

An Oblique Encounter with Sociology: Frantz Fanon's "Les damnés de la terre"

Steinmetz, George

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Steinmetz, G. (2021). An Oblique Encounter with Sociology: Frantz Fanon's "Les damnés de la terre". *Soziopolis: Gesellschaft beobachten*. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-78857-5>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY Lizenz (Namensnennung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY Licence (Attribution). For more information see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>

George Steinmetz | Essay | 06.12.2021

An Oblique Encounter with Sociology

Frantz Fanon's „Les damnés de la terre“

Fanon's work has been read in the context of his training in psychiatry, his immersion in phenomenology, existentialism, Hegelian philosophy, and psychoanalysis, and his activities as a revolutionary. There is at least one intertextual dimension of Fanon's writing that has not been sufficiently explored, however, which is his relationship with sociology. By this, I do not mean sociology in general, or sociology today, but rather, sociology as it existed in France and its colonies during Fanon's lifetime. Several features of this scientific and intellectual formation are extremely relevant for Fanon's thought. One is its attention to the colonial context and the central role of racism and crisis in colonialism. Another aspect of sociology and other social disciplines as they existed in France, and especially in the colonies, during Fanon's lifetime was relative openness and fluid boundaries. We can try to determine some of the possible points of contact between Fanon and this sociology. After that, we can return to his classic *Les damnés de la terre*, and recognize some of the resonances with this intellectual environment, which was especially powerful at the turn of the 1960s when Fanon was composing his more sociological texts.

Sociology's Colonial Moment

The main reason why Fanon's oblique relation to sociology has escaped notice in the secondary literature is that the entire formation of French sociology of colonialism was repressed from collective disciplinary memory after the 1960s. It has also been elided from almost all of the secondary literature on the history of postwar French sociology. There are at least four reasons for this disciplinary amnesia.¹ (1) First is the underdevelopment of serious research on the history of sociology. Historians of science turned to the social sciences only recently.² (2) The second reason for the “amnesia effect” around colonial sociology has to do with efforts to impose a particular vision of a professionalized sociology as presentist and naturalistic, i.e., as operating according to the same methods as the natural sciences. Self-reflexivity and historicization are anathema to a discipline committed to presenting itself as forward-looking, productive, and useful. Colonies and empires are singular and complex, and thus incompatible with a version of social science committed to finding uniform and universal laws. Finally, after 1945 and especially after 1960, it became increasingly impossible to approach colonies in a value-neutral way, as common sense

among European social scientists turned anticolonial. Colonies thus became unappealing scientific objects for sociologists wedded to conventional doctrines of axiological neutrality. (3) Third, colonies and empires are avoided for some of the same reasons that German sociologists long resisted examining Nazi-era sociology (this has of course changed in recent decades). Jacques Berque diagnosed an ongoing “*therapeutic forgetting*” of colonial assumptions in 1964.³ Georges Balandier observed that the Algerian war had led to a “turning in upon the Hexagon” (*repli sur l’Hexagone*) among French youth.⁴ This was also true of French sociologists who largely avoided discussing the colonial past after the mid-1960s. The repression of sociology’s colonial involvement allowed the discipline to evade the wave of criticism directed against anthropology as complicit with colonialism.

The fourth reason for the repression of colonial sociology from disciplinary memory is scientific “metrocentrism” (4). This stance entails a focus on the global North, or on the colonial and imperial powers.⁵ This is related to a division of social-scientific labor in which the global North is assigned to sociology, the global South, and its indigenous peoples and cultures, to anthropology. This distribution of ontological turf has always dominated American academia, but it was disrupted in the European colonial metropolises during the period analyzed here, and it continues to be rejected by scholars in the former colonies. The result of this division of labor was that after the mid-1960s, sociology’s object domain, even in the European countries that had recently lost their empires, once again became the global north. Many colonial researchers or specialists in Africa, Asia, or indigenous America who were defined as sociologists during the colonial era were reclassified as anthropologists after the 1960s. A recent book ignores ethnology altogether in its discussion of French sociology between 1945 and 1980, and dates the *rapprochement* between sociology and “anthropological methods” only after 1980, and only in studies of metropolitan France.⁶ In fact, ethnographic methods were widely used by sociologists working in the French colonies between 1945 and the mid-1960s. By 1953 there were more “sociologists” than “anthropologists” among the 164 people carrying out ethnographic research in Greater France, according to André Leroi-Gourhan.⁷ Balandier and Roger Bastide were the most sought-after advisors among all postgraduate students between 1960 and 1965 at the Sixth Section of the École Pratique des Hautes Études, the most important French faculty of the social sciences.⁸

