persistently declares in different formulations throughout *The Wretched* “It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and thrives.”²⁸⁵ Moreover, as Fanon makes clear in the opening lines to *The Wretched*, “..decolonization is quite simply the substitution of one “species” of mankind by another. The substitution is unconditional, absolute, total, and seamless.”²⁸⁶ In other words, it is insufficient for individuals to rid themselves of their inferiority complexes through their sacrificial agency. There must be a transformation at a larger collective level that involves more than a mere handover of power to another ruling class. It must be a complete replacement and substitution of rule by domination at the global scale. Decolonization thus involves the end to external domination through colonial-imperialism and the end of internal domination by indigenous elites. Only in this sense can decolonization be “the substitution of one “species” of mankind by another.”²⁸⁷ To bring this about, Fanon contends that the colonized must also be prepared to act as sacrificial agents beyond the

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 180.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 1.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

nation-state. Thus, in his writings he gestures to the ways in which the colonized take on risks and vulnerabilities at the intercontinental scale through their engagement in armed struggle. Doing so, they act as sacrificial agents who share the immense burden of decolonizing a world shaped by rule by domination.

Notably, the chapter “On Violence” was initially published as an article in the journal *Les Temps Modernes* in May, 1961. In its initial composition, the chapter did not include the final section “On Violence in the International Context” and was later included when Fanon published the final version as the first chapter of *The Wretched* in December, 1961.²⁸⁸ Without this section, the chapter does not project the anti-colonial struggle to the intercontinental scale. Fanon confines the descriptions of the armed struggle to different national contexts in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The colonized people, although aware of the international context of anti-colonial struggles,²⁸⁹ are largely portrayed as being immersed in armed struggle and taking on the sacrifices it involves in order to achieve national liberation from colonialism. However, the inclusion of this final section on the nature of imperialist violence in international context draws these struggles outward into the changing context of the Cold War; a context that he saw as instilling anti-colonial struggles with a new political significance. As he writes,

The basic confrontation which seemed to be colonialism versus anticolonialism, indeed capitalism versus socialism, is already losing its importance. What matters today, the issue which blocks the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity will have to address this question, no matter how devastating the consequences may be.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Macey, *Frantz Fanon*, 451.

²⁸⁹ For instance Fanon writes, “Colonized peoples are not alone. Despite the efforts of colonialism, their frontier remain permeable to news and rumors.” Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 31.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 55.

Here, Fanon is pushing the second wave of decolonization struggles around the Third World to address the global conditions of inequality left behind by the centuries of colonialism. Thus, this final section should not be read as a mere addendum, but rather as a crucial section which makes it possible to read the whole chapter as persistently pushing national struggles outward to an intercontinental scale. In other words, Fanon laid out the preparatory work in the first chapter that makes it possible for *The Wretched* to be read as a political treatise that would allow Third World peoples to broaden the sacrifices they made at the national level to the intercontinental scale.

Thus, when Fanon refers to the first battles against colonialism in Vietnam, he does not merely applaud the Vietnamese people for their courage and strength in taking up armed struggle against the French Union's troops. Rather, he writes:

The success of this violence plays not only an informative role, but also an operative one. The great victory of the Vietnamese people at Dien Bien Phu is no longer strictly speaking a Vietnamese victory. From July 1954 onward the colonial peoples have been asking themselves: "What must we do to achieve a Dien Bien Phu? How should we go about it?"²⁹¹

The victory of the Viet Minh at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu marked an important shift in that it expanded the political imagination of colonized peoples to the intercontinental scale to tackle the colossal structure of global imperialism. Thus, 1954 marked a shift in decolonization movements as they became increasingly entangled in the emerging ideological war between capitalist and communist nation-states. Although Fanon acknowledges that many Third World nations took the stance of neutrality in this ideological war,²⁹² he also makes clear that it was not an agnostic position on the question

²⁹¹ Ibid., 30, 31.

²⁹² Ibid. 40, 41.

of economic development and modernity.²⁹³ In fact, decolonization movements across the Third World began to see their struggles as part of a larger anti-imperialist armed insurgency that could build sufficient political power to defeat the political influence and military prowess of the emerging superpowers of the Cold War era.

In this sense, it is important that the central question that Fanon poses is “What must we do to achieve a Dien Bien Phu?” Fanon argues that the victory at Dien Bien Phu signaled to national liberation struggles that they must expand the sacrifices they make toward the global struggle against imperialism. The central political question for Fanon effectively changed from, “What sacrifices and risks must we take to get free from colonialism?” to “How must those sacrifices and risks be broadened to support an intercontinental struggle against imperialism? In other words, the question was not narrowly constricted to national liberation, rather, it became much more about how to support and give solidarity to the victims of imperialist aggression across the Third World. Moreover, Fanon’s argument about the significance of Dien Bien Phu demonstrates that it was not enough to wish the victims success, but it was necessary to share their fate by accompanying them to defeat or victory by taking on the same sacrifices and risks in life that they took on. It is in this sense that Dien Bien Phu was not merely informative, but rather operative.²⁹⁴ Fanon argues that the event was a call to

