

THE VIOLENT ORIGINS OF PSYCHIC TRAUMA: FRANTZ FANON'S THEORY OF COLONIAL TRAUMA AND CATHERINE MALABOU'S CONCEPT OF THE NEW WOUNDED

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Octave Mannoni's Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization ([1950] 1964) adopts a clearly outdated colonial worldview. Nonetheless, I argue that it must still be critiqued, since its colonial legacy is apparent in the variants of racial and colonial logics and hierarchies at work in contemporary psychiatric, sociological, and philosophical descriptions of violence. In Black Skin, White Masks ([1952] 2008), Frantz Fanon refutes the theses of The Psychology of Colonization, written by his friend and colleague Mannoni, by linking them to colonial attitudes prevalent in classical French psychiatry and psychoanalysis (Baladier 1984, 16). It was not the first time that Fanon critiqued French colonial psychiatry. In "The North African Syndrome" ([1952] 1967), Fanon voiced his opposition to the work of the Antoine Porot, an ethno-psychiatrist and professor in the psychiatric school of Algiers. Porot's student Don Côme Arrii's 1925 thesis, "The Criminal Impulsivity of the Algerian" was later revised and published in the Annales in 1932, under both Porot and Arrii. Advocating for a stringent policing regime in colonial cities, they construct the North African mind as constitutionally criminal (Keller 2007, 138-140). Ranjana Khanna notes that this type of pathology upheld the immutable immorality and criminality of the Arab 'Algerian' Muslim," naturally prone to the automatic reflexes against the self-reflexive moral consciousness of the white European Christian, whose pathological responses led to suicidal thoughts (2003, 177). In 1955, Fanon would publish another attack on Porot's views entitled "Ethnopsychiatric Considerations." After first debunking Porot in "The North African Syndrome" ([1952] 1967), Fanon turns his attention, in Black Skin, White Masks ([1952] 2008), to Mannoni, whom he accuses of echoing the views of the Algerian school, despite Mannoni's rejection of the notion of fixed biological races.

Fanon argues that this notion of racial difference remains implicit in Mannoni's paternalistic attitude toward the colonized. Hence, Mannoni's book is the focus of "The So-Called Dependency Complex of the Colonized," chapter 4 of *Black Skin, White Masks*. Fanon shows how Mannoni redeploys the racial hierarchies to theorize Madagascan inferiority vis-à-vis the French colonizer, despite the differences in Mannoni's understanding, which

held that these hierarchies were not fixed, but instead delegate evolutionary stages to the different "races." Mannoni writes against French psychiatric theory, which does not address the particularity of the colonial situation. Accordingly, he mobilizes psychoanalytic theory to critique the idea of racially fixed categories, using social evolutionary theory to displace the views of the Algerian school. But Fanon shows that the idea of racial and colonial inferiority lingers in Mannoni's psychoanalysis.

The academic disciplines at the *fin de siècle* engaged in ideas about evolution. Hence, new theories in psychological discourse were influenced by social Darwinism. This led figures such as Auguste Marie to bring evolutionary biology into the field of comparative psychology, drawing on "Lamarck, Haeckel, and Darwin to argue that physiological and evolutionary factors accounted for psychological differences among populations" (Keller 2007, 126-127). Influenced by these trends in early twentieth century theory, Mannoni combined "European history, ontogeny and revolutionary theory" to characterize the psychological development of the Madagascans. According to Bloch, Mannoni drew together Durkheim, Tonnies, and Dumont, among others, to theorize social evolution in the colonial context (1990, viii).

Section I of this paper delineates the flaws in Mannoni's attempt to move beyond the limits of colonial psychiatry by embracing social evolutionary theory. Mannoni admitted to this error in regard to the origins of psychic disorders in 1966, when he published both the second edition of his book and "The Decolonisation of Myself." But his 1950 publication remains historically important, since it reveals the extent to which a faith in human hierarchies forbade the recognition of the role of colonial violence in the development of psychic trauma. Section II examines Fanon's critique of Mannoni, to reveal the violent origins of psychic trauma in the colonies, which remain undetected in colonial psychiatry and psychoanalysis, including the work of Mannoni. Fanon suggests a relation between the violent event of colonization and the development of psychic disorders, thereby offering a theory of colonial trauma as socially and politically constituted. Section III proposes that Fanon invites Catherine Malabou's elucidation of psychic causality in situations of extreme violence. I read Fanon's critique of Mannoni in relation to Malabou's redefinition of trauma and her concepts of cerebrality and the new wounded. Malabou examines the PTSD diagnosis, to argue for a theory of neuropsychiatric trauma, which moves beyond the Freudian concept of the traumatic neurosis. She proposes the concepts of cerebrality

¹ Bloch writes: "Mannoni's general evolutionary theory is reminiscent of both earlier theorizing by such writers as Durkheim and Tonnies and subsequent theorizing by authors such as Dumont. This is no accident, since what we are presented with is, under a thin disguise, very much the 'received' view of social evolution that became accepted in the earlier part of the twentieth century through the gradual osmosis into general currency of the theories of nineteenth-century anthropologists and social scientists. As was the case for many of these early writers, Mannoni's argument combines European history, ontogeny, and evolutionary anthropology" (1990, viii). According to Bloch, Mannoni's embrace of social evolutionary theory reflected the views of his academic milieu, and eventually led to his flawed interpretation of the 1947 Madagascan revolts.

and the new wounded, which respectively allow for the exposure of psychic causality (in the absence of neurosis) and the self-representation of survivors of PTSD.

I propose that Fanon's critique of the naturalized racial hierarchies is linked to Malabou's understanding of the obfuscation of political oppression today. Fanon was critical of recurrent eugenicist theories.² The sub-categories of the human race, formulated into a hierarchical order that excluded the Black, evolved during the period of colonization into a modern scientific ranking of congenital markings, attributed to discrete racial identities. The historical archive of racial identities was thus built on the pseudo-scientific categorization of innate, biological differences among the "races." Because these differences were deemed to be biologically determined, they appeared as "natural" and hence irredeemable. In this light, the racism implicit in this hierarchization was depoliticized, and a language that naturalized the state of racial oppression developed to obfuscate the oppressive relation and negate the possibility for revolt, since one cannot revolt against a naturally given condition. The intention behind this obfuscation was a racially predetermined access to freedom in favor of the white colonizer. It permeated western thought and infiltrated psychoanalytic and psychiatric theories in the colonial area.