Fanon and Sociology

David Macey makes at least one mistake in his otherwise excellent biography of Fanon, writing that *L’An V de la révolution algérienne* (1959) was reissued “rather misleadingly”

under the title *Sociologie d'une révolution* in 1966 edition, “even though it is obviously not an exercise in sociology in any real sense.”⁹ It is correct that the genre of Fanon’s 1959 book is not obvious. Although it is certainly not a work of psychiatry, its arguments about gender relations, family structure, veiling, radio, medicine, and science seem too sustained and theoretical to qualify as journalism. The same is true of *Les damnés de la terre* from 1961. In fact, the contemporary French books which Fanon’s books resemble most closely are Paul Mus’s *Viêt-Nam, sociologie d’une guerre* (1952), Albert Memmi’s *Portrait du colonisé, précédé du portrait du colonisateur* (1957), Georges Balandier’s *Afrique ambiguë* (1957), Jacques Berque’s *Les Arabes* (1959) and *Dépossession du monde* (1964), and *Le déracinement* (1964) by Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad. These were all identified as works of sociology at the time.

Mus was a specialist in Buddhist and Sanskrit cosmology who had reoriented himself toward a sociological vocabulary during and after WWII. Memmi taught at the Sixth Section of the École Pratique des Hautes Études and later became a sociology professor at Nanterre. Balandier became a sociology professor at the Sorbonne in 1962 after directing the Sociology Section of the Institut d’Études Centrafricaines in Brazzaville, teaching at the Sixth Section, and editing a key sociology journal, *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, and a book series, “Sociologie d’aujourd’hui.” Berque was a *directeur d’études* (Professor) of “Muslim Sociology” at the Sixth Section (1955–1981). Bourdieu had already published *Sociologie de l’Algérie* in 1959 and joined Raymond Aron’s Centre de Sociologie Européenne in 1960.

A sociological approach to colonialism, as it emerges from these works, and others from the same period, tended to combine original empirical observations with a systematic analytic framework. Whereas colonial anthropology had typically elided the colonial context, sociology after 1945 insisted that colonialism was the key context for understanding indigenous (and European) societies in the French Empire. All of the thinkers mentioned above typically described colonialism as a distinctive system, “scene” or “situation.” Sociologists tended to argue that colonialism was organized first and foremost around racism. Finally, sociological books on colonies, including the exemplary works cited above, were synthetic and thematic. These differed from standard anthropology books, which were in-depth case studies of a single community, based on lengthy fieldwork.¹⁰ This genre of sociology of colonialism was not a minor endeavor but characterized a large percentage of the overall French sociological production between 1945 and the mid-1960s.¹¹

Some French thinkers recognized the resonance of Fanon’s work with this new form of

sociology. Fanon's publisher François Maspero was clearly making an informed choice that he thought would make sense to readers in marketing the book as a "sociology of a revolution." Macey himself describes Fanon as engaging in "sociological analysis" and as combining "sociology" with "phenomenological" approaches and "psychiatric diagnosis."¹² Joby Fanon writes that his brother Frantz studied for a *licence* degree in sociology. In fact, the sociology *licence* did not exist until 1958, after Fanon had already completed his studies. Yet this mistake speaks volumes about perceptions of Fanon's work as "sociological."

Another reason this connection has escaped notice is that Fanon's explicit references to sociology are mainly critical, with one telling exception. In "Algeria Unveiled," Fanon associates the idea of the "sociological case study" of colonialism with the fields of medicine or psychiatry. Here he seems to be referring to Mannoni as a sociologist.¹³ This is peculiar, since Mannoni was a lycée professor of philosophy in Madagascar and became a psychoanalyst, but never had anything to do with sociology. In *Les damnés*, Fanon describes sociology as "a guiding force behind [...] colonialist maneuvers" of defusing the "hatred" of the colonized through politeness, etc.¹⁴ Here again, Fanon actually seems to have Mannoni in mind, since he summarizes this "sociological" intervention as being based on the notion of "complexes – the complex of frustration, the complex of aggressiveness, the complex of colonizability."¹⁵