²⁹³ Ibid. As Fanon writes, “Neutrality produces in the citizen of the Third World an attitude of mind which translates in everyday life to a brazenness and hieratic pride strangely resembling an act of defiance.” Here, Fanon articulates the non-alignment movement not as taking a position of impartiality on the question of economic development, but rather an unwillingness to be embroiled in ideological struggles to which the Third World is merely a battleground between emerging superpowers of the postwar era. Rather, they were disillusioned by both capitalist “welfare states” and Stalinist bureaucratic centralism of the postwar social resolutions and sought alternative models for economic development and modernity. However, Fanon, like other revolutionaries of the Maoist phase of Third Worldism, argued that alternatives could only be realized with the defeat of global imperialism.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 30-31 “The success of this violence plays not only an informative role, but also an operative one.”

decolonization struggles across the Third World to give genuine solidarity to the Vietnamese by changing their political orientation from the national to intercontinental scale and create a second and third Dien Bien Phu in each of their particular national contexts as part of a global war against imperialism. In this way, Fanon envisions colonized peoples as sacrificial agents who act at the intercontinental scale. They begin to re-imagine their national sacrifices for political independence and economic freedom as part of a global struggle against imperialism. In the next two sections, I turn to Fanon's writings in *African Revolution* to track the ways in which the nature of sacrifice as a practice of political solidarity shifts as it moves from an expression of national consciousness to intercontinentalism.

III. BEYOND ALGERIA: SACRIFICE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THIRD WORLD SOLIDARITY

Fanon's political essays, articles and notes, collectively published in *African Revolution*, are gathered from his time working and organizing towards the decolonization of Algeria. These writings were produced in the midst of struggle and revolution, and thus, Fanon's prose was born out of the constant volatility and flux of a dynamic and dangerous political context. Despite this, there are a number of persistent threads of argument that emerge in his writings from this period, which are important to pay attention to. One of these lines of argument is on the need to connect the Algerian Revolution to the struggles for decolonization in the rest of the Third World. Although his writings are firmly grounded in Algeria, he repeatedly insists on the common nature of the struggle of colonized peoples against imperialism. For this reason, Fanon underscores that Algeria's importance stems from the fact that the events leading up to the revolution in the French

colony inaugurated a second phase of decolonization struggles across the Third World where it was no longer sufficient to combat colonialism at the national level, but rather the struggle had to be expanded to counter the re-assertion of imperialism at the global level.²⁹⁵ In the move from national liberation in Algeria to the global struggle against imperialism, sacrifice as a political practice of solidarity transforms to encompass a larger racial and ethnic community than the narrow conceptions identity articulated by national origin stories. In other words, one of the specific features of anti-colonial nationalism in this second phase of decolonization during the 1950s and 1960s is that these movements arise within global political context which demands sacrifices not just for the liberation of a nationally oppressed peoples, but rather for a globally oppressed peoples.²⁹⁶

Fanon expresses this argument most explicitly in the article “The Algerian War and Man’s Liberation” from *El Moudjahid*. In this article, Fanon calls Algeria a “guide territory” of the second phase of decolonization, by which he means that its struggle for independence was understood by other nations under imperial domination as “an invitation, an encouragement and a promise.”²⁹⁷ The major demonstrations across Algeria

²⁹⁵ For instance Fanon writes of the fragility of independence, which calls into existence the second phase of decolonization which makes it necessary to think of a world strategy of coalition against imperial domination, “All the colonial countries that are waging the struggle today must know that the political independence that they will wring from the enemy in exchange for the maintenance of an economic dependency is only a snare and a delusion, that the second phase of total liberation is necessary because required by the popular masses, that this second phase, because it is a capital one, is bound to be hard and waged with iron determination, that finally at that stage, it will be necessary to take the world strategy of coalition into account, for the West simultaneously face a double problem: the communist danger and the coming into being of a third neutral coalition, represented essentially by the underdeveloped countries.” Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*, trans. Haakon Chevalier, (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 125-126.

²⁹⁶ For the specificity of nationalist movements that emerge in the postwar period that takes decolonization as the watershed moment for nationalism rather than the French or American revolution, see John D. Kelly and Martha Kaplan, “Nation and Decolonization: Toward a New Anthropology of Nationalism,” *Anthropological Theory* 1, no. 4 (December 1, 2001): 419–37.

²⁹⁷ Fanon and Maspero, *Toward the African Revolution*. 145.

for independence were a signal to other colonized nations across the Third World to continue the protracted struggle against European colonialism by any means necessary to secure economic independence and political autonomy. Specifically, it signaled that the methods of struggle used in the Algerian Revolution and the corresponding sacrifices in life and well-being of a long and bloody conflict could bring an imperial power to its heels and secure the independence of the colony. Thus, the Algerian struggle had global repercussions across the Third World in so far as its path to political freedom became one of the models for decolonization during the 1950s.

