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What Is Decolonial Critique?

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To Mireille Fanon Mendès France

1. Introduction: Notes on the Coloniality of Critical Theory and the Eternal Return of Eurocentrism

In my sojourn through mainstream European philosophy and critical theory, I have found two recurrent responses that seek to protect and shield the established Eurocentered canon of philosophy and critique from charges of complicity between the thought of major figures in that canon and coloniality. The first response involves arguing that, however scandalous, the presence of racism, sexism, and other problematic views in the work of canonical figures is not central to their most important theoretical arguments.[1] According to this response, these views only reflect the general prejudices of the time and place of the authors, and/or that their theoretical work was sufficiently abstract or general to avoid an entanglement with these prejudices. A familiar corollary of this response is that at least a number of these canonical works not only escape the accusations of racism and related prejudices but that they also offer the very best tools for criticizing and exposing those problematic views. The conclusion is that raising the problem of the coloniality of the canons of hegemonic academic philosophy and critical theory both fails to comprehend the epistemological basis of these works and deprives critics of the most important resources to engage in their practice—that is, presumably, the works of canonical western thinkers themselves. The consequences are predictable: dismissals of challenges to the canons, condescension toward those who do not adhere to them, and reinforced efforts at disciplining through academic training, skewed conceptions of excellence, and uneven application of selection criteria for publication and various types of positions and merits.

The second response that supports a colonizing attitude in critical theory circles is simpler and more direct. This response is also less

defensive, at least on the surface, and even though it is sometimes affirmed by radical scholars, it fits completely within the liberal (and colonial) model of "diversity and inclusion" that is dominant in much of the contemporary academy. In the face of criticism of the canon, this response involves a recognition of contributions by non-canonical voices; it concedes that critical theory is not only found in mainstream and canonical European thought and the thought of descendants from Europe who are seen as white. Therefore, some space is created to accommodate and "include" some works from non-European authors in courses or textbooks.[2] However, several questionable presuppositions remain: (1) that critique is an unqualified good; (2) that critique is the quintessential component of a theoretical practice; (3) that the established canon represents the best possible configuration of the body of critical thinking to which we can add other voices; and (4) that philosophy, theory, and critique are fundamentally a European invention and affair.

The idea of the foundational, perennial, and universal relevance of canonical European figures is used to justify the creation of academic programs and publication projects invested in the authority of the canon. Meanwhile, other thinkers and expressions of thought are relegated to the realm of the optional or the elective. Calls for the diversification of philosophy and critical theory therefore often collapse into projects that recentralize and impose the authority of European thought and the theoretical supremacy of ideas that are considered to be of European provenance. This exercise constitutes a kind of perverse cyclical process that, predictably, very often results in a perverse and perpetual return of Eurocentrism. The strategy seems to consist in stopping or containing change as well as in gaining enough time—always more time—to properly domesticate and minoritize any body of work from Black, Indigenous, or racialized authors that is "included" in the canon.

The first step in the process of containment involves admitting only those scholars of color to the curricula of critical theory whose work can be reconciled with, or directly or indirectly reinforces rather than questions, the priority of the established Eurocentered set of questions, concepts, and theories. The presence of these newly inducted scholars helps to delay—sometimes with the support of these very scholars—having to engage with more substantial challenges raised by other voices. Less frequently, and only after much work by generations of scholars of color with an anti-racist, anticolonial, and decolonial orientation, as well as some allies, a unit creates space for one faculty member of color who is typically expected to represent vast bodies of knowledge (e.g., African philosophy or Latin American philosophy) while other colleagues focus on much more specific topics and literature. Faculty of color are also typically put in positions where the demands of mentoring and service

are heavier because they are among the very few people of color on their campus.[3] Scholars in this position who specialize in areas that are only recently recognized as important in mainstream programs are also expected to continually explain and justify their work.[4] For the most part, too, the classes and graduate seminars that relate to their areas of specialization are considered to be electives.[5]

The perpetual return of Eurocentrism through dismissal, evasion, and/or strategies of "diversity and inclusion," constitutes a central modality of the coloniality of knowledge in most academic philosophy and critical theory circles today.[6] The coloniality of knowledge is reproduced in established methods, disciplines, and canons, as well as in attitudes that shape and limit the possibilities of critique. These contemporary expressions of the coloniality of knowledge at the heart of mainstream views and institutional projects of critical theory raise questions about the possibility of a decolonial form of critique: Can critique be decolonial? Is critique needed? And, if critique is to be used, doesn't it need to be decolonized first? If so, how do we engage in this decolonization? And what are the principal features of decolonized forms of critique? Most importantly, what are the virtues and the limits of decolonial forms of critique, assuming that there are any, in the largely unfinished project of decolonization? These are some of the questions that I explore in this essay.

2. On Decolonizing Critique and the Decolonial Attitude

That critique needs to be decolonized seems clear from mainstream definitions of the concept. These definitions tend to trace an intimate and direct connection between critique and western modernity. For example, reflecting on Immanuel Kant's work, Michel Foucault advances the idea that "the critique is, in a sense, the handbook of reason that has grown up in Enlightenment; and, conversely, the Enlightenment is the age of the critique."[7] Foucault also argues that

> the thread that may connect us with the Enlightenment is not faithfulness to doctrinal elements, but rather the permanent reactivation of an attitude—that is, of a philosophical ethos that could be described as a permanent critique of our historical era. (E 42)

The philosophical ethos of critique defines a "historico-critical attitude" that Foucault considers to be the quintessential attitude of modernity (E 46). Now, if western modernity is or has been colonial in character, then one has to consider the question of whether critique is also colonial or entangled with coloniality.

In the face of this question, one might attempt to distinguish, as Foucault does, between modernity as a historical event or project and modernity

as an attitude. The argument could be made that the modern project is entangled with coloniality, but not the modern attitude of critique. One can go further and argue that the modern attitude of critique is indispensable for any critique of modernity as a grand historical project. In this vein, Foucault claims that "the historical ontology of ourselves," which is the result of the modern historico-critical attitude, "must turn away from all projects that claim to be global or radical" (E 46). By this, Foucault has in mind "the programs for a new man that the worst political systems have repeated throughout the twentieth century," among other projects (E 47). Instead, Foucault admires "partial transformations" in "areas that concern our ways of being and thinking," such as the "relations between the sexes" or "the way in which we perceive insanity or illness" (E 46–7). Foucault's own work on sexuality and "insanity" would seem to be an example of a form of scholarship that engages in the "historical ontology of ourselves" and the task of critique, as he defines them.

While Foucault seems to be targeting certain forms of Marxism and, perhaps, communism in his critique of "all projects that claim to be global or radical," one has to wonder whether his skepticism extends to the internationalist activism of racialized and colonized communities who struggle toward decolonization.[8] It is obvious that there are no perfect social movements, whether they have a grand vision or not. The crucial question might then be: How does one conceive of decolonization as something less than global when modern colonization is a project of global expansion?[9] And how does one avoid the radicality of the decolonial project when it faces systemic and systematic forms of dehumanization? Must one ignore the global dimension of modernity/coloniality—by which I mean the ways in which areas that concern "our ways of being and thinking," such as the body and the mind, labor exploitation, racialization, and gender socialization become profoundly entangled? Should the multiple sources for defining being and thinking become activated only to engage in partial transformations? And should one delimit in an *a priori* manner the extent to which the activity of decolonization generates new modes of subjectivities and social formations? Why should one determine the scope and depth of decolonization in advance?[10]