Malabou, I argue, critically inherits Fanon's understanding that the oppressive relation is hidden in a language of naturalization vis-à-vis racial difference, to analyze present iterations of violent oppression as obfuscated by a language of naturalization. She views these iterations as dissimulated events, which lack an identifiable perpetrator or even an instance. Hence, the naturalization of violent oppression results in the loss of an understanding of the motivation for the oppressive state. Since it becomes difficult to separate a naturally occurring catastrophe from a political event, the event cannot be comprehended as intentional. Moreover, she writes, "the sheer number of these traumatic events tends to neutralize their intention, such that they assume the unmotivated character of the chance, uninterpretable event" (2012, 155). Malabou attempts to account for the scale of today's violence, which, she argues, reduces the ability to identify any motivation for this violence.

In other words, Malabou intimates that the naturalization of instances of violence today obfuscates the culpable actors and systems wielding oppressive forms of power. She implicitly states that this illegibility cannot be addressed in the absence of the designation of the evental cause of psychic wounds and traumas. In my view, this also calls for a critique of power, in order to illuminate political injustices and demand the revolutionary transformation of social, economic, and political systems. But today's forms of violence, which sustain the forces of contemporary globalization, conceal their intentionality. I thus concur with Malabou that it falls to trauma scholars to expose the concealed or

² In chapter 5 of *Black Skin, White Masks*, "The Lived Experience of the Black Man," Fanon refers to Jon Alfred Mjoen's (1921) "Harmonic and Disharmonic Race-Crossings" (2008, 99). This note reveals that eugenics was accepted in mainstream literature, even after its scientific debunking.

absent event and its related wounds. Fanon rejects the practice of naturalizing racial and colonial violence in the period of colonization. Malabou appropriates Fanon's concept of naturalization to critique today's obfuscations of traumatic events, which appear either as "unexpected" accidental events or as ones necessitated by the indifferent logic of "natural law" (2012, 11). In either case, the oppressive force has not been identified, interpreted, critiqued, and resisted.

I argue for mobilizing both Fanon and Malabou to develop new critiques of oppressive power, which analyze the sociopolitical violence that triggers new wounds and traumas. Hence, a critique of power, which examines the recurrence of racial and colonial hierarchies in the present, is essential if the evidence of the globalized psychiatric profile of PTSD is to address the long-term effects of the histories of racial and colonial trauma.

I. MANNONI'S FLAWED CRITIQUE OF COLONIAL PSYCHIATRY

As contemporaries, Mannoni and Fanon both attempted to understand the impact of the colonial encounter on the psyche, by developing new methods other than those offered by the classical European psychoanalytic and psychiatric traditions. In effect, their views converged in regard to the ineffectuality of colonial psychiatry, and both explored psychoanalytic theory to dispute the use of racial categories, touted by ethno-psychiatrists in the Algiers school of psychiatry (Khanna 2003).

Despite their affinities, however, their views of the 1947 revolts in Madagascar were fundamentally opposed. What Mannoni saw as manifestations of engrained "native" pathologies, Fanon saw as expressions of liberation, with the subsequent military repression triggering psychic disturbances in the colonized. According to Fanon, Mannoni's failure to disavow the naturalized racial hierarchies engrained in colonial psychiatry is related to his disregard of the Madagascan liberation struggle. Instead of considering the impact of violent oppression on the colonized psyche, Mannoni proposes an unconscious signification for "inferiority complexes," unrelated to violent rule. As Fanon illustrates, Mannoni's dependency complex can address neither concrete politics nor how the colonial situation works toward the destruction of the colonized psyche. In this regard, Mannoni neglects the ongoing anticolonial revolution, as well as how the colonizer's violence restructures the imaginary of the colonized.

In contrast, Fanon views the 1947 events as anticolonial revolts, violently repressed by the French colonial army. Fanon declares 80,000 deaths, but the figure of approximately 100,000 Madagascans is cited by Bloch (1990, v). Nigel C. Gibson (2003) contends that the lack of reference to this massacre in the French media resulted in the loss of an opportunity to acknowledge the severe forms of political repression, including mass death, perpetrated by the French colonial state. This led to the concurrent loss of an ability to recognize the existence of liberation struggles against colonial power. Gibson concludes that the dearth of French press coverage of the 1947 massacre is linked to the lack of coverage of massacres in other French colonies, including the 1945 massacre of 45,000 in Sétif, Algeria (56). Hence,

the press silence in regard to the 1947 revolt reflected the habit of denying responsibility for massacres in other French colonies. According to Bloch, "Mannoni's lack of understanding of the revolt of 1947 is in part explicable by the fact that exactly what happened remained for a long time very obscure, thanks, no doubt, to systematic disinformation by the French authorities" (1990, vii).

Rather than concede to the fact that the violent repression following the 1947 revolts had a negative impact on the colonized psyche, Mannoni uses social evolutionary theory to diagnose psychic trauma. Fanon critiques Mannoni for appropriating a social evolutionary theory to transmute debunked racial hierarchies, and therefore revive the pseudo-scientific racial categories in a different form. Even as Mannoni affirms a future "equal" psychic structure, he does not divest this view from the concept of racial inferiority. The white European is placed above the racialized and colonized other, according to an evolutionary scale of linear progression vis-à-vis European social classes. Thus, he mimes the logic of racial hierarchies, with the caveat that the colonized are now assigned a future potential, thanks to social evolutionary theory.

Mannoni shares with Porot, and colonial psychiatry in general, the view that the racialized and colonized other lacks the cognitive capacity for self-determination, and hence the ability to galvanize an organized revolutionary response. Unlike Porot, however, Mannoni proposes that this future liberation from servitude is dependent on the colonized acquiring the necessary psychical structure to become the equals of their colonizers. In effect, this requires them *to become* Europeans. Until then, they must be subjected to a "long tutelage" by the colonizer, whose (white) burden is to instruct them in the desire for liberation—a classical colonial project of racial and cultural inferiorization, even after the biological argument is ostensibly negated. But Mannoni's theory could only be affirmed, according to Fanon, by disregarding the political importance of the armed insurrections from below.