Algeria's position as a guide territory of the Third World also shaped the self-understanding of the Algerian masses. Fanon contends that Algerians saw themselves as embodying a larger struggle for freedom than just their own liberation from French colonialism. As he writes:

The Algerian war is far from ended and at the dawn of this fifth year of war the men and women of Algeria, gripped by an incoercible hunger for peace, lucidly measure the very difficult road they still have to travel. But the positive, decisive, irreversible result that their struggle has just made possible in Africa sustain their faith and strengthen their combativity.²⁹⁸

In this passage, Fanon argues that when Algerians reflect on the sacrifices they have made in risking their lives through hunger and battle to attain independence for their nation, they think not just of Algeria but also the liberation of a larger community beyond Algeria. In fact, what instills Algerians with encouragement and strength to continue on the "road they still have to travel" are the dreams of a liberated Africa. In this sense, Fanon's portrait of the Algerian struggle for independence is untethered from narrow conceptions of ethnic or religious nationalism, which would have excluded the possibility of making sacrifices in the interest of a larger and more plural political community along

²⁹⁸ Ibid. 147.

the lines of race, religion and ethnicity. In fact, Africa re-appears on several occasions in this article as the political community for which Algerians serve as a guide territory of liberation. Thus, Fanon's numerous articles in the *El Moudjahid* consistently documented the continental dimensions of the Algerian Revolution, that was otherwise largely underrepresented.²⁹⁹ Fanon's representation is on the one hand what he observes concretely on the ground as indicated by the journalistic style of the reporting of these articles. On the other hand, they are also aspirational in so far as he was attempting to fully develop and amplify what he sees as the nascent tendencies of the Algerian revolution to go beyond the demand for national liberation.

Fanon was fully aware that the FLN's newspaper *El Moudjahid* was mostly read by members of the organization who were immersed in the daily struggle of the Algerian Revolution. He knew that he was speaking to readers who were committed to the struggle for independence and were prepared to continually making sacrifices to secure freedom for Algeria. Consequently, through these articles he had the ability to shape the political perspective of those who continually made sacrifices for political freedom. For instance, *El Moudjahid* is a name that emerged from the French transliteration of Arabic, meaning "holy warrior," which is also the name the FLN used to refer to those engaged in the struggle against French colonialism. Thus, this newspaper and the articles within were the FLN's direct communication channel with resistance fighters. Fanon used the opportunity to write in the newspaper as a way of making appeals that could shape the political community that emerged from the Algerian struggle for independence. Alongside conceptions of popular sovereignty relating to nationhood and the transnational political

²⁹⁹ Fanon is one of the only writers from the postwar era who make the connection between Algeria and Africa persistently. His contemporaries such as Albert Memmi, Assia Djebar or Albert Camus do not make this connection.

community of the Muslim *ummah*, Fanon advanced a third expression of popular sovereignty that was continental in reach. In this sense, he does not merely report on the anti-colonial struggle in Algeria, but attempts to actively shape the popular will of those engaged in struggle so that it was not confined to expressions of national or religious community, but rather grounded in a political community united by their common interest in ending global imperialism. As he writes:

Algeria, the bridgehead of Western colonialism in Africa, has rapidly become the hornet's nest in which French imperialism has got itself stuck and in which the insensate hopes of the Western oppressors have been swallowed up. ... This is because the Algerian people know that it has the support of immense international democratic forces. Moreover, the Algerian masses are conscious of the importance of their combat to the African continent as a whole.³⁰⁰

Fanon conveys with these lines the international significance of the Algerian struggle to those immersed in it, compelling them to see the impact of their everyday sacrifices at a global level, where the imperialist ambitions of Western powers are arrested by the struggle they wage at a national level. In turn, they are also made conscious of the immense support they receive from other parts of Africa and the Third World.

Through this feedback loop, Fanon seeks to instigate a slow expansion of political consciousness from Algeria to Africa and outwards to the Third World. For instance, Fanon is clear from the outset of the article "The Algerian War and Man's Liberation" that it is not just the relationship between Algeria and Africa that he seeks to fortify, but rather he imagines a much more interdependent coalition of nation-states between Africa, Asia and the Americas. He writes:

Among colonized peoples there seems to exist a kind of illuminating and sacred communication... Every setback of colonial domination in America or in Asia strengthens the national will of the African peoples. It is in the national struggle against the oppressor that colonized peoples have discovered, concretely, the

³⁰⁰ Fanon and Maspero, *Toward the African Revolution*., 147.

solidarity of the colonialist bloc and the necessary interdependence of the liberation movements.³⁰¹

In other words, the global frame of reference in which he seeks to situate the growing synergy of anti-colonial struggles in Algeria and Africa is the intercontinental solidarity that was emerging between Asia, Africa and the Americas. Fanon argues here that the sacrifices of the colonized peoples in the Americas or in Asia strengthened the resolve of those waging similar struggles in Africa because every setback experienced by the colonial power as a result of the anti-colonial struggle sends out ripples of confidence and optimism throughout the colonized world. In this sense, even Algerians acted knowing that their actions would have repercussions not just on the African continent but also at an intercontinental scale. They imagined their sacrifices as contributing to the freedom of a larger world than just their own.