The questions that emerge from decolonial movements indicate that the options for defining the scope of transformation are not exhausted by a divide between pre-made state or global scripts, on the one hand, and the partial transformations to which Foucault refers, on the other. In like manner, the historico-critical attitude of modernity does not account for the multiple ways in which one can engage in critique and even less in decolonization, as useful as some of Foucault's reflections might be for certain dimensions of these acts. It might then be that coloniality is not

only found in views of the European Enlightenment as a project—see, for example, Jürgen Habermas' work for a classic account of this—but also in Foucault's view of the Enlightenment as a critical attitude.[11] We arrive at a suspicion that Mark Jackson has formulated well:

> the concepts of critique and critical subjectivity, which are often taken as the modern possibility for articulating political and legal legitimacy are themselves products of colonial geographies and contemporary colonialities. Assuming critique and the critical attitude to be somehow inured from colonial reproduction and coloniality is short-sighted and mistaken.[12]

Decolonial struggles indicate the presence of a critical attitude that is remarkably different from the Enlightenment's historico-critical attitude. The decolonial attitude not only motivates the critique of the self and of global structures and patterns; it also generates new subjectivities and social formations through organizing and the creative and critical engagement with life-worlds and knowledges that precede, and many times resist, modernity/coloniality. In short, as Catherine Walsh has put it, decolonization demands consideration of "other" knowledges as well as "other" critiques.[13] Insofar as these other knowledges and forms of critique are decolonial in character—and this is not to say that they all are consistently decolonial, or that any of them represents a perfect decolonial formation—, they should be traced back, not to the modern attitude, the European Enlightenment, or western modernity but to the decolonial attitude and to decoloniality as an unfinished project.[14] This decolonial attitude involves critique, but it is not limited or bound by critique. In order to promote ethico-political encounters among the colonized and openness to other-than-modern worldviews, the attitude in question has to involve humility in the face of unknown ways of thinking and the flexibility to adapt and change in the process of coming together with others in a struggle. This means that the decolonial attitude will also have to involve commitment to struggles in the present.

Fortunately, examples of this decolonial attitude abound. As I have argued elsewhere, one can find them in the works of decolonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, Gloria E. Anzaldúa, and Chela Sandoval, among many others.[15] Their work is grounded in the struggle against anti-Black racism and colonialism (in the case of Fanon) and in the movement of U.S. third world feminism and international struggles against colonization (in the case of Anzaldúa and Sandoval). Sara C. Motta identifies similar features in the works of Black and women of color feminists such as bell hooks and María Lugones.[16] Motta contrasts critique as prophetic performance with the decolonizing critique that is present in the storytelling of various women of color who address the entanglement of race, gender, and the colonial project. There are

also Indigenous philosophers, writers, and intellectuals, such as Doug White, Deborah McGregor, and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, who anchor loving ways of being and thinking beyond the nature-culture distinction.[17] As Jackson puts it, their work suggests that "the 'critical ontology of ourselves' has not been radical enough."[18]

A common thread through the work of the above-mentioned decolonial authors is that they challenge the presupposition that critique is a *summum bonum* anchored in the force of the negative or in agonism. Instead, in the work of these and many other decolonial intellectuals, artists, and organizers, the function of critique is performed as part of a larger and more comprehensive endeavor where love and the search for justice are the ground of action. Following Sandoval and Fanon, I have referred to this positive upsurge of the decolonial attitude as decolonial love.[19] Here, I will focus on Fanon's work to illuminate the meaning and significance of the decolonial attitude, decolonial love, and of the decolonial critique that is grounded on it.

3. Critique and Love in the Unfinished Project of Decoloniality

I have argued elsewhere that one can read Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* as a narrative that seeks to perform a search for the decolonial attitude as well as decolonial love.[20] The decolonial attitude, as opposed to a hegemonic modern/colonial attitude that undergirds multiple ideologies on the Left and Right, allows Fanon to thematize colonization and racial dehumanization as fundamental problems, and to raise critical questions about dominant forms of reason and critique, including positivism, Freudian psychoanalysis, and Sartrean phenomenology. The decolonial attitude also leads Fanon to pursue the decolonization of knowledge as part of a larger commitment to decoloniality as an unfinished project, and to identify forms of knowledge and critique that emerge outside of the scope of European philosophy and the European sciences. It should therefore not be surprising that Fanon ventures outside the European canon of philosophy and critique by asserting in *The Wretched of the Earth* that "self-criticism has been much talked about recently, but few realize that it was first of all an African institution."[21]

I take Fanon's point about the existence of self-criticism in Africa less as an argument about the origins of critique than as a claim that Africans did not have to wait for the French or other European colonizers to know what self-criticism was. Fanon's claim is also an affirmation that self-criticism can appear in multiple kinds of institutional settings and practices, and not only in the form of explicitly self-reflexive and abstract written documents, or as part of the modern nation-state, the modern western academy, and/or civil society. I took Fanon's claim to be

uncontroversial until I cited the idea in a room with prominent critical theorists and it seemed to cause momentary panic. It was as if I had crossed the line beyond which not even those among them who were most receptive to non-European authors would dare to follow. The line consisted in the assumption of a unique and primordial link between critique and Europe. I was made to understand that critique was first and foremost a Franco-German creation and that thinkers from other places could claim to engage in it only to the extent that their work was rooted in or depended on European sources.

Given the centrality of Cartesian philosophy, the French Revolution, and the French Enlightenment in the definition of modern philosophy and critique, it is not without significance that Fanon, a French-speaking intellectual who received his doctoral education in France, recognizes "self-criticism" as an institution outside of Europe and independent of European influence. That he would indicate that self-criticism existed in a colonized territory before the Europeans arrived, and that this territory was none other than Africa, is all the more significant because, in the dominant Eurocentric imaginary, Africa is the true antithesis of Europe: a place without history and without reason.[22] Similar ideas about Africa had and continue to have consequences: when Africa is considered to be deprived of history and reason, it is impossible to think that Africans have engaged or can engage in any significant revolution. Revolutions involve a rejection of a state of affairs and a generation of abstractions and horizons of expectation, which necessitate both reason and the anticipation of historical change. Therefore, if one approaches Africa as if it is deprived of substantial history and thinking, one cannot but presume that revolutions are impossible in Africa without infusion from Europe—the opposite remains unthinkable within the terms of hegemonic forms of western rationality and the western historico-critical attitude.

In the Eurocentric perspective, the supposed absence of history and reason in Africa not only precludes the very possibility of revolutionary upheavals in the region but also the possibility of reflection about limits and excesses in socio-political movements and the creation of social formations that can organize themselves rationally. As a result, the predominant and highly selective modern western attitude of critique demands that one must look at each social or political upheaval in Africa with skepticism, whereas one must strive to find the *universal significance* and normative dimension of revolutions or other such political events in Europe. Under the same modern/colonial point of view, even true revolutionary resistance to European colonialism cannot but be imagined as dependent on European influence. This is not only incorrect and condescending but also reinforces the

problematic idea that European colonialism was not as negative as it is often depicted to be; that it provided the conditions of possibility for Africans to revolt and for them to aspire to build modern nation-states, as if modern nation-states were exempt from coloniality. Likewise, this logic invites a legitimization of neo-colonialism: the European settler and even the distant political elite and the metropolitan bourgeoisie are perceived as importing some degree of reason to regions that are deprived of rationality. The presupposition is that the masters' tools and, by extension, the masters themselves are indispensable in any effort to build a "decent house." Any dismantling of the old house is relative and leads to a recentralization of the masters' perspectives. Audre Lorde well understood this perverse logic when she declared: "For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."[23]