Mannoni's appropriation of social evolutionary theory reflects received views, in the early twentieth century, of nineteenth-century theories that blended historical, ontogenic, and evolutionary concepts, to construct a linear progression upward from primitivism to feudalism to republicanism in Europe. Deploying it to demote the "natives," Mannoni draws an equivalence between Madagascans and feudal European serfs. He therefore professes to depart from the notion of fixed categories for biological race, only to reconfigure them in an effort to justify French colonial power. This allows Mannoni to acknowledge the existence of the 1947 revolt without regarding its political character; instead, he classifies it as an effect of a pathology, which, in his view, replicates childhood abandonment syndrome. In psychoanalysis, this syndrome describes the experience of human development, in which the child's recalcitrant behavior is deemed a psychic response to the loss of parental authority. Unlike the adolescent, who ranks higher on the social evolutionist's ladder, (experiencing abandonment but advancing toward freedom), the child cannot yet realize this movement.

In likening the European child's play to "primitive' peoples" who "play at being the totem," for instance, Mannoni infantilizes the colonized (1990, 82). This infantilization further reinforces his view of naturalized inferiority.

But Mannoni also pathologizes the "colonial" functionary, who carries out the administrative duties of the regime. He contrasts the "strong character" of the "real colonizer" with the "typical colonial": the former is characterized as impervious to contact with the "natives," whereas the latter is described as affected by an exposure to the "native" (1990, 97). Hence, the capacity to be changed by human interaction with the colonized is explained in terms of "complex-determined feelings roused by the colonial situation" (88). According to Mannoni, after failing to make the transition to freedom in Europe, the colonial compensates for this failure by dominating the "natives," in whom he finds an ideal state of dependence. On the other hand, the colonized welcome the authority of their colonial masters as a matter of providence. Of the arrival of the Europeans, Mannoni writes, "it can safely be said that their coming was unconsciously expected—even desired—by the future subject peoples" (86). This is one of a number of passages in Mannoni's book that Fanon critiques, when he asserts that the colonized do not look to the European colonizer as the "awaited master" (2008, 79).

Mannoni infantilizes the non-European Madagascans in relation to the European father figure by drawing his idea of dependence from different theories circulating in the early twentieth century, including those of "Freud, Jung, Adler, and Kunkel; Shakespeare and Defoe; Lévy-Bruhl and a few anthropological sources" (Khanna 2003, 149). He argues that Madagascans remain psychically underdeveloped, thus incapable of self-rule, since they lack the cognitive capacity requisite for liberation. For Mannoni, the figure of the patriarchal father, which he wrongly assumes to be predominant across Madagascan tribal tradition, provides anthropological evidence for his view that Madagascans are predisposed to a state of dependence. Of course, his interpretation of tribal tradition has since been shown to contain errors and abstractions.3 Mannoni held that Madagascans had lost their original bond with their primitive tribal fathers in the colonial situation. Mannoni explains that the Europeans were at first unaware that "in the network of dependences they occupied roughly the same position as the dead ancestors" (1990, 87). In other words, European rule took over from the rule of the "dead ancestors," ostensibly engrained in tribal tradition. Mannoni views the 1947 revolt as a manifestation of aggressive responses related to feelings of abandonment rather than a struggle for liberation. He concludes that the loosening of despotic rule by the French colonial state led to the rebellion in 1947. The Madagascans' revolt was, in his view, irrational—the result of the pathological complex of dependency, related to an underdeveloped psychical character, unprepared for the responsibilities of self-determination.

³ Bloch describes the imprecisions in Mannoni's understanding of Madagascan social and cultural traditions and concludes that "Mannoni knew little about either the Malagasy in general or the causes of the revolt in particular" (1990, vi).

Bloch explains that Mannoni's interpretation of the rebellion omits key historical facts. In 1942, Madagascan independence seemed assured, due to the defeat of the Vichy regime by the allies. But the movement toward independence was reversed once colonial power was reestablished in the wake of World War II (Bloch 1990, x). It is therefore more likely that the rebellion was inspired by the anticolonial movements taking place in Indo-China. Moreover, many of the anticolonial leaders in Madagascar were nationalist politicians and former soldiers discharged from the French army, not tribal chiefs. According to Bloch, Mannoni misreads the situation that gave rise to the rebellion of 1947.

Evidently, Mannoni's colonial worldview made a political revolution from below illegible to him. Bracketing the anticolonial revolts and the ensuing massacre perpetrated by the French colonial state allowed Mannoni to diagnose congenital inferiority complexes, despite his rejection of the idea that this inferior state could not be transcended. Mannoni also lacked general knowledge in regard to the cultural complexity and diversity of Madagascan peoples and traditions, including the existence of matriarchal and egalitarian relational structures (Bloch 1990). Clearly, a "Millian" form of epistemological ignorance permeates Mannoni's justification of colonial oppression.⁴

According to the logic of his colonial model, Madagascans would be forced to assimilate into European cultural, social, economic, and political systems. Mannoni held that the colonial relation would eventually collapse under the pressure of revolutionary republicanism. But, in the colonial context, Madagascans remained dependent on the colonizer. This dependency would only be surpassed once the colonized psyche was transformed by the processes of colonization. What is demanded is the eventual erasure of non-European forms of existence.

Thus, while Mannoni does repudiate the congenital categories of race produced by colonial psychiatry, he does not divest himself of the hierarchical view of human existence from the colonizer's perspective, at least in 1950, the year of the publication of *The Psychology of Colonization*. In 1966, Mannoni critiqued his earlier theory of social evolution for its exclusion of the social and economic context of Madagascar. Nevertheless, an examination of the 1950 work draws out a reading of Mannon's disregard of the violent political upheavals in Madagascar, which took place during his tenure as a colonial officer from the late 1920s until the early 1950s (Khanna 2003, 150). Certainly, Mannoni's flawed 1950 attempt to revise European psychoanalytic theory for the colonial context systematically ignored the

⁴ Charles Mills develops his concept of the "epistemology of ignorance" in *The Racial Contract* (1997), and later widens it to include all forms of 'active forgetting' in "Epistemological Ignorance," an entry in the collection 50 Concepts for a Critical Phenomenology (2019). In *The Racial Contract*, he argues that the concept of epistemic knowledge demands an active forgetting, which produces the suppressed truths of racial oppression. In the latter work, he writes, "Knowing as a general cognitive ideal will thus require whenever necessary, knowing to not-know" (110). In both sources, Mills uncovers suppressed truths within liberal forms of knowing, classing them within an epistemology of ignorance, which perpetuates the oppressive practices, ostensibly negated within the history of egalitarian liberalism.

negative impact of colonial violence on the psychic life of Madagascans. Consequently, Mannoni fails to theorize the violent origins of psychic trauma in the colonies.