For this reason, Fanon's overall argument is that anti-colonial nationalism in this second phase of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s sought to break out of the ideology of nationalism and was in fact grounded in a broader conception of intercontinentalism as its ideological anchor. In *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Partha Chatterjee famously asked scholars of nationalism whether colonized nations had no other choice but to simply replicate Europe's imaginings of nationhood and national identity?³⁰² Throughout Fanon's writings, he shows the ways in which anti-colonial nationalism was not simply a derivation of European nationalism, but rather grounded in the political contestation and identity formation of the anti-imperialist movements of the 20th century, particularly that of Third

³⁰¹ Ibid. 145.

³⁰² Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1993), 25-24.

World internationalism which Fanon conceives in his writings as a form of intercontinentalism. Consequently, political sacrifice, one of the foundational practices of nationalism, gets re-imagined in expressions of anti-colonial nationalism as an act which colonized peoples take on for a political community that extends beyond the nation-state. In the next section of the paper, I examine the political significance of this re-imagining as a strategy for dismantling global imperialism.

IV. FROM ALGERIA TO AFRICA: DISTRIBUTING THE BURDENS OF SACRIFICE

The question of how racial and ethnic minorities within a nation-state can survive the demands of extraordinary sacrifice arose in the context of racial justice struggles in the United States. Largely absent from this discussion was how black radicals in the United States identified with and looked toward the Third World in their struggles against racial violence and discrimination within the United States. For instance, many members of the Black Panther Party, including Eldridge Cleaver, Kathleen Cleaver and Pete O'Neal, went to Algeria to seek temporary safe-haven and to establish an international chapter of the Black Panther Party in Algiers. The Algiers chapter of the BPP lasted from 1969 to 1973, and although it has received very little attention, the chapter served an important role in connecting the struggle of black Americans with anti-imperialist struggles across the Third World.³⁰³ In other words, the struggle for freedom in black America were part of the intercontinental movement against global imperialism that emerged during the

³⁰³ One of the few primary accounts of the Black Panther Party's chapter in Algeria is from the diary of Elaine Mokhtefi, "Diary," *London Review of Books*, June 1, 2017; Also see Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin Jr, *Black against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party*, (University of California Press, 2016), 316-321.

second phase of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s. Algeria served as a “guide territory” for many black Americans in the United States, just as it had for those struggling against colonialism across Africa, Asia and Latin America.³⁰⁴ Members of the BPP connected the struggles against American racism with U.S imperialism abroad and made efforts to build solidarity with the ongoing decolonization struggles in the Third World. By going beyond national identification during this second phase of decolonization, anti-imperialist movements across the world were able to strategically disperse the burdens of struggling against the mutually imbricated structures of racism and imperialism at the national and global level.

Having begun to identify with a broader political community than that which was defined by conceptions of racial, ethnic, religious or national identity, anti-imperialists took on sacrifices that could realize the liberation of colonized peoples across the Third World. For instance, revolutionaries in Cuba were the first to throw their support behind the Algerian struggle against French colonialism. Cuban doctors and soldiers were the first to arrive in Algeria to strengthen the Algerian people’s resistance of imperialist domination. In other words, Cubans made sacrifices in their life and resources in order to support an international struggle against imperialism. Similarly, the Black Panther Party greatly admired the courage and tenacity of the Vietnamese people as they took up armed struggle against imperialist aggression, which prompted Huey Newton to offer troops to the National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government of South

³⁰⁴ For more on the connections between US activists of color and Third World liberation struggles see Cynthia A. Young, *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a U.S. Third World Left* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2006).

Vietnam.³⁰⁵ Although Deputy Commander Nguyen Thi Dinh graciously declined the Party's offer, the action itself is an indication of the evolving practice of political solidarity during the second phase of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s. Namely, political solidarity was not limited to a verbal expression of support for imperialist struggles, as has often been the case at earlier moments of Third World internationalism. Instead, an extension of political solidarity was understood to mean that the burdens of political struggle had to be shared between colonized people through sacrifices in life, personal well-being and resources. In this sense, Fanon's call to create a second or third Dien Bien Phu³⁰⁶ arose from the strategic belief that the war against imperialism could not be won if Third World nations were isolated in their struggle to end colonial domination. Colonized peoples could not survive the extraordinary demands of sacrifice required to abolish the intertwined structure of racism and imperialism at the national or global level without fully harnessing the powers of political solidarity. The Vietnamese, although resilient in their struggle against French and American imperialism, could only tackle "the local phase of a world problem."³⁰⁷ They would need the support of anti-imperialist

³⁰⁵ In his letter offering aid to South Vietnam, Newton writes "In the spirit of international revolutionary solidarity the Black Panther Party hereby offers to the National Liberation Front and Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam an undetermined number of troops to assist you in your fight against American imperialism. It is appropriate for the Black Panther Party to take this action at this time in recognition of the fact that *your struggle is also our struggle, for we recognize that our common enemy is the American imperialist who is the leader of international bourgeois domination. There is not one fascist or reactionary government in the world today that could stand without the support of United States imperialism.* Therefore our problem is international, and we offer these troops in recognition of the necessity for inter-national alliances to deal with this problem." See Newton, "To the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam" in *To Die for the People*, ed. Toni Morrison, (San Francisco, Calif: City Lights Publishers, 2009), 180 -183.