The large number of prejudices and double standards in philosophy and critique, like those having to do with the existence of reason and history in Africa, may partially account for the lack of support for the Algerian Revolution that Fanon found among French activists and scholars of the Left in the late 1950s and early '60s.[24] The "French intelligentsia" as a whole saw itself as embodying a greater sense of rationality than what was found in the Algerian Liberation Front. This was manifested in an "ill-repressed desire to guide, to direct the very liberation movement of the oppressed" (FAR 80). The French democrats and the French Left posed themselves as arbiters or rational adjudicators and expected the Algerian Liberation Front to condemn what the Europeans found reprehensible and to make its violence particularly selective, as defined and accepted by the French (ibid.). Fanon describes well this pattern of thinking and acting:

> ten French civilians . . . were killed in an ambush and the entire French Left, in a unanimous outburst, cried out: we can no longer follow you! The propaganda became orchestrated, wormed its way into people's minds and dismantled convictions that were already crumbling. The concept of barbarism appeared and it was decided that France in Algeria was fighting barbarism. (FAR 79)

After an initial superficial sympathy with the decolonization struggle among some sectors in France, it did not take much for this support to be conditioned or even to turn into opposition. In this and other ways, Eurocentric philosophical arrogance becomes a ground for western political arrogance as well as the justification of western military power, and vice versa. In this context, it is once again clear that Fanon's point that "self-criticism . . . was first of all an African institution" has as much theoretical as practical significance. It means that Africa was

not, as the "French intelligentsia" would have it, the land of barbarism, and that the Algerian revolutionaries were already building on African forms of critique.

I also want to emphasize that Fanon does not simply point to the existence of self-criticism in Africa. His point is not only that Africa and Africans should get credit for having produced one or two examples of self-criticism in their history—present in the work of specific and perhaps exceptional individuals or works—, of which most, if not all, occurred in a particular place in the continent or in ancient times (e.g., in ancient Egypt). Rather, Fanon has a deeper point to make about the traditions of critique in African countries. He writes:

> whether it be in the *djemaas* of North Africa or the palavers of West Africa, tradition has it that disputes which break out in a village are worked out in public. By this I mean collective self-criticism with a touch of humor because everyone is relaxed, because in the end we all want the same thing. (WE 12)

Fanon points to structured, collective efforts—not simply to the work of exceptional individuals—and explicitly refers to different parts of Africa—North Africa, West Africa—as well as to the past—"tradition has it"—and the present—"we all want the same thing." Furthermore, he argues, this self-criticism takes place "in public," meaning that it is not an isolated activity or one that would admit simply of a private conception of critique or reason; critique in public can generate accountability.

In a note, Constance Farrington, translator of the 1963 English edition of *The Wretched of the Earth*, explains that the *djemaas* are "village assemblies."[25] Elsewhere, Fanon describes the *djemaa* as "a sort of municipal council."[26] According to Neil MacMaster, "the *djemaa* or village assembly . . . formed a key organizational base for the peasant community throughout the period 1871–1962."[27] He argues that "such forms of traditional assembly survived best in the mountainous zones of refuge, the same areas in which the Armée de libération nationale (ALN) maquis was later to find strategic support" (RI 421). This explains how Fanon was acquainted with the *djemaa*. Some ethnologists have compared one type of *djemaa* to the "ancient democratic Greek *cité*," MacMaster notes (RI 426).[28] This is the type of *djemaa* that surprised Jacqueline Guerroudj, a communist militant and teacher, when she arrived with Abdelkader Guerroudj "to organize political cells among impoverished peasants in the hinterland of Tlemçen in 1948" (RI 439). She "was astonished, on first contact, to find that isolated and largely illiterate mountain peasants already possessed a highly structured communist organization, a fact that she found difficult to understand or explain" (ibid.).

As Fanon points out, the *djemaa* is not unique to Algeria and can be found in multiple places in North Africa. These territories were for the most part colonized by the French and the Spanish governments, which either took functions away from existing *djemaas* and made them disappear, or took over them to maintain control over the colonized.[29] The fate of some *djemaas* is described well by M.D.W. Jeffreys, who concludes his study with the following lines:

> Two systems of administration, one resting on talk and the other on law, cannot permanently function simultaneously in one territory; and once the *djemaa* loses any method of enforcing its unanimous findings upon any recalcitrant member its authority wanes and it will in time cease to function.[30]

This does not mean that North Africans were passive in the face of colonialism. For example, as Fanon points out, the Algerians did not recognize the authority of *djemaas* that had been taken over by the French, and instead created other *djemaas* that were "democratically elected."[31] *Djemaas* did not simply disappear; some retained their traditional form, others transitioned into anti-colonial political units, and new ones were created (RI 440). Fanon takes note of this in *The Wretched of the Earth*: "Traditional institutions are reinforced, expanded and sometimes literally transformed. The tribunal for local conflicts, the *djemaas*, and the village assemblies are transformed into revolutionary tribunals and politico-military committees" (WE 93–4). Anne Lippert notes that the *djemaa* may have also informed democratic decision-making in organizations such as the Polisario Front in Western Sahara, which, contrary to the traditional *djemaa*, includes women participants, who "in some cases, dominate . . . local and national policy-making."[32]

The *djemaas* were also a place for "transmitting the memory of past acts of rebellion"—not passively, "but as always within peasant oral culture, retelling involved transformation of the 'text' and an instrumental reinterpretation of the past in the light of present contingencies and dangers" (RI 445). The *djemaas* were thus a place for discussion and debate that included self-criticism as well as anti-colonial criticism. They were far from perfect, though, which means that they represented a possible point of departure for critique as well as an important point of connection for revolutionary struggle more than a point of arrival.

In addition to the "*djemaas* of North Africa," Fanon mentions "the palavers of West Africa" as an example of non-European self-criticism (WE 12). In truth, the original French text does not name "palavers" but rather "les réunions d'Afrique occidentale," which the 1963 translation renders as "the meetings of western Africa."[33] "Palaver" is an English word that comes from the Portuguese *palavra*, which means

"word" or "speech." The English apparently adopted the term from the Portuguese, who used it to refer to "negotiating with the natives" in West Africa.[34] Even well into the twenty-first century, tour guides "in the restored slave forts of the city of Cape Coast Ghana . . . will often describe the rooms where European and African traders met to discuss their business as the 'Palaver Room.'"[35] But "palaver" has a broader meaning; it also refers to practices of "restoring relations through conflict solving" that existed in Africa before colonization and Portuguese incursions in the continent.[36] In that sense, the institution of the *palaver* in West Africa seems close to that of the *djemaa* in North Africa, which explains why Richard Philcox translates Fanon's "les réunions d'Afrique occidental" as "the palavers of West Africa."

While the institution of the *palaver* is "underused in contemporary African society," there are various attempts to shed light on its contemporary relevance.[37] In 1973, Robert Smith argued for the relevance of *palavers* in the context of understanding "international relations in pre-colonial West Africa."[38] Smith believed that, despite the neglect of the study of indigenous institutions of pre-colonial Africa,

> and despite the unwritten nature of law in Africa, and of many of the historical sources, there is abundant evidence of formal relations at the highest governmental levels between the different peoples of West Africa in the pre-colonial period, and there is even some evidence of the existence of an inter-states system.[39]

More recently, in 1997, the philosopher Jean-Godefroy Bidima published a book-length study on the philosophical significance of the *palaver*, or "la palabre," as it is known in French.[40] As Souleymane Bachir Diagne puts it in his foreword to the English translation of Bidima's book, for the latter, the *palaver* is "a process of argumentation inextricably tied to the overarching goal of *maintaining* peace, harmony, and social consensus."[41] Bidima suggests that "attention to *palabre* might motivate jurists in Africa and the postcolonies to think about rescuing law from the state's monopoly and making it into a 'common good.'"[42] Like Fanon and others have pointed out with respect to the *djemaas*, the "meetings of West Africa" serve as an important source for critical and creative retrievals of pre-colonial practices of discussion, deliberation, and self-critique. These institutions, practices, and philosophical approaches are surely not the only ones. For example, one might add *gacaca* from Rwanda and *ubuntu* from South Africa.[43]

As important as the *palaver* or *palabre* could be for international relations and the formation of African postcolonial law and state formation, Fanon was most interested in the role of self- and collective-criticism in the process of decolonization. Critique as collective self-criticism serves an important role in the process of decolonization, since

it skips the colonial apparatuses for the production and legitimation of knowledge and allows for the presence of native voices and the exploration of ideas that would not find admission in those other settings. The "touch of humor" and the collective bonding that Fanon mentions give an indication of the mode of relationality that is part of the collective activity—one that arguably promotes decolonial love and the decolonial attitude.