Fanon rejects the validity of Mannoni's model of the dependency complex, arguing instead that the phenomenon of dependency emerged from the colonial situation, not vice versa (Khanna 2003, 154). According to Fanon, Mannoni is wrong to attribute rebellious action by the colonized to unconscious complexes. What emerges is a pattern of attempts to justify colonial power by pathologizing resistance.

In section II, I read Fanon's critique of Mannoni's racialized pathologies. In section III, I propose that both Fanon's theory of colonial trauma and Malabou's concepts of cerebrality and the new wounded be mobilized to theorize the violent origins of psychic trauma.

II. FANON'S THEORY OF COLONIAL TRAUMA

As a clinical psychiatrist, Fanon believed that his racialized patients were misdiagnosed largely because the systemic racism experienced by North African immigrants in colonial France was unacknowledged by the clinicians working in French psychiatric hospitals (1967). During his employment in French hospitals, Fanon developed an understanding of the gaps in the treatment of his North African patients. He later extended this critique of the ineffectuality of psychiatry and psychoanalysis to the Madagascan context described by Mannoni. His subsequent clinical practices in Algeria and Tunisia were central to his later psychiatric assessments of the colonized. While *The Wretched of the Earth* ([1961] 2004) addresses the psychiatric conditions triggered by colonization, *Black Skin, White Masks* critiques the "invisible" causal structure of psychic trauma in the colonies and explores psychoanalytic theory for descriptions of the Black psyche. Fanon proposes that the task of thinking psychic trauma in the colonies demands an analysis of the experience of colonization. His theory of colonial trauma therefore integrates the effects of violent oppression.

FANON ON THE MADAGASCANS

In chapter 4 of *Black Skin, White Masks*, "The So-Called Dependency Complex of the Colonized," Fanon opposes the naturalization of racial and colonial inferiority in Mannoni's psychoanalytic reading. He rejects the characterization of the Madagascans as dependent, which, according to Mannoni, naturally predisposes them to a state of servitude. Clearly, Mannoni's view of human liberation was delimited by the evolutionary theories described above.

Fanon critiques Mannoni's description of Madagascans as inferior. While Mannoni links the inferiority complex to the study of racial minorities in white European culture, Fanon

contends that "a white man in the colonies never felt inferior in any respect whatsoever"; he therefore concludes that Mannoni has not considered the effect of colonial domination on the psychic disorders of the colonized (2008, 73). In an analogy with Jean-Paul Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew* (1948), Fanon positions the "racist who creates the inferiorized" at the origin of the complex; this shows that Mannoni cannot explain the fact that the inferiority complex is an effect of the European claim to superiority (2008, 74).

Fanon rejects Mannoni's view of inferiority among the évolué, the assimilated "natives," suggesting that it is as equally erroneous as the rest of his psychoanalytic theory of dependency. Fanon was not the first to reject the notion of a Black inferiority complex for the évolué. Indeed, Fanon's epigraph from Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1950) invokes Césaire's refutation of the inferiority complex to describe Black existence. Moreover, as Gibson writes, following Paulette Nardal, the Harlem Renaissance poets Claude MacKay and Langston Hughes had rejected "all inferiority complexes" (2003, 42). These Black literary influences are integral to Fanon's argument from "The North African Syndrome" onward that inferiority is socially produced, not congenital.

Citing Mannoni's examples of educated Black men suffering from an "inferiority complex," Fanon concludes:

So long as the author's typical authentic Malagasy adopts his "dependent behavior," all is for the best, but if he forgets his place, if he thinks himself the equal of the European, then the European becomes angry and rejects the upstart, who on this occasion and in this "exceptional instance" pays for his refusal to be dependent with an inferiority complex. (2008, 74)

Fanon critiques Mannoni's pathologization of the Madagascan as follows: the Madagascan suffers from an inferiority complex by mistakenly assuming a position of equality to the white man. If the Madagascan accepts a position of inferiority, then neurotic tendencies will be absent. Consequently, by submitting to a state of dependency, the naturally "inferiorized" psychic structure of the Madagascan enables a reaffirmation of a relation to the primitive, tribal fathers.

But Fanon argues that these cases of inferiorization are related to the arrival of the white colonizer in Madagascar, who "inflicted an unmistakable wound" (2008, 77). Indeed, Fanon's metaphorical wound of colonization discloses the psychic trauma wrought by colonial history. Tracing this wound back to the first colonial governors, Fanon writes, "since Gallieni the Malagasy has ceased to exist" (74).⁵ Further elucidating the absolute erasure

⁵ Joseph-Simon Gallieni was a French colonial officer who directed the "pacification" of Madagascar by means of military force. His exercise of oppressive force against revolutionaries was normalized and reiterated in practices of military repression across the French empire (*Encyclopædia Britannica* 2018).

of the precolonial world, which preceded the creation of the colony, he writes, "What Monsieur Mannoni has forgotten is that the Malagasy no longer exists; he has forgotten that the Malagasy exists in relation to the European" (Fanon 2008, 77). Consequently, the lost precolonial subjectivity remains inaccessible for a description of existence. Madagascans experience the effects of a permanent psychic wound as colonized peoples.