³⁰⁶ As Fanon writes, "A Dien Bien Phu was now within reach of every colonized subject. The problem was mustering forces, organizing them and setting a date for action This pervading atmosphere of violence affects not just the colonized but also the colonizers who realize the number of latent Dien Bien Phu's." See Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 31.

³⁰⁷ This phrase comes from an article Du Bois published in 1906 "The Color Line Belts the World." In it he attempts to re-imagine his color line thesis as linked to colonized parts of Asia. It is one of the early

movements across the Third World in order to expand their struggle to tackle the bipolar power structure of the postwar world. Toward this end, Fanon lays out some of the ways in which sacrifice as a practice of political solidarity distributed the immense burdens of waging an armed struggle against the colossal structure of imperial power.

Among the writings published in the *African Revolution* is an article by Fanon on the first All African Peoples' Conference held in Accra, Ghana in 1958. Fanon attended as a delegate from Algeria and gave an electrifying speech on a rostrum backed by a banner emblazoned with the slogan "Down with Colonialism and Imperialism."³⁰⁸ In the aftermath of the conference, it is this image that has become a paradigmatic reference point for the conference. Fanon's speech and the representation of his presence at the All African Peoples' Conference re-signified the importance of the conference from a continent-wide gathering on African unity to one that connected the African continent to the global struggle against colonialism and imperialism. In his two articles on the conference, which were published in *El Moudjahid* soon after the conference, Fanon writes of the debates on non-violence and violence that took center stage at the conference. In these articles, Fanon does not make abstract arguments about the detoxifying and purgative effects of violence as he did in *The Wretched*. Instead, he makes a strategic argument for the use of violence by underscoring how peaceful decolonization was built on the heels of those who have taken on the risks and sacrifices involved with threatening colonial powers with violent resistance. In a section titled "Violence and Non-Violence: The End and the Means," he writes,

attempts to connect the American experience of racism with the global problem of imperialism. See Du Bois, W.E.B., *W.E.B. Du Bois on Asia: Crossing the World Color Line*, ed. Mullen, Bill V. and Watson, Cathryn (Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2005); Kelley, "But a Local Phase of a World Problem."

³⁰⁸ Macey, *Frantz Fanon*, 364.

Raising the problem of a non-violent decolonization is less the postulation of a sudden humanity on the part of the colonialist than believing in the sufficient pressure of the new ratio of forces on an international scale. It is clear, for example, that France has initiated a process of decolonization in Africa south of the Sahara. This innovation without violence has been made possible by the successive setbacks to French colonialism in other territories.³⁰⁹

Here, Fanon makes the argument that non-violent decolonization is an end achieved through violent means. The successive setbacks to French colonialism in other territories through violent struggle were crucial to forcing the colonial power to eventually capitulate and withdraw peacefully. Furthermore, he contends that “the sufficient pressure of the new ratio of forces on an international scale” was a determining factor in forcing colonial powers to relinquish their hold over land and resources in Africa and Asia - the two continents at the center of decolonization during the second phase in the 1950s and 1960s. Consequently, the upshot of Fanon’s contention is that non-violent decolonization was only possible because the difficult burden of waging violent struggle was dispersed between colonized peoples across the world, which created a general climate of danger and instability that raised the stakes for European powers to continue with colonialism. In this sense, the risks and sacrifices which colonized people took on to wage violent struggle at a national level could not be understood in isolation because they contributed to what Fanon calls a “new ratio of forces on an international scale,” which was able to collectively exert pressure on imperial powers to decolonize.

Notably, Fanon’s articles in the *El Moudjahid* between 1957 and 1958 persistently articulate his understanding of a global system in crisis during the 1950s. A few months before the conference in Accra, Fanon had elaborated on this argument in an article titled “A Continued Crisis,” which he published in May 1958. In this article, Fanon centers the

³⁰⁹ Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution*, 155.

exploitative relationship between Western powers and Africa as the pivotal node of the colonial system that needed to be broken. Fanon envisioned Africa as the epicenter of imperial wars in the postwar era. As he writes, “Africa, France’s restricted hunting ground tends to be replaced by a second formula, Africa, Europe’s restricted hunting ground.”³¹⁰ He foresaw the ways in which decolonization released African resources from France’s monopoly to other European powers for exploitation. He included the United States as a major player in this gamble for power and resources.³¹¹ For this reason, Fanon argues that ensuring the democratic self-rule of the nation-states of the African continent was crucial to forestalling the re-constitution of imperial power in the postwar era. He asserts that Western powers would not be able to continue their centuries long accumulation of power and wealth in the global system without the ability to sustain their exploitation of African resources into the postwar era; without their ability to engage in a renewed scramble for Africa.³¹²

Given this analysis of the global system, Fanon conceives of the transition from the national struggle against colonialism to international struggle against imperialism as being centered on Africa, and particularly on Algeria. Fanon describes Algeria as the gateway to access African resources, making it all the more important for France and

³¹⁰ Ibid., 108.