The activity of "collective self-criticism" serves to deactivate existing colonizing attitudes, including those among intellectuals. Gradually, while participating in the life of the community and in "collective self-criticism," Fanon posits that "the intellectual sheds all that calculating, all those strange silences, those ulterior motives, that devious thinking and secrecy as he gradually plunges deeper among the people" (WE 12). In this process, intellectuals can abandon their traditional, heightened individualism and the role of the "sentinel on duty guarding the Greco-Roman pedestal" (WE 11) and discover the productive dimension of collective efforts. "In this respect then," Fanon adds, "we can genuinely say that the community has already triumphed and exudes its own light, its own reason" (WE 12). The formation and cultivation of community is part of the project of "[building] the world of *you*" (BSWM 206), where love and understanding—φιλο-σοφία—are possible.[44] The decolonial community is different from the liberal civil society. To the extent that there is an enlightenment in the process of decolonial community formation—"its own light, its own reason"—it does not refer to a victory of modern secular rationality over "tradition" but to a collective process of transformation that can already be found in communal life. The process becomes effective and generative in the pursuit of decolonization and can help to decolonize modern/colonial attitudes rooted in modern/colonial views of enlightenment and practices of critique.

The reconceptualization of the concepts of critique, philosophy, reason, and enlightenment is not unique to francophone intellectuals like Fanon, whose education was heavily informed by a philosophy that found inspiration in Cartesianism, the French Revolution, and the European Enlightenment. Likewise, one can make a case for "self-criticism" not only taking place in Africa but also in other geopolitical spaces. One notable figure from the Americas who contributes to the task of identifying philosophy, reason, and critique outside of the European setting is the Native American philosopher, critic, theorist, and theologian Vine Deloria, Jr. In an insightful analysis of perceptions of maturity, Deloria invites his readers to consider a view of maturity that appears in societies typically considered to be "primitive." For Deloria,

> Maturity, in the American Indian context, is the ultimate goal of all human existence. . . . [It] is the ability to reflect on the ordinary things of life and discover both their real meaning and the proper

> way to understand them when they appear in our lives. This idea sounds as abstract as anything uttered by a western scientist but it is not abstract in the Indian context.[45]

At least since Kant's "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?," the European Enlightenment has been associated with the ability to "exit from . . . self-incurred immaturity."[46] In Kant's view, Enlightenment, and therefore maturity, can be obtained through the affirmation of freedom, understood primarily as "the freedom to make a *public use* of one's reason in all matters."[47] Kant understood the public use of reason to be different from its private use: the former is the exercise of reasoning in one's capacity as a scholar "before the entire public of the *reading world*," while the private use has to do with the exercise of reason "in a certain *civil post* or office."[48]

While Kant considered it important to identify the specificities and limits of each use of reason in the process of European modernization and enlightenment, Deloria and Fanon, writing from the colonies, First Nations, and/or occupied territories, found that both the European civil servant using reason privately and the European scholar using reason publicly were largely complicit with colonialism. In Fanon's account, the typical European scholar and the typical Eurocentric intellectual using public reason appear in the colonies not merely as immature but also as potentially perverse and incompetent in the face of the process of decolonization. The institutionalized practice of "collective self-criticism," as present in African communities, is much more apt to the process of decolonization and closer to any serious sense of maturity in the face of coloniality.

Deloria also considers the limits of mainstream western scholarship. Like Fanon, Deloria identifies and criticizes "a general attitude" in dominant forms of western thought. For Fanon, this general attitude was Negrophobia (see BSWM 169). Deloria targets what he considers western metaphysics, which he connects to "the development of an attitude that sees reality as basically physical, the knowledge thereof basically mental or verbal, and the elimination of any middle ground between extremes."[49] This attitude arguably produces the typical polar opposites of rationalism and positivism. The "devastating effect" of this attitude or "fundamental orientation of western peoples toward the world" includes the formulation of questions and the search for the answers to these questions that reproduce and magnify the problems that they presumably aim to solve.[50] These problems include endangering life on the planet and reproducing the conditions faced by indigenous peoples and "minority groups."[51]

Deloria challenges the metaphysical presuppositions of dominant western approaches to knowledge and reality and calls for a careful consideration of indigenous views, which offer the basis for a different

attitude and general orientation toward reality. The indigenous metaphysics that Deloria considers includes a critique of a metaphysics of individuality and linear temporality, and the exploration of the relevance of land and communal relationships. Elsewhere, I have referred to the imposition of a Eurocentric metaphysics as a "metaphysical catastrophe," by which I mean a devastating turn that creates and sustains a world of permanent war toward colonized and racialized populations.[52] It is catastrophe, and not crisis, that best describes western modernity. The detachment from the absolutism of western metaphysics and the opening to other metaphysical conceptions lead to new kinds of questions and to the exploration of unsuspected solutions. This results in a new experience of freedom that is different from the public use of reason within the constraints of western metaphysics and its accompanying attitudes, and is more akin to epistemic decolonization and decolonial pluriversality, interculturality, and transdisciplinarity.[53]

Much like Fanon's description of decolonization, Deloria's goal is not simply to find non-western equivalents of western ideals, as if the process of critical thinking needs to stay within the boundaries of what European philosophers have found significant. Rather, dominant western concepts, such as light, reason, and maturity, facilitate a labor of decolonial translation—largely for the sake of the western reader and to all readers trained in western thought—that points to commonalities as well as to differences between epistemic practices. This process facilitates a critique of the dominant ways of understanding such concepts. Part of Deloria's and Fanon's point is that it is not too difficult to show that the European assertion of virtues such as enlightenment and maturity are contradicted in the very effort to characterize non-European peoples as immature or irrational, as well as in their continued dehumanization and subordination. It is also not difficult to demonstrate that there are more serious expressions of reason, maturity, and critique in many other places, including spaces regarded as ahistorical and primitive. Since the west has openly shown its own contradictions and violence in those spaces, it should not be surprising to find forms of critique that target coloniality along with the labor to forge decolonial viewpoints, creative expressions, and practices there. Decolonial thinking involves the identification and proliferation of these forms of critique and creative efforts.

Based on the discussion so far, it is possible to conclude that in the decolonial turn, critique is pluriversal, intercultural, and transdisciplinary. It is pluriversal in that it can be expressed and practiced in different languages and in reference to multiple histories and problems; intercultural in that it can also be found within and across multiple cultural formations; and transdisciplinary in that it is not limited by the scope of any given

discipline, and in that it includes engagement with non- and un-disciplinary practices, such as decolonial social and artistic movements. This means that critique cannot be monopolized or limited to a specific region or set of issues, and that, in a world greatly marked by coloniality, critique must participate in the task of decoloniality to remain critical.