The psychic wound of colonial history reconstitutes the Madagascan in the wake of a rupture with an earlier identification, since the Madagascan as Madagascan did not exist prior to colonization. Fanon writes, "If he is a Malagasy it is because of the white man" (78). Thus, Madagascan identity is inseparable from the colonial experience. Later, in section III, I show the relation between Fanon's concept of the psychic wound as linked to colonial experience and Catherine Malabou's description of the destructive psychic transformations engendered by a volatile and unexpected situation of violence in a global context. Malabou explicates the alteration of identity triggered by and following an unexpected rupture as follows: "This 'change in personality' thus designates such a disruption of identity that it, or the wound that causes it, constitutes a bright dividing line, between 'before' and 'after'" (2012, 15). Hence, the unexpected traumatic event produces irreversible psychic disruptions. This transforms the psyche subjected to the violent undoing of pre-existent identities. Evidently, the psychic wound reveals an annihilated consciousness, in the wake of the violent impact of the event.

Fanon refutes Mannoni's dream analysis of frightened Madagascan children, which draws on Freud's sexual etiology of the neuroses. More recently, Mannoni's faulty method, which included drawing on the essays of his French language students, who had a rudimentary grasp of linguistic differences, has been critiqued and debunked.⁶ Fanon claims that Mannoni's misreading of the children's dreams is the result of his disregard for the cultural, social, and political conditions in Madagascar. He writes:

We must put this dream *in its time*, and this time is the period during which 80,000 natives were killed, i.e., one inhabitant out of fifty; and *in its place*, and the place is an island with a population of 4 million among whom no real relationship can be established, where clashes break out on all sides, where lies and demagoguery are the sole masters. (2008, 84)

Fanon traces the children's trauma back to the 1947 revolt and the deployment of French colonial force against the revolutionaries, including the habitual use of torture. The frightened children were not having neurotic dreams about their absent tribal fathers, as Mannoni claims. Their dreams reflected instances of psychic trauma linked to experiences

⁶ As a teacher of French in Madagascar, Mannoni used his students' papers to theorize psychic disorders, even as his students' grasp of the French language was rudimentary. Both Bloch and Khanna are critical of Mannoni's psychoanalytic theory of complexes for its reliance on French second-language papers. See Bloch (1990, xv) and Khanna (2003, 154).

of violent repression, which affected the psychic structure of all members of the colonized community. Opposing Mannoni's view, Fanon shows that the 1947 rebellion in Madagascar and the ensuing military repression by the French colonial state triggered psychic disorders in the Madagascans that Mannoni studied.

Importantly, Fanon views Freud's sexual etiologies as external to the diagnosis of psychic trauma related to experiences of violent oppression in the colonies. He writes, "Freud's discoveries are of no use to us whatsoever" (2008, 84). Instead, he shows that the torture of revolutionaries in Madagascar traumatized the colonized community as a whole. When Madagascans dreamt of being chased by a black bull or threatened by Black men, these dreams could not be understood by relying on the psychoanalytic language of paternity, which, as mentioned earlier, was based on a lack of knowledge concerning tribal roles in Madagascar (Bloch 1990). Fanon reframes these dream figures as the "Senegalese [who] were torturers in the police headquarters of Tananarive" (2008, 84). Fanon reinterprets Mannoni's dream analysis as follows: "the black bull and the black man are nothing more nor less than the Senegalese in the criminal investigation department" (85, n. 30). Fanon also shows that colonial policing creates new and distinct intra-racial hierarchies, which, by design, foment tensions and divisions among racialized peoples. This effectively brings the divide-and-conquer strategy of colonial power into Madagascan psychic life.

For example, according to Fanon, Mannoni fails to identify the traumatizing factor of military repression in the 'black bull' dream. In contrast, Fanon writes, "The Senegalese soldier's rifle is not a penis, but a genuine Label 1916 model. The black bull and robber are not *lolos*, 'substantial souls,' but genuine irruptions during sleep of actual fantasies" (2008, 86). In other words, the children's dreams were related to their fear of the violent colonial state, in which the torture of the lighter-skinned Madagascan revolutionaries was conducted by the darker-skinned Senegalese military personnel, employed by the French rulers. Hence, their traumatic illnesses were related, not to sexual fantasy as Mannoni claimed, but to the brute force of colonial violence and its wielding of divisive racial categorizations.

In the final pages of Fanon's chapter on Mannoni, Fanon critiques Mannoni's Prospero Complex. Mannoni draws on the character of Prospero from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610-1611) to convey his psychoanalytic reading of the colonial functionary. In so doing, Mannoni constructs a narrative of parental abandonment: the colonial Prospero leaves his collective home, in which he failed to make the complete psychic transition to adulthood and freedom; he compensates for this failure by ruling over the lesser, dependent 'natives' in the colonies. But Fanon refutes this interpretation by arguing that it does not consider the fact that the colonial trader is rather "a trafficker who profits economically from his stint in the colonies" (2008, 88). Hence, Fanon concludes that the extraction of economic profit plays an important role in the formation of the colonial psyche. The complex of neurotic tendencies, writes Fanon, is dependent upon the society that creates the neurotic situation (80). In this regard, the unconscious complexes of the colonial functionary cannot be isolated from the economic exploitation permeating colonial life. Fanon views this

"criminal" activity of profit extraction, underlying the project of colonization as inseparable from the psychic structure of the colonial "trafficker." Mannoni's analysis of the colonial functionary's pathology is also flawed, Fanon concludes.

The colonized psyche reflects an oppressive psychic state resulting from acts of colonial violence on the one hand, and, on the other, the colonial Prospero cannot be understood outside an analysis of the enactment of this violence.

III. MALABOU'S NEW WOUNDED

In this final section of my paper, I show how Catherine Malabou's redefinition of trauma, in light of the psychiatric category of the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), moves beyond prior definitions in psychoanalysis, which emphasize the centrality of the Freudian concept of the traumatic neurosis. Furthermore, I suggest that Fanon's critical view of psychoanalysis precedes and is dialogically related to Malabou's psychoanalytic argument, which builds on the American Psychiatric Association's DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) initial diagnostic measure of PTSD within war zones, and its subsequent enlargement to cover a multitude of violent experiences outside war zones. In *The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage* (2012), Malabou draws from the DSM reports, and the research of trauma scholars Louis Crocq, Judith Lewis Herman, and Ruth Leys, among others (150). By relating Malabou to Fanon, I show that Fanon's early interpretation of radical psychic transformation, engendered by the unexpected violence of colonization, constitutes an important historical and critical resource for Malabou's redefinition of trauma in view of the PTSD diagnosis.