³¹¹ For instance, Fanon writes: “The United States of America, face to face with the communist world, is developing an African policy which fundamentally corresponds with the new European positions. Ibid, 108. Importantly, largely absent from Fanon’s analysis of the centrality of Africa in the postwar era, was China’s interest and influence in the region throughout the twentieth century. Fanon only ever refers to China as a sleeping giant in *African Revolution*, who like newly decolonized nations in Asia were just beginning to build a society free from imperialist domination. Ibid., 153.

³¹² On the centrality of Africa to the West see Fanon, *African Revolution*, 153.

other major European nations to establish territorial control over Algeria.³¹³ Thus, Fanon imbues the Algerian struggle for independence with immense significance. He writes: “The war of liberation of the Algerian people has spread the gangrene and carried the rot of the system to such a point that it has become obvious to observers that a global crisis must result.”³¹⁴ In other words, Fanon understands Algeria as one of the cornerstones that will be indispensable for setting up a structure for Western imperial dominance in the postwar era, making the independence struggle of Algerian peoples crucial to cutting off access to African resources that sustain imperial powers. To provoke gangrene in the body politic of imperial power, he contends that it will be necessary to cut off the vital blood supply that surges from the African continent to imperial nation-states.

For this reason, Fanon argues that the intercontinental struggle against imperial domination focused its energies on Algeria in order to foment a global atmosphere of crisis. The slogan “Hands Off Africa,” which was circulating in movements and conferences during the 1950s, particularly at the All African People’s Conference in Accra, was a global declaration of solidarity with Africa by colonized peoples around the world. Fanon argues that colonized peoples saw the fate of Algeria and Africa as intimately interconnected with theirs, and they willingly took on their share of the burden of struggling against global imperialism by pitching their national liberation struggles to an intercontinental realm. To this end, Fanon describes the political climate that ensued after the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia as one defined by an expression of solidarity with Africa and a readiness to collectively share the burden of

³¹³ Ibid., 160. Fanon writes, “Algeria must remain French soil because the strategic necessities of Europe and of France require it.”

³¹⁴ Ibid., 114.

struggling against the imperial powers who sought to institute neo-colonial dominance in Africa. He writes:

It is worth emphasizing the immense enthusiasm aroused throughout the Afro-Asiatic countries by the epic struggle which the Algerian people has been waging for nearly four years. From Bandung to Cairo to Accra, the Afro-Asiatic peoples, all the oppressed of yesterday bear, support and increasingly assume the cause of the Algerian Revolution; it is absolutely not exaggerated to say that, more and more, France will have two continents against her in Algeria.³¹⁵

Here, Fanon asserts that moving beyond national liberation meant that colonized peoples bore, supported and increasingly assumed the cause of the Algerian Revolution, for Algeria was “the bridgehead of Western colonialism in Africa.”³¹⁶ Thus, the conferences of the era that brought together Third World nation-states became an arena in which to articulate the importance of dispersing the burden of sacrifices beyond the struggle for national liberation in order to prioritize the liberation and self-rule of the peoples of Algeria and the continent of Africa. Notably, Fanon effaces national distinctions to refer to the Afro-Asiatic people as a single body who collectively “the cause of the Algerian revolution.” He observes the unity of action that is enacted by an intercontinental body of people who act in concert to galvanize their collective political power and distribute the immense political work of dismantling powerful imperial nation-states.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Ibid., 109.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 153.

³¹⁷ Although in this passage, Fanon only refers to Africa and Asia as the two continents which are unified in the struggle against imperialism, he is also clear that the colonization of the Americas by European powers includes the region in the intercontinental movement against imperialism. For instance, of the Cold War battles in Latin America he writes: “We have only to remember the violent interventions in the West Indian archipelago or in Latin America every time the dictatorships supported by American policy were in danger. The Marines who today are being landed in Beirut are the brothers of those who, periodically, are sent to reestablish “order” in Haiti, in Costa Rica, in Panama. The United States considers that the two Americas constitute a world governed by the Monroe Doctrine whose application is entrusted to the American forces. The single article of this doctrine stipulates that America belongs to the Americans, in other words, to the State Department.” Ibid., 123.