Understanding critique in terms of decolonial pluriversality, interculturality, and transdisciplinarity means, in short: (1) recognizing the existence of critique in multiple worldviews, community practices, creative expressions, and knowledge systems; and (2) mobilizing these sources of critique in the struggle for decoloniality. By decoloniality I mean, on the one hand, the unfinished project of engaging the coloniality of power, being, and knowledge, including the coloniality of gender and the coloniality of nature, among other forms.[54] On the other hand, decoloniality refers to the emergence of ideas, practices, symbols, and institutions that make love and understanding possible, which Fanon referred to as "[building] the world of *you*." Together, the critical task of undoing coloniality and the constructive task of "[building] the world of *you*" give shape to a conception of philosophy not as the love of knowledge but as the creative effort to restore love and understanding (see TCD 21). In that sense, in a context that is constituted by coloniality, decoloniality becomes first philosophy.[55]

First philosophy is not to be understood here as a set of basic rational principles established *a priori* but as a practice and way of life that seek to make love (φίλος) and understanding (σοφία) possible. In a context marked by coloniality, which undermines the basis for love and understanding, philosophy requires a decolonial turn and the emergence of a decolonial attitude.[56] While some of these ideas have been made explicit with specific reference to the concepts of coloniality and decoloniality in Chicana feminism and the work of what Arturo Escobar referred to as "the Latin American modernity/coloniality research program," they are part of a larger decolonial turn in various parts of the globe that emerged in response to the catastrophe of "discovery," conquest, modern colonization, and coloniality.[57] The works of Fanon and Deloria are just a few among many.

4. Catastrophe and the Decolonial Turn

Fanon and Deloria identify practices of reflection and critique that cannot be subordinated to European critique and critical theory. These are forms of thinking that do not remain merely beside mainstream European thought but that offer possibilities to criticize and decolonize elements of European philosophy—including what is traditionally considered to be the practice of being a philosopher or an intellectual. They open the door not so much to new philosophical nationalisms and

provincialisms but to more encompassing, robust, and rigorous forms of critical thinking, and to epistemic practices that are not limited by the negative moment of critique.

In Fanon's and Deloria's accounts, the substance of the forms of thinking and critique that they identify precedes European modernity and therefore modern colonialism. These intellectual formations nonetheless become effective epistemic sources in the critique of colonialism and the practices of decolonization. To be sure, there are elements of European philosophy that can also play useful roles in the struggle for decolonization. But for this to be possible, these ideas from European thought have to be de-Eurocentralized and decolonized, which can only be done by putting them in relation to other concepts within a framework and set of activities that promote decolonization. Likewise, there are also elements in non-European epistemic practices that need to be revised or rejected in the process of decolonization. Decolonization is not the repetition or retrieval of forms of thinking due to a sense of tragic loss or nostalgia but the endeavor to create what Fanon referred to as "the world of *you*."

The reason why it is necessary to build "the world of *you*" is that modern colonialism involved the collapse of the intersubjective structures that would have allowed for a global sense of sociality to emerge. The collapse of these structures at the level of personal identity, ethics, politics, and economics, among other areas, can be understood not only as a crisis but as catastrophe (see endnote 52 of this essay). The catastrophe in question has been as much demographic—with the deaths of millions of Indigenous, colonized, and racialized peoples—as metaphysical. In this sense, I agree with Deloria that decolonization entails a critique of western metaphysics, but I would add that this modern/colonial metaphysics does not exist in a continuum with older Christian metaphysics. Rather, the most central aspect of western metaphysics is its catastrophic dimension—catastrophe indicating a "downturn" that largely took place in the context of the "long" sixteenth century, which includes moments prior to and after the sixteenth century. One can make a similar point in relation to other ways of conceptualizing the critique of western metaphysics from Nietzsche to Heidegger to Derrida, who also presuppose a continuity in western metaphysics from ancient Greek philosophy to modernity. Deloria's analysis, however, has the advantage that he identifies links between western metaphysics and the coloniality faced by Indigenous peoples, and he also contributes to the formulation of a metaphysical view that facilitates decolonization.

Fanon also highlights the relevance of metaphysical catastrophe. Consider that the first chapter of *Black Skin, White Masks* focuses on language, and that Fanon defines language as a "dimension of being-for-others, it being

understood that to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (BSWM 1). The "other," in strict terms, can only be found beyond the horizon of being and meaning, a characteristic that makes it a quintessential metaphysical category. Speaking is thus a kind of metaphysical encounter and relation. Anti-Black racism represents a modality of modernity/coloniality that creates a deviation in the route to alterity: language, which includes accent, culture, and knowledge, is used as a way of masking Blackness in order to appear as white, close to white, or as different from Black. This represents a metaphysical catastrophe: a downturn of the metaphysical relation that seems inescapable and intractable.

After discussing catastrophe at the linguistic level, Fanon turns his attention to loving relationships. Since love, like language, is a modality of a relation with an other, the failure of achieving interracial love as an ordinary act is another form of metaphysical catastrophe. Existential deviation and metaphysical catastrophe are united first and foremost through a naturalized anti-Black attitude that is at the core of modernity/coloniality. Love is impossible when subjects are driven by anti-Blackness. In a nutshell, anti-Blackness makes Black people seek to escape Blackness by entering into intimate relations with white people, and white people seek to dominate and desire Black people because they conceive of them as subservient and as highly erotic.[58] Racial dynamics that place some in the position of masters and others in the position of permanent slaves take over intersubjective dynamics and make love abnormal in an anti-Black world. Nevertheless, Fanon asserts that he believes "in the possibility of love" (BSWM 24), and concludes *Black Skin, White Masks* with an unequivocal affirmation of love: "Yes to life. Yes to love. Yes to generosity" (BSWM 197). For Fanon, the human is a "'yes' resonating from cosmic harmonies" (BSWM xii). It is this affirmation that propels the human toward an other and that accounts for a decolonial turn at the level of affect and action: instead of desiring to replace the master, the colonized can turn toward another slave.[59] This turn is the start of the end for an anti-Black attitude and the condition of possibility for love in spite of the color line. It is also the ground from which a decolonial praxis—those in the position of slaves and their allies working together or in a coordinated manner to counter coloniality and to create a different world—can emerge. Both love and language are about connection and offer the conditions of possibility for relations between subjects, communities, struggles, ideas, projects, and beyond. This represents a liberation from isolation as well as from the empire of negation and forms of thinking that keep philosophy and critique confined to modernity/coloniality.

In the first three chapters of *Black Skin*, *White Masks*, Fanon offers a description of Black subjects under catastrophe: Black people and

Blackness must not appear, particularly not in oneself, even if one is Black, but it must also, more generally, not appear anywhere. The Negrophobic Black person is a good example of the catastrophic dimensions of this expectation of disappearance, which is why Fanon starts his psychological and phenomenological study with this type of subjectivity. The imperative of the erasure and violent disappearance of the Black person in the modern world points to a link between metaphysical catastrophe and genocide. Demographic catastrophe goes hand in hand with metaphysical catastrophe, and vice versa. This might be what distinguishes modernity/coloniality from previous forms of imperialism and colonialism: modernity/coloniality is intimately linked with ongoing war, torture, rape, and genocide. The massive genocide of indigenous peoples in the early moments of modernity/coloniality has not concluded or remained confined to the elimination of indigenous peoples. Rather, what we find is both the continuity of indigenous genocide and the proliferation of a genocidal attitude toward communities that appear as a menace to the order of modernity/coloniality.[60] Anti-Blackness anchors the genocidal attitude in appearance and color, while it is also spread in various forms through society. This is why Fanon proposed a sociogenic approach to understand the catastrophe of modern subjectivity in various populaces.