Malabou coins the word "cerebrality," as distinct from a description of the brain's cerebral functions, to specify "the causal value of the damage inflicted upon these functions – that is, upon their capacity to determine the course of psychic life" (2012, 2). In the place of neuroses and their demand for psychic continuity, Malabou proposes a cerebral etiology, which accounts for the damage to neuronal organization that ruptures psychic continuity, despite the survival of the psyche. Consequently, Freud's definition of traumatic neurosis is displaced by the neuropsychological profile of PTSD, which identifies permanent, irreversible changes to personality, occurring in reaction to an exposure to violence. Malabou argues for a move to cerebrality, since it can hold drastic metamorphosis

⁷ The New Wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage contains references to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 3rd edition (DSM-III) (1980); revised 3rd edition (DSM-III-R) (1987); and 4th edition (DSM-IV) (1994). In the DSM-V, published in 2013, the diagnostic criteria for PTSD was widened to include non-fear responses to traumatic situations. R.A. Bryant writes, "It is worth noting that the DSM-5 definition has broadened the scope of PTSD from its traditional focus on fear responses to also include other emotional reactions to trauma" (2019, 259). Certainly, this new evidence corroborates Malabou's earlier insights into the ubiquity of post-traumatic diagnoses in the contemporary world, classified under her term, "the new wounded."

in patients of both brain damage to cerebral function and traumas related to extreme forms of violence, such as abuse, assault, and war.

Malabou refers to people suffering from such psychic wounds as the new wounded. This appellation also holds established psychopathologies, no longer conceived as solely organic, but comprised of "psychic effects" (2012, 9). In sum, the category of the new wounded brings wounds resulting from neuropathological conditions linked to cerebral lesions, degenerative brain disease, new disorders, etc., into relation with wounds related to experiences of sociopolitical violence, whose victims "display striking resemblances with subjects who have suffered brain damage." Hence, the new wounded, who suffer in the absence of physiological lesions, "has seen his or her neuronal organization and psychic equilibrium permanently changed by trauma" (10). However, Malabou concludes, even while the cause of this disorganization is said to be solely "neuronal change" in neuropathological cases, apart from cases where an external violent situation causes this disorganization, it is increasingly difficult to separate these two types of trauma, since oppressive violence can appear to be a senseless accident: a "traumatic blow stripped of all justification" (11). Importantly, for this discussion, the term the new wounded provides an objective designation for experiences of PTSD, and thus the possibility for survivors to represent their trauma and exist in the wake of these fissures.

It is crucial to note that the cerebral etiology identified by Malabou remains external to the causal link to sexuality established in psychoanalysis. Thus, Malabou displaces both Freud's concept of the traumatic neurosis and Freud's exclusive sexual etiology of the neuroses. In this regard, I argue that Fanon's retraction of the Freudian sexual etiology of the neuroses to address situations of violent oppression in the colonies invites Malabou's displacement of the sexual etiology in her designation of the cerebral etiology of psychic disturbances.

REDEFINING TRAUMA

Malabou draws on neuroscientific data to demonstrate that events of extreme violence trigger radical psychic transformations, producing permanent changes in subject formation. Mobilizing this data to redefine trauma, Malabou challenges "a certain psychic continuity" said to persist in the aftermath of the event. In contrast, Malabou shows that the PTSD diagnosis severs "the very link between neurosis and trauma" (2012, 150). In regard to Freud, she asserts, "[f]or him, traumas and wounds do not seem capable of creating ex nihilo a posttraumatic identity" (152). Malabou finds in the empirical studies evidence that contradicts Freud. She concludes that the received definition of the traumatic neurosis in psychoanalysis can no longer be sustained, since the PTSD diagnosis nullifies the certainty of psychic continuity in the aftermath of the traumatic effraction.

In my view, Fanon's theory of colonial trauma precedes Malabou's redefinition of trauma. Prior to Malabou, Fanon theorizes the colonial break and rupture of subject formation. As I have argued in this paper, Fanon describes the unforeseen rupture between precolonial and colonial life, which results in the profound destruction of (precolonial) existence, rendering it permanently irretrievable. Moreover, across his published writings in clinical psychiatry, as well as in *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon gestures toward a concept of "cerebral" trauma and asserts the need for the "recerebralization" of existence in the wake of European colonization. Thus, Fanon retracts Freud's concept of the traumatic neurosis, which demands psychic continuity, in his theorization of the colonial rupture and break, as well as in cases of exposure to extreme forms of violence. Moreover, Fanon suggests that the cerebral brain is linked to the possibility of psychic liberation, appearing at the intersection of physiological and political oppression. This demonstrates further affinities with Malabou.

But Fanon does not completely dismiss the concept of the neurosis. In chapter 6 of Black Skin, White Masks, "The Black Man and Psychopathology," he asserts that Freud's articulation of the *Erlebnis* belongs at the origin of neurotic behavior; it consequently reflects the workings of the unconscious. Moreover, he explores the Jungian collective unconscious in the white colonial contexts that repress Black identity. He concludes that, since the Black man "has no time to 'unconsciousnessize' [the racial relation]," the "affective amnesia" of the original event, which, for instance, appears for the white man in the form of guilt, is absent (2008, 129). Fanon recognizes the social conditions that produce neurotic behavior in racialized Black identities, as opposed to the focus on the familial environment in traditional psychoanalytic theory. Hence, Fanon mobilizes the concept of the neurosis to analyze unconscious psychopathologies of race, which, he argues, have not yet been explored. Thus, he develops a theory of the unconscious for the Black psyche. But his identification of the colonial wound and the ensuing traumas associated with exposure to colonial violence, I argue, complement Malabou's unravelling of Freud's concept of the traumatic neurosis, in light of the diagnostic profile of PTSD, despite this new research on the violent origins of brain damage being not known to Fanon. Linking Fanon and Malabou, I suggest that colonial ruptures and traumas, including their respective durations, be represented in terms of cerebrality and the new wounded.

⁸ In "Diagnosing the Sociopolitical Wound: Frantz Fanon and Catherine Malabou," I show that, in "The North African Syndrome," Fanon discovers the "non-lesional" wound in his North African patients and concludes that, while it leaves no physiological trace, it manifests as a result of oppressive experience. In this regard, Fanon's observations and analyses vis-à-vis the evidence of unmarked wounds and traumas in his racialized patients complements Malabou's concept of the new wounded, whose survivors do not always present with physiological lesions (2018).