Thus, it is not a coincidence that Fanon's articles from the *El Moudjahid* were collectively published under the title *Pour la révolution africaine*, translated as *Towards the African Revolution*. The persistent thread of argument in these articles is that colonized peoples must collectively work toward the liberation of Africa and do so by sharing the burden of the global struggle against imperialism. Fanon understood the freedom of the African continent as crucial for ensuring the freedom of the entire Third World. The democratic control of Africa's resources was vital for its own independence, but was also strategically important for depriving imperial powers of the ability to continue to accrue political and economic power in the postwar era. For this reason, Fanon appeals to the FLN revolutionaries in these articles to go beyond Algeria's national liberation to struggle for the liberation of Africa and the Third World. Concomitantly, Fanon appeals to decolonization movements across the world to mobilize their demands for national independence within a larger framework of African liberation and global anti-imperialism. Importantly, going beyond nation to the intercontinental level called forth practices of political solidarity that shared the burdens of global anti-imperialist struggle.

V. CONCLUSION

The second phase of decolonization during the 1950s and 1960s inaugurated two decades of deep instability and profound possibilities. The political and economic contours of the postwar world had yet to be determined and although it was clear that imperial powers had begun to jockey for power, Third World peoples were vigilant of the ways in which imperial domination sought to reassert itself on a national and global scale. In this chapter, I took up two of Fanon's works - *The Wretched* and *African Revolution* - which were

written at this world-historical moment of decolonization and Cold War power struggles. In these texts, Fanon puts forward political sacrifice as an important dimension of intercontinental political solidarity, which he argues to be a central practice that peoples of Asia, Africa, and the Americas engaged in to resist the resurgence of global imperialism. Namely, sacrifice transforms in significant ways when it shifts from an expression of national consciousness to intercontinental solidarity between the masses of the Third World. Specifically, sacrifice transforms in two ways 1) The demands of national sacrifice which are usually grounded in a narrow conception of racial/ethnic identity are transformed to encompass a multi-racial coalition. 2) The burdens of sacrifice are dispersed from resisting national populations to an intercontinental body of people in order to effect change at the global scale. By offering a conception of sacrifice that goes beyond national boundaries, Fanon provides an important framework for thinking about how oppressed minorities within racialized polities like the United States resisted white supremacy by turning to the Third World for political solidarity and community. As Fanon writes in the conclusion of an article titled “First Truths of on the Colonial Problem,” “The wolves must no longer find isolated lambs to prey upon. Imperialism must be blocked in all its attempts to strengthen itself. The peoples demand this; the historic process requires it.”³¹⁸ In other words, oppressed minorities could only survive the demands of sacrifice required to resist the dual structures of racism and imperialism by removing themselves from isolation, and harnessing the power of political solidarity.

³¹⁸ Ibid. 126.

CONCLUSION: FRANTZ FANON AS A THEORIST OF THIRD WORLD POLITICAL THOUGHT

After Fanon's death from leukemia on December 6, 1961 in Washington, D.C., the newly published *The Wretched of the Earth* was banned in France on grounds that it posed a threat to national security. *The Wretched* was considered to be a controversial text that incited "terrorism" in France and Algeria. However, despite efforts to suppress its circulation, Fanon's final work grew in popularity. It soon became one of the central texts that generated support and enthusiasm for the wave of Third Worldism that had begun to influence the French Left in the decade that followed Fanon's death. His political writings contributed to a new ferment in socialist thought in France, which centered anti-imperialist struggles across the Third World as a crucial to transforming the capitalist foundations of the postwar world. Outside of France, Fanon posthumously achieved fame as a Third World revolutionary to be read and discussed along side Ho Chi Minh, Che Guevara, and Amílcar Cabral. He became one of the main figures of the Tricontinental moment of the Third World movement that was deeply influenced by Maoism.

The relationship of Fanon's political writings to the Third World movement of the postwar era is largely forgotten, or only gestured to on occasion when the politically charged quality of his writings proves to be helpful for an introductory epigraph. There are very few sustained attempts to develop his contributions to Third Worldism despite the profound influence he had on the ideology and politics of this global anti-imperialist movement of the twentieth century. In this dissertation, I read Fanon's works chronologically from *Black Skin, White Masks* to *The Wretched of the Earth* in order to develop the strands of his political thinking that contributed to many elements of the third

phase of Third Worldism in the 1960s and 1970s. Fanon was deeply cognizant of the political currents during his time, in the 1950s and early 1960s, because he was immersed in political struggle through these decades and also connected to public spheres that brought together colonized peoples from across the world. He attended the international congresses of Black Writers and Artists throughout Europe, and numerous conferences throughout Africa to end colonial rule and inaugurate an era of independence. As a result of his political engagements in various spheres of public life, Fanon had a keen sense of the form of anti-imperialist political solidarities that were possible in the postwar era. Thus, I turn to Fanon's writings to recover his conception of political solidarity, which I argue is a form of intercontinental populism between Africa, Asia, and Latin America expressed through the political practices of vigilance and sacrifice. Namely, he posed this form of intercontinental solidarity as an alternative to the federalist departmentalization model that was emerging in the postwar era as a framework through which to achieve political and economic freedom for colonized peoples. As expressed in his first work, *Black Skin*, Fanon had argued that any form of political association with the imperial metropole would inevitably produce compromised citizenship rights for racialized subjects because of its tendency to be predicated on a model of persistent racial inclusion and exclusion. Thus, he urged colonized people to turn away from Europe, which he asserts, "never stops talking of man yet massacres him at every one of its street corners, at every corner of the world."³¹⁹