Here, we find another characteristic feature of decolonial critique vis-à-vis modern western critique. Modern western critique and the modern attitude are typically connected to crisis: the crisis of tradition that opens up the possibility of critique, and the critique that makes it possible to put tradition in crisis.[61] This operation is often celebrated as a virtue of the European Enlightenment. By contrast, decolonial critique is part of a decolonial turn against the downturn of catastrophe. This catastrophe is demographic, metaphysical, material, environmental, epistemic, and psychological in nature. At the heart of it, there are communities that find themselves mourning endlessly and facing perpetual war. Their lands and rivers have been taken, their languages decimated, and their identities slashed. In this context, critique emerges as a counter-catastrophic activity of questioning that is part of the unfolding of a new subjectivity that embraces decoloniality as its project. Decolonial critique is anchored in the decolonial attitude and plays important roles in the decolonial turn: it contributes to illuminating the catastrophic dimensions of modernity and to providing evidence of the bad faith and hypocrisy in modern/colonial efforts to engage with modern/colonial problems. However, critiquing is a nearly impossible affair under catastrophe.

If subjects who live under catastrophe fail to use language as a form of communication with an other, their ability to speak and write is also

compromised. This includes their ability to ask questions. The decolonial turn, therefore, needs to involve the process of becoming a questioner (see TCD 24–5). Fanon suggests that modernity/coloniality can be understood as the massive downturn of a catastrophe, and that this catastrophe can generate emotions and prayers that initiate a process of interrogation and therefore one of critique (see TCD 11–6). Fanon connects the action of praying with critique in the very last sentence of *Black Skin*, *White Masks*: "My final prayer: O my body, make of me always a man who questions" (BSWM 206). This means that a new questioning subject can emerge as a result, but also in spite of catastrophe. One can therefore trace a path from the downturn of catastrophe to a decolonial turn that includes affect, spirituality, and thought (see TCD 13–6). Thus, the decolonial turn appears to be crucial in the formation of decolonial thinking and critique. The decolonial turn seems to reside in a fundamental change of attitude: from the modern/colonial attitude found in the mainstream forms of critique that I referenced at the start of this essay to the decolonial attitude that one finds in projects of decolonization.

Considering that a subject under catastrophe cannot speak or question properly, it now becomes clear why Fanon valued the activity of the *djemaas* and the *palavers* so much. They can serve as counter-catastrophic spaces that foster decolonial attitudes and therefore restore the ability to speak and to question even oneself. Self-questioning through engagement with others in the context of the struggle against coloniality can also serve as an engine for the decolonization of the intellectual and the critical theorist. Mainstream critical theory, however, operates with the presumption that critical theorists are subjects who either create or respond to crisis through critique. It is extremely difficult, if not nearly impossible, for critical theorists to perceive the extent to which their practices and presuppositions contribute to catastrophe. Recognizing how established practices of knowledge production and critique advance catastrophe, and how, therefore, they make people—including critical theorists—unable to speak and think properly, would be a good place to start to consider the possibility of decolonial critique and decolonial struggle. But even a very simple step, under catastrophe, is nothing less than a logical and an existential impossibility. Academic philosophers and critical theorists will no doubt continue to serve the role of the "sentinel on duty guarding the Greco-Roman [and also the Franco-German] pedestal" for a long time (WE 12). These academics will keep rationalizing the exclusions, sometimes engaging in liberal/colonial strategies of diversity and inclusion; they will maintain and reinforce the gates of academic programs, degrees, and fellowships with selection criteria based on peculiar ideas of excellence, if not with established rankings. In the

meantime, others will keep producing "movement-generated theory," engaging in acts of decolonial radical hope, and advancing multiple other forms of counter-catastrophic thinking, creation, and action.[62] Echoing the rallying cry of the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) fighters in their war of independence, *a luta continua* . . .

NOTES

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1. See, for example, William Uzgalis, "John Locke, Racism, Slavery, and Indian Lands," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race*, ed. Naomi Zack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 21–30; Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant's Second Thoughts on Colonialism," in *Kant and Colonialism*, ed. Katrin Flikschuh and Lea Ypi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 43–67; and Darrel Moellendorf, "Racism and Rationality in Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit," *History of Political Thought* 13:2 (1992), pp. 243–55. One can also find relevant critical discussions of this point in assessments of David Hume's racism in, for example, John Immerwahr, "Hume's Revised Racism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 53:3 (1992), pp. 481–6; and Aaron Garrett and Silvia Sebastiani, "David Hume on Race," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race*, pp. 31–43. Also important in this context is Paula Moya, "Who We Are and from Where We Speak," *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1:2 (2011), pp. 79–94, where Moya cites Martin Jay's comments about cosmopolitanism as a way of transcending "the situatedness that seems to constrain us" (Martin Jay, "Response to 'Latina/o Philosophy," Mapping the Decolonial Turn Conference, University of California, Berkeley, April 23, 2005; cited in Moya, "Who We are and from Where We Speak," p. 82). Moya suggests that Jay's dismissal of identity and the material relations that condition intellectual productions in the North and the South serve both to protect the canon of critical theory from criticism and to behave condescendingly toward Latin American, Latinx, and other non-western intellectuals (Moya, "Who We are and from Where We Speak," pp. 82–3).
2. See, for example, Steven M. Cahn, ed., *The World of Philosophy: An Introductory Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Stephen Stich, Masaharu Mizumoto, and Eric McCready, eds., *Epistemology for the Rest of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Daniel Bonevac and Stephen Philips, eds., *Introduction to World Philosophy: A Multicultural Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); and Bryan W. Van Norden, *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017). While these texts do not necessarily endorse the idea of Europe as the original home for philosophy

and critique, they approach philosophy through liberal, multicultural lenses that only register cultural and not colonial differences. For a critical analysis of multiculturalism in relation to coloniality, see Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). For a recent critical discussion of racism, colonialism, and multiculturalism in philosophy, see Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee, Amy K. Donahue, David Kim, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Kris Sealey, "Symposium: Why Historicize the Canon?," *Journal of World Philosophies* 5:1 (2020), pp. 121–76.

3. On this issue, see, for example, Amado M. Padilla, "Ethnic Minority Scholars, Research, and Mentoring: Current and Future Issues," *Educational Researcher* 23:4 (1994), pp. 24–7; Laura E. Hirshfield and Tiffany D. Joseph, "'Why Don't You Get Somebody New to Do It?': Gender, Race, and Cultural Taxation in the Academy," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34:1 (2011), pp. 121–41; and René O. Guillaume and Elizabeth C. Apodaca, "Early Career Faculty of Color and Promotion and Tenure: The Intersection of Advancement in the Academy and Cultural Taxation," *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2020.1718084 (accessed June 25, 2020).

4. See, for example, Padilla, "Ethnic Minority Scholars, Research, and Mentoring," p. 24; and Daniel G. Solórzano, "Critical Race Theory, Race and Gender Microaggressions, and the Experience of Chicana and Chicano Scholars," *Qualitative Studies in Education* 11:1 (1998), p. 130.

5. See, for example, Christopher C. Sonn, "Educating for Anti-Racism: Producing and Reproducing Race and Power in a University Classroom," *Race, Ethnicity, and Education* 11:2 (2008), p. 158; Frances Henry and Carol Tator, "Interviews with Racialized Faculty Members in Canadian Universities," *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Études ethniques au Canada* 44:2 (2012), p. 83; and N. Martin Nakata, Victoria Nakata, Sarah Keech, and Reuben Bolt, "Decolonial Goals and Pedagogies for Indigenous Studies," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society* 1:1 (2012), p. 122.

6. On the concept of coloniality of knowledge, see Edgardo Lander, ed., *La colonialidad del saber: Eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales; Perspectivas latinoamericanas* (Buenos Aires: CLACSO, 2000); and Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," trans. Michael Ennis, *Nepantla: Views from South* 1:3 (2000), pp. 533–80.