DISPLACING THE SEXUAL ETIOLOGY OF THE NEUROSES

Malabou declares that the "cerebral etiology of psychic disturbances" has replaced "the 'sexual etiology of the neuroses" in psychoanalysis (2012, 2). The new research in the neurological sciences cannot be ignored, Malabou writes, because it has permanently dislocated sexuality as the *evental* cause for a host of psychic disturbances (2012, xix). In effect, the psychic event can no longer be understood in relation to a definitive past, nor to any sense accessible through narrative or fantasy. The event is therefore senseless: it appears suddenly, as a shock, permanently damaging the cerebral brain. If the inner drives trigger the destruction of the psyche, then the posttraumatic subject reveals a psychic life, damaged to the point that it no longer recognizes itself, despite still being alive. This metamorphosis cannot subtend the validation of the sexual etiology of the neuroses.

Fanon does explicitly negate Freud's sexual etiology in the case of the Madagascans, but he does not go as far as Malabou to offer a theory of cerebral trauma to replace sexual trauma, at least not in this early critique of Mannoni. Of course, the diagnostic criteria indicated by the DSM are relatively recent. But his analysis of the Madagascan children's dreams (discussed above) affirms the idea that the eruption of the real within the confines of fantasy cuts fantasy off from its origins in the sexual etiology of the neuroses. The latter cannot subtend traumatic factors. In this regard, Fanon's interpretation of the children's dreams identifies traumatic experiences, unrelated to the psychoanalytic causal link to sexuality. Hence, Fanon's description of the inassimilable character of violent experiences, which remain external to fantasy, complements Malabou's displacement of the sexual etiology. In this regard, Fanon and Malabou respectively show that psychic rupture cannot be reduced to neurotic fantasy in cases of extreme forms of violence.

READING FANON WITH MALABOU

Reading Fanon with Malabou, I propose that Malabou's concept of cerebrality be mobilized to develop traumatic etiologies related to historical ruptures (i.e., arrivals) and specific violences (e.g., tortures), which effectuate profound psychical shifts (2012, 150).

⁹ This may be challenged with further evidence from *Alienation and Freedom* (2018). It is possible that Fanon's view of the cerebral brain, as negatively affected by colonial experience, is more closely aligned with Malabou's concept of cerebrality than previously thought. As Alia Al-Saji (2020) discussed in a lecture, Fanon also explicitly calls for the invention of a new body and brain beyond colonization in *The Wretched of the Earth* ([1961] 2004), notably when he writes: "Let us decide not to imitate Europe and let us tense our muscles and our brains in a new direction" (2004, 236). I read Fanon as an inheritance and as complementary to the idea that cerebral shocks to the fragile brain occur, due to a wide range of violent experiences.

This necessitates bringing the concept of cerebrality into the colonial context and paying greater attention to Fanon's later insights in *The Wretched of the Earth* and in his clinical work, published in *Alienation and Freedom* (2018), on torture victims, refugees, etc. This could potentially connect Fanon's revolutionary forms of psychiatry and psychoanalysis to the latest developments in neurology, neuropsychology, and psychoanalysis.

In particular, Fanon's writings in the field of clinical psychiatry show that, even as his work predates Malabou's, their concepts are interrelated. For instance, in chapter 5 of *The Wretched of the Earth*, "Colonial War and Mental Disorders," Fanon addresses how, in the context of revolt and war (and therefore in circumstances much like revolutionary Madagascar), colonization can irrevocably mold the colonized psyche. These are certainly findings that Fanon further develops in the interim period between *Black Skin*, *White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*. Thus, I view the neuroscientific grounds on which Malabou rests her redefinition of trauma also in relation to Fanon's later departure from psychoanalysis and psychiatry, when he famously leaves the clinic and introduces new treatments and analyses, which takes him beyond all existing theories and practices in psychiatry and psychoanalysis, and, arguably, also in phenomenology.

I emphasize the importance of further exploring the interrelated concepts and ideas of Fanon and Malabou, to develop a greater understanding of the violent origins of psychic trauma. In this vein, I propose that Malabou's elucidation of the disclosure of the irreversible, permanent transformations of the psyche is dialogically related to Fanon's theory of colonial trauma. In effect, Malabou's concept of an absolute rupture, which arrives accidentally, either through a blow to the head, or, equally, through severe political oppression, follows Fanon's understanding that the arrival of the white man in the colonies constitutes a psychic event, which is catastrophic. Colonization marks an absolute rupture with the precolonial subjectivity, experienced as a traumatic blow that gives rise to irreversible psychic changes, which, in Malabou's words, "cut the thread of history" to the point that the former personality disappears completely (2012, 5). The event of colonization arrives unexpectedly, cutting the Madagascans off from themselves, as they existed, prior to contact, without the possibility of a return to their precolonial existence. These annihilated subjectivities are replaced by the identity of the Madagascan as Madagascan, that is, as an originary colonized people.

The past was forever changed through the event of colonization, which engendered a permanent psychic transformation. It was replaced with another past, one in which—as Malabou writes—"[it] is no longer the same subject who anticipates himself and sees himself die," an organic process that perceives the matter of choosing through the life drives; the subject instead sculpts a path toward an inescapable death (2012, 152). The destruction of the past therefore generates a *new subject*, which no longer knows or recognizes the previous one, other than in terms of annihilation, since the destructive process leaves the subject severed from its history, on the one hand, and on the other, kept from an anticipated future by means of an oppressive force.

Before Malabou, Fanon analyzed wounds that do more than simply modify a previous personality: they create a new and unprecedented one, in which, Fanon writes, "I will try quite simply to make myself white; in other words, I will force the white man to acknowledge my humanity" (2008, 78). The Madagascan will have no other choice but to submit to the oppressive colonial state, which engaged in the absolute destruction of precolonial life and replaced it with colonial categories and definitions. My reading of Fanon's work suggests that a new theory of trauma must account for psychic disorders connected to the violent histories of colonization. Fanon theorizes colonial trauma, whose aftereffects spill over into the postcolonial world. Malabou views contemporary instances of psychic rupture in relation to the oppressive forces of globalization: her concept of the new wounded suggests that psychic events must be analyzed vis-à-vis the new modes of violence.