For Fanon, the Third World had the chance to set in motion a new humanism, born out of a struggle to abolish imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation. Out of this struggle, he imagines a new form of political community that heals the fracture and

³¹⁹ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 235.

disunity born out of imperialist greed, class stratification, and racial hatred. Fanon, being the ultimate dialectician, articulates different forms of political solidarities that are born to resist domination and exploitation before a truly just political community can find expression at the global scale. Among the political solidarities that he articulates are nationalism, pan-Africanism, and Third World intercontinentalism. He consistently argues that the intercontinental solidarity between colonized peoples of Africa, Asia, and the Americas initiates practices of political solidarity that seek to resist and abolish global imperialism in order to commence a “new history of man” grounded in the struggles of the colonized.³²⁰

Third Worldism was a powerful movement against global imperialism, but it declined towards the late 1970s and 1980s with the weakening and demise of the popular social movements that had sustained intercontinental solidarity against external imperialist domination and internal undemocratic rule. Many Third World nations fell victim to autocratic rule, including Algeria, which was Fanon’s guiding light for the Third World. This trend was often initiated and bolstered by the United States and its allies in Western Europe who, in an effort to secure treasured resources to maintain their global hegemony, orchestrated regime changes across the Third World. Despite the strength of populist movements throughout the Third World, especially in Latin America, imperialist powers often suppressed these movements with overwhelming political and military power. Thus, the story of the Third World and of the intercontinental populism it gave rise to, is one of eventual collapse. The Third World movement, nevertheless, arose at a world-historical moment and articulated a vision of collective subjectivity at the global scale that has rarely been seen since. Third Worldism, and those who gave voice to

³²⁰ Ibid., 239.

its vision, hold important keys to understanding imperialism today, and how to account for the different strands of opposition to the present. Namely, an understanding of Third Worldism is vital for building global opposition movements to war, imperialism, and capitalism today for it was one of the most vigorous opposition movements to global imperialism in the twentieth century.

Importantly, Fanon's body of work offers a historical and theoretical account of how political solidarity was forged at the global scale in order to contest and transform unequal geographies of power, which remains the defining characteristic that determines the relationship between and within the Global South and North. His account of intercontinentalism articulates a conception of political solidarity that goes against prevailing accounts, which tends to maintain that political solidarity is the outcome of an amalgamation of political interests. Instead, he articulates political solidarity as producing a new political identity of the Third World that is grounded in an alliance between the three continental spheres of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Doing so, he constructs an alternative geography to the one established by imperial power to facilitate labor and resource exploitation. Namely, the alternative geography of intercontinentalism was a non-state centered articulation of political solidarity that sought to democratize the world order across political, economic, and cultural spheres. In this sense, reconstructing Fanon's account of Third World intercontinentalism can provide important resources for contemporary social movements that have arisen at the global, regional, and local level to resist the re-assertion of imperial interests and neoliberal globalization. As a theorist of Third World political thought, Fanon provides important insights on how postwar

struggles against imperialism contested the reconstitution of transnational power structures in the postwar era by mobilizing multi-ethnic/racial political solidarities.

Notably, the history and geographies of these past struggles undermine the vision of opposing neoliberal globalization with small, bounded communities engaged in local resistance. Fanon writes of a tradition of resistance that sought to remake the unequal economic and political relations of the world order through the construction of an oppositional power bloc, which gave expression to popular sovereignty at a transnational scale. Doing so, he persistently evokes the oppositional strategies of Third World Maoism, which maintained that anti-colonial movements cannot simply be content with national liberation, but must work toward forging global solidarity with other colonized peoples to abolish imperialism by any means necessary. This is a political tradition that is largely ignored by contemporary social movements that challenge and seek alternatives to neoliberal globalization. The tensions of these social movements tend to be on whether opposition should be local or global; on whether to deploy violent or non-violent resistance; and on whether institutions like the World Trade Organization should be abolished or reformed. Paying closer attention to the rich tradition of Third World political thought can re-frame these debates and open the political possibilities latent in the present moment. In a global context where the nation-state is prostrate to the demands of global capital and the voting public continually expresses their anger and frustration at their political representatives in unpredictable ways, it is important to examine what forms of political identities, alliances, and solidarities are possible outside of the nation-state. Re-historicizing Fanon within the Third World political tradition offers important insights for how to articulate a dispersed global multitude into a coherent political force

that can continue the work of challenging and transforming unequal economic and political relations.

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