7. Michel Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment?," trans. Catherine Porter, in *The Foucault Reader*, trans. Catherine Porter et al., ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), p. 38; henceforth E, followed by page number. For a comparison and critique from a decolonial point of view of Foucault's and Habermas' interpretation of the Enlightenment as attitude and project, see Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Transdisciplinariedad y decolonialidad," *Quaderna: A Multilingual and Transdisciplinary Journal* 3:1 (2015), https://quaderna.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/pdf-NMTORRES.pdf (accessed January 28, 2020). Note that while the relevant discussion is not included in the translation of this essay, the English text offers an account of decolonization as project and attitude that is important for other arguments

in this article (see "Ethnic Studies as Decolonial Transdisciplinarity," trans. George Ciccariello Maher, *Ethnic Studies Review* 42:2 [2019], pp. 232–44).

8. The responses to Foucault's work in the context of former colonies vary, as is demonstrated in Sam Binkley and Jorge Capetillo-Ponce, "Foucault, Marxism, and the Cuban Revolution: Historical and Contemporary Reflections," *Rethinking Marxism* 20:3 (2008), pp. 437–51; "Foucault and the 'New Man': Conversations on Foucault in Cuba," *Rethinking Marxism* 20:3 (2008), pp. 452–63; and Mariana Canavese, "El efecto Foucault, entre el hombre nuevo y la crisis del marxismo," *Prismas* 16:1 (2012), pp. 79–97.

9. Mignolo has long argued for the need of "building macronarratives from the perspective of coloniality," not as "the counterpart of world or universal history" but as pluriversal conviviality projects, emerging from multiple places, including the borders between dominant and colonized bodies, spaces, and knowledges (see Mignolo, *Local Histories / Global Designs*, p. 22).

10. Building on the work of Quijano, Édouard Glissant, and Enrique Dussel, among others, Mignolo has proposed the idea of "pluriversality as a universal project," which seems to defy the Foucauldian dictum about oppositional thinking (see Walter Mignolo, "Delinking: The Rhetoric of Modernity, the Logic of Coloniality and the Grammar of De-Coloniality," in *Globalization and the De-Colonial Option*, special issue of *Cultural Studies* 21:2–3 [2007], pp. 452–3). For Mignolo, "global designs" must be met with different global projects (see also Mignolo, *Local Histories / Global Designs*).

11. See Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity: An Unfinished Project," trans. Nicholas Walker, in *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on* The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity, ed. Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), pp. 38–58. See also Maldonado-Torres, "Transdisciplinariedad y decolonialidad," for a development of this point.

12. Mark Jackson, "Critique's Coloniality and Pluriversal Recognition: On Care as the Ecological Ground of Justice," in *Unsettling Colonialism in the Canadian Criminal Justice System: A Reader*, ed. Vicki Chartrand and Josephine Savarese (Edmonton: Athabasca Press, forthcoming).

13. Catherine E. Walsh, "'Other' Knowledges, 'Other' Critiques: Reflections on the Politics and Practices of Philosophy and Decoloniality in the 'Other' America," *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1:3 (2012), pp. 12–27.

14. For an elaboration of the "decolonial attitude," see Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Frantz Fanon and the Decolonial Turn in Psychology: From Modern/Colonial Methods to the Decolonial Attitude," *South African Journal of Psychology* 47:4 (2017), pp. 432–41. The notion of decoloniality as an unfinished project appears, among other places, in Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar, "Latin@S and the 'Euro-American' Menace: The Decolonization of the U.S. Empire in the Twenty-First Century," introduction to *Latin@S in the World-System: Decolonization Struggles in the Twenty-First Century U.S. Empire*, ed. Ramón Grosfoguel, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and José David Saldívar (Boulder: Paradigm Press, 2005), pp. 3–27.

15. See, for example, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality," Frantz Fanon Foundation, https://fondation-frantzfanon.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/maldonado-torres_outline_of_ten_theses-10.23.16.pdf (accessed February 4, 2020); henceforth TCD, followed by page number; "Decolonization and the New Identitarian Logics after September 11: Eurocentrism and Americanism against the Barbarian Threats," *Radical Philosophy Review* 8:1 (2005), pp. 35–67; and "Frantz Fanon and the Decolonial Turn in Psychology."

16. Sara C. Motta, "Decolonizing Critique: From Prophetic Negation to Prefigurative Affirmation," in *Social Sciences for an Other Politics: Women Theorizing without Parachutes*, ed. Ana Cecilia Dinerstein (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 33–48.

17. See, for example, Doug White, "Re-Imagining Reconciliation: Confronting Myths and the Future of Canada," CBC Audio Archive, https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/re-imagining-reconciliation-and-the-future-ofcanada-1.5000450 (accessed July 18, 2020); Deborah McGregor, "*Mino-Mnaamodzawin*: Achieving Indigenous Environmental Justice in Canada," *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 9:1 (2018), pp. 7–24; and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence* (Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2011); cited in Jackson, "Critique's Coloniality and Pluriversal Recognition."

18. Jackson, "Critique's Coloniality and Pluriversal Recognition."

19. See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008). It was the Chicana feminist Sandoval who first introduced and fleshed out the concept of decolonial love (see Chela Sandoval, "Love in the Postmodern World: Differential Consciousness," pt. 4 of *Methodology of the Oppressed* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000], pp. 137–84). Love also occupies a central place in Maldonado-Torres, "Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality." Other relevant discussions of decolonial love include Junot Díaz and Paula M.L. Moya, "The Search for Decolonial Love: A Conversation between Junot Díaz and Paula M.L. Moya," in *Junot Díaz and the Decolonial Imagination*, ed. Monica Hanna, Jennifer Harford Vargas, and José David Saldívar (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), pp. 391–402; Cornelia Gräbner, "'But How to Speak of Such Things?': Decolonial Love, the Coloniality of Gender, and Political Struggle in Francisco Goldman's *The Long Night of White Chickens* (1992) and Jennifer Harbury's *Bridge of Courage* (1994) and *Searching for Everardo* (1997)," *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 20:1 (2014), pp. 51–74; Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Islands of Decolonial Love: Stories and Songs* (Winnipeg: ARP Books, 2013); Yomaira Figueroa, "Reparation as Transformation: Radical Literary (Re)Imaginings of Futurities through Decolonial Love," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society* 4:1 (2015), pp. 41–58; and Carolyn Ureña, "Loving from Below: Of (De)Colonial Love and Other Demons," *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 32:1 (2017), pp. 86–102.

20. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Wilcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008); henceforth BSWM, followed by page number. See

Maldonado-Torres, "Frantz Fanon and the Decolonial Turn"; and "Ethnic Studies as Decolonial Transdisciplinarity."

21. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 12; henceforth WE, followed by page number.

22. See V.Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonization* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2013).

23. Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984), p. 112. See also Lewis R. Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon, eds., *Not Only the Master's Tools: African-American Studies in Theory and Practice* (Boulder: Paradigm Press, 2006).

24. See Frantz Fanon, "French Intellectuals and Democrats and the Algerian Revolution," in *Toward the African Revolution: Political Essays*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1988), pp. 76–90; henceforth FAR, followed by page number.

25. Constance Farrington, translator's note in Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963), p. 48.

26. Frantz Fanon, "Social Therapy in a Ward of Muslim Men: Methodological Difficulties," in *Alienation and Freedom*, trans. Steven Corcoran, ed. Jean Khalfa and Robert J.C. Young (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), p. 364.

27. Neil MacMaster, "The Roots of Insurrection: The Role of the Algerian Village Assembly (*Djemâa*) in Peasant Resistance, 1863–1962," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55:2 (2013), p. 420; henceforth RI, followed by page number.