THE NEW FORMS OF PSYCHIC VIOLENCE

By drawing out the violent origins of psychic trauma in my reading of Fanon and Malabou, I have shown that sociopolitical violence today proliferates new wounds and traumas, which echo those of colonial history. I end this paper by showing that these new wounds and traumas, linked to situations of globalization, are chiefly borne by the formerly colonized. Alia Al-Saji theorizes the colonial *durée* (or the colonial duration): a non-linear concept of time, in which racializing and colonizing practices intensify and reappear "through other means," retraumatizing the bodies and cultures of the historically oppressed (2019, 103).¹⁰ In effect, the oppressed experience time (differentially) within the colonial duration, which does not advance away from its origins without eliciting new forms of violence.

In his foreword to the 2004 edition of *The Wretched of the Earth*, Homi K. Bhabha describes the "colonial shadow," in which the former colonial states demonstrate greater degrees of economic, social, and political oppression (xii). This calls for a critique of the colonial duration and its reiterative forms of violence. While Malabou outlines a global profile for psychic disorders related to the PTSD diagnosis, it is essential to notice that psychic wounds shatter today's subjectivities more frequently though unevenly in postcolonial states, against minorities, women, children, refugees, etc. (Bhabha 2004, xxi-xvi). Even so, the new wounded are illegible, and the perpetrators of violence are unidentifiable.

Bhabha names the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as potential resources for this violence. But his foreword reveals a longer list of catastrophic

¹⁰ Alia Al-Saji conceptualizes the colonial durée (or colonial duration), in order to identify the temporal processes of "active forgetting" endemic to the exercise of a Millian epistemological ignorance and to trace the mutating iterative practices of racialization and colonization, which appear "through other means," and reflect intensified, rephrased forms of oppression, differentially borne by the originally colonized (2019, 103).

events from ethnic cleansing campaigns to military coups to religious fundamentalist acts of terrorism—in addition to the detrimental forms of economic deprivation. I contend that these are implicated in World Bank and IMF policies. They tend toward the effacement of the traces of their violence, which take the form of bottomless debt bondage, healthcare restrictions, control on access and mobility in airports and seas, etc.

Fanon theorized colonial ruptures, but the postcolonial entanglements that reflect globalized ruptures are evident in Malabou's intimation that new modes of violence are constituted as "events that mask their intentionality" (2012, 11). The concept of cerebrality may be mobilized to illuminate causality, in the absence of any signification. Moreover, it may elucidate psychic traumas wrought from aggressions, which leave no clear marks on the body and brain. Hence, the violences noted above (debt bondage, etc.) may be better understood once the *evental* cause of today's traumatic events is known. The expanded concept of brain damage, which includes "types of harm that do not initially pertain to neuropathology," may help to designate psychic causalities associated with these new modes of violence. Hence, disruptions of neuronal organization, following experiences of "extreme relational violence," may suggest "sociopolitical traumas," in the absence of physiological lesions, which are indicators of brain damage to cerebral function (Malabou 2012, 11). The new violence effaces the traces of its destructive intention, and the new wounded manifests a psychic wound with no lesional trace.

Fanon's colonial wound elicits an understanding of the original trauma, which created a "dividing line" between the precolonial and colonial world, while Malabou's concept of the new wounded illuminates the mutating forms of psychic violence in the period of contemporary globalization. In my view, these new oppressive situations call for a radical form of critique that expresses dissent against the death and destruction of cultural, economic, social, and political systems, which do not conform to the industrial-military complex of global capitalism. The latter produces the intensification and enlargement of wounds and traumas, above all in the former colonial world. Hence, recognizing causality is essential for the development of resistance against the proliferation of sociopolitical traumas.

Yet, instances of violent oppression remain obfuscated by a language of naturalization, inherited from the colonial era. Thus, the violent origins of psychic trauma are still naturalized, but the new forms of psychic violence now tend to bypass Manichean lines and potentially become mobile, while deepening existing wounds and traumas in the postcolonial world. As Malabou writes, the "enemy" of global power is "hermeneutics." She concludes that "it falls to neurology, psychoanalysis, and neuropsychoanalysis, starting from the redefinition of trauma, to produce the sense of this war on sense" (2012, 155). If the "war on sense" destroys the sense of any possible other future, which may work toward the treatment and care of survivors of psychic trauma, then these disciplines must elucidate the *evental* cause to make sense of the appearance of senselessness. Violent oppression is lived psychically, resulting in trauma that impinges on the community as a whole, as it once did during the violent and destructive era of colonization, described by Fanon. Hence,

communities and institutions—social bodies—are subjected to the new modes of violence and are also affected by increasing levels of traumatic experience.

A new hermeneutics must decipher the toll of psychic damage wrought by new systems of power, in order to give the survivors of new wounds and traumas the possibility of representation in the aftermath of an exposure to this violence. If oppression continues to be naturalized, it will sediment into deadlier forms, eliciting an increased vulnerability to disease, war, hunger, climate catastrophe, etc. These new violences will fall within the trajectory of the colonial duration.

The naturalization of violent oppression has acquired new patterns of obfuscation: not only does politics appear as natural—purely accidental and without reason—but nature seems indivisible from a politics that justifies its oppressive force with a necessary "natural law." In other words, today's violence annuls politics as natural and disappears nature "beneath the mask of politics." In this context, the psychic event lacks a clear causality. Malabou concludes that this "globalized heterogenous mixture of nature and politics is brought to light in the worldwide uniformity of neuropsychological reactions" (2012, 156). The neuroscientific data provides the resources to develop traumatic etiologies, "universally" held by the PTSD diagnosis. Malabou's term the new wounded gives people, as well as communities, cultures, histories, and life worlds, the possibility of representation. I have shown in this paper that both Fanon and Malabou elucidate the origins of psychic trauma in situations of violent oppression. Hence, identifying causality is essential for resisting this violence that hijacks the psyche of its new wounded. But the psychic wounds of colonization are impressed upon the origins of contemporary violence and must also be resisted.

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