28. MacMaster is referring to Émile Masqueray, *Formation des cités chez les populations sédentaires de l'Algérie (Kabyles du Djurdjura, Chaouïa de l'Aourâs, Beni Mzâb)* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1886), p. 48.

29. See M.D.W. Jeffreys, "Democratic Institutions in Primitive Societies," *Civilisations: Revue international d'anthropologie et de sciences humaines* 4:1 (1954), p. 40; and Stephen Zunes and Jacob Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010), p. 95.

30. Jeffreys, "Democratic Institutions in Primitive Societies," p. 40.

31. Frantz Fanon, "Racism and Culture," in *Toward the African Revolution*, p. 34.

32. Anne Lippert, "Sahrawi Women in the Liberation Struggle of the Sahrawi People," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 17:3 (1992), pp. 644–5.

33. Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*, in *Œuvres: Peau noire, masques blancs; L'an V de la révolution algérienne; Les damnés de la terre; Pour la révolution africaine* (Paris: La Découverte, 2011), p. 461; *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Farrington, p. 48.

34. See Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. "palaver," https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=Palaver+ (accessed March 6, 2020).

35. Moradewun Adejunmobi, introduction to *Vernacular Palaver: Imaginations of the Local and Non-Native Languages in West Africa* (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd., 2004), p. vii.

36. Birgit Brock-Utne, "Peace Research with a Diversity Perspective: A Look to Africa," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 9:2 (2004), p. 115.

37. Ibid.

38. Robert Smith, "Peace and Palaver: International Relations in Pre-Colonial West Africa," *Journal of African History* 14:4 (1973), pp. 599–621.

39. Ibid., p. 599.

40. Jean-Godefroy Bidima, *La Palabre: The Legal Authority of Speech*, in *Law and the Public Sphere in Africa: La Palabre and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. Laura Hengehold (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), pp. 15–74; *La palabre: Une juridiction de la parole* (Paris: Michalon, 1997).

41. Souleymane Bachir Diagne, foreword to Bidima, *Law and the Public Sphere in Africa*, p. xiv.

42. Jean-Godefroy Bidima, "Justice, Deliberation, and the Democratic Public Sphere: Palabre and its Variations," preface to *Law and the Public Sphere in Africa*, p. xvii.

43. See, among others, Bidima, *Law and the Public Sphere in Africa*; Brock-Utne, "Peace Research with a Diversity Perspective," p. 115; Mogobe B. Ramose, *African Philosophy through Ubuntu* (Harare, ZI: Mond Books, 1999); Drucilla Cornell and Nyoko Muvangua, eds., *Ubuntu and the Law: African Ideals and Postapartheid Jurisprudence* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012); and Samuel Hinton, "The Connection between Ubuntu Indigenous Philosophy and the Gacaca Traditional Judicial Process in Rwanda," *US-China Education Review B* 5:1 (2015), pp. 392–7.

44. For an account of philosophy as the struggle for love and understanding, and decoloniality as first philosophy, see my "Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality." For the idea of decoloniality as first philosophy, see Juan Blanco and Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "La descolonización como filosofía primera: 'Giro decolonial,' universidad y 'meditaciones fanonianas,'" *Cultura de Guatemala* 37:2 (2016), pp. 147–64.

45. Vine Deloria, Jr., "Perceptions and Maturity: Reflections on Feyerabend's Point of View," in *Spirit and Reason: The Vine Deloria, Jr., Reader*, ed. Barbara Deloria, Kristen Foehner, and Sam Scinta (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 1999), pp. 13–4.

46. Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?," trans. James Schmidt, in *What Is Enlightenment?: Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth-Century Questions*, trans. James Schmidt et al., ed. James Schmidt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 58.

47. Ibid., p. 59.

48. Ibid., p. 60.

49. Vine Deloria, Jr., "A Native American Perspective on Liberation," *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 1:3 (1977), p. 16.

50. Ibid., pp. 15–6.

51. Ibid., p. 15.

52. I have developed some aspects of this idea of catastrophe in "Outline of Ten Theses on Coloniality and Decoloniality"; "Critique and Decoloniality in the Face of Crisis, Disaster, and Catastrophe," in *Aftershocks of Disaster: Puerto Rico Before and After the Storm*, ed. Yarimar Bonilla and Marisol LeBrón (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2019), pp. 324–34; and "On Metaphysical Catastrophe, Post-Continental Thought, and the Decolonial Turn," *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, ed. Tatiana Flores and Michelle Ann Stephens (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), pp. 247–59.

53. See Catherine E. Walsh, *Interculturalidad, estado, sociedad: Luchas (de) coloniales de nuestra época* (Quito: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar and Abya-Yala, 2009); Mignolo, "Delinking," pp. 452–3, 497–8; Jackson, "Critique's Coloniality and Pluriversal Recognition"; and Maldonado-Torres, "Ethnic Studies as Decolonial Transdisciplinarity."

54. For further discussion of this idea of coloniality, see Santiago Castro-Gómez and Ramón Grosfoguel, eds., *El giro decolonial: Reflexiones para una diversidad epistémica más allá del capitalismo global* (Bogotá: Universidad Javeriana and Siglo del Hombre Editores, 2007); Walter D. Mignolo and Catherine E. Walsh, *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); Walter D. Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, eds., *Globalization and the Decolonial Option* (London: Routledge, 2010); Edgardo Lander, "Eurocentrism, Modern Knowledges, and the 'Natural' Order of Global Capital," *Nepantla: Views from South* 3:2 (2002), pp. 245–68; and María Lugones, "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System," *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 22:1 (2007), pp. 186–209.

55. See Blanco and Maldonado-Torres, "La descolonización como filosofía primera," pp. 147–64.

56. See Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "The Decolonial Turn," trans. Robert Cavooris, in *New Approaches to Latin American Studies: Culture and Power*, trans. Robert Cavooris et al., ed. Juan Poblete (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 111–27.

57. Arturo Escobar, "Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: The Latin American Modernity/Coloniality Research Program," in *Globalization and the Decolonial Option*, pp. 33–64; Maldonado-Torres, "The Decolonial Turn," pp. 111–27.

58. For further exploration of these issues, in addition to Fanon's work, see Lewis R. Gordon, *Bad Faith and Antiblack Racism* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1995); and Lewis R. Gordon, "Sex, Race, and Matrices of Desire in an Antiblack World," in *Her Majesty's Other*

Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), pp. 51–72.

59. I describe this shift away from dominant accounts of recognition in *Against War*, pp. 122–62.

60. See Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); and Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014).

61. See, for example, Bo Isenberg, "Critique and Crisis: Reinhart Koselleck's Thesis of the Genesis of Modernity," trans. Emily Rainsford, *Eurozine*, https://www.eurozine.com/critique-and-crisis/ (accessed March 6, 2020). For a related argument, see Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988).

62. I take the notion of "movement generated theory" from Decolonize This Place, https://www.decolonizethisplace.org (accessed January 28, 2020); and Deena ElGenaidi, "'Movement-Generated Theory Magazine' *Anemones* Launches at Hyperallergic HQ on March 14," *Hyperallergic*, https://hyperallergic.com/486220/anemones-magazine-march-14/ (accessed January 28, 2020). The idea of radical hope is mobilized in decolonial forms by the Colectiva Feminista en Construcción from Puerto Rico (see, among others, their text *La manifiesta*, https://www.scribd.com/document/263057948/La-Manifiesta-Colectiva-Feminista-en-Construccion [accessed January 28, 2020]). The Colectiva draws inspiration from as well as contributes to ideas advanced by Black radical feminism, such as the work of the Combahee River Collective, and from decolonial thought.