In *A Dying Colonialism*, Fanon uses the word "sociology" to refer somewhat more specifically to the traditional "Sociology of Islam" at Algiers University, associated with notions of eternal, fatalistic, and irrational Muslim culture.¹⁶ This was the lineage running from Émile Masqueray in the 19th century, to René Maunier in the 1920s, to Georges-Henri Bousquet, who taught at Algiers from 1927 until 1962. Maunier was one of the rare mid-20th century sociologists to openly embrace the label "sociologie coloniale." Bousquet was described by Fanon as making "hysterical appeals" to students in favor of *l'Algérie française*, and was one of Bourdieu's main targets in his 1974 lecture on decolonizing sociology.¹⁷ Fanon does not seem to have owned any of Bousquet's books, according to the list compiled by Jean Khalifa and Robert J. C. Young. Fanon does, however, seem to have had a clear image of this older, conservative form of colonial sociology.

There is one remarkable exception to this rule of critical comments on sociology in Fanon's writing, in his study of "social therapy in ward of Muslim men" with Jacques Azoulay. Fanon and Azoulay refer to the need to "try to grasp the North African social fact." They then refer to the "totality which Mauss saw as the guarantee of an authentic sociological study."¹⁸ The notion of the "social fact" in a French context gestured unambiguously toward

the Durkheimian notion of “le fait social” from *Les Règles de la méthode sociologique* (1895). Every French social scientist writing at the time would have recognized the reference. Fanon and Azoulay’s reference to Mauss’s notion of totality is an even more direct and substantial connection to the French sociologists of colonialism. Mauss was the inspiration between the wars for the earliest social studies of indigenous societies that framed them in terms of colonialism, by people like Roger Bastide (in Brazil), Jacques Soustelle (in Mexico), Maurice Leenhardt (in New Caledonia), and Charles Le Cœur (in Chad). In his 1934 “Plan for a General Descriptive Sociology,” Mauss recognized that “colonialism gives birth to new societies,” and recommended that researchers focus on such “composite societies” and on the “immense field of changes in which they were engulfed,” adding that “here, as in the case of *métissage*, this opens up an immense field of observations.”¹⁹ This was a green light to move beyond the conventional Durkheimian use of colonial ethnographic material as “data” in generating models of primitivism.²⁰ Sociologists often referred to Mauss’s notion of totality when they argued for conceptualizing colonialism as a complex, overdetermined phenomenon in which every element influences every other elements.²¹ Fanon had a copy of Mauss’s *Sociologie et anthropologie* in his personal library.²²

In addition to this explicit reference to Mauss, we have to consider Fanon’s association with the Institut des Hautes Études de Tunis. Fanon taught a course on social psychopathology that was part of the social psychology certificate for students working toward the sociology *licence* in 1959–1960 in Tunis. This institution could have allowed Fanon to come into contact with a number of actual sociologists who were teaching there at the time and whose work concerned colonialism. Sociologist Jean Cuisenier, who worked on underdevelopment in Tunisia, taught at the Tunis Institut des Hautes Études starting in 1956. Georges Granai, a sociological ethnographer specialized in cities, directed the Tunis sociology department from 1958 to 1965. Sociologist Claudine Chaulet, whom Fanon knew from Algeria, was a member of the FLN and an *attaché de recherche* via the CNRS at the Department of Human Sciences of the Institute des hautes études in Tunis in 1958–1959. Chaulet’s husband had introduced Fanon to the FLN.²³ Sociologist Jean Duvignaud began working as a *chargé de cours* in sociology at the same Institute in 1960, and was the author an insightful essay on “the practice of sociology in decolonized societies” and a “sociological” study of the village of Chebika in the Tunisian south.²⁴ Jacques Berque, the most famous historical sociologist of the Maghreb, carried out a mission for UNESCO in December 1959 aimed at developing sociological teaching and research in Tunisia.²⁵

Thus, it is possible that Fanon could have become acquainted with a number of sociologists doing innovative work on colonized and decolonized societies while he was in Tunisia. The

students in Fanon's course on social psychopathology included Lilia Ben Salem, who went on to write a sociology doctorate with Balandier as director and Duvignaud and Berque as committee members.²⁶ Other students in the course included Abdelbaki Hermassi, Abdelkébir Khatiba, Abbès Lahlou, Frej Stambouli, and Khalil Zamiti, all of whom remained in Tunisia, Claude Tapia, who went on to a career as a sociologist in metropolitan France, and Monique Laks, who was a sociology lecturer at the University of Algiers in 1962–1965.²⁷ For at least one year, when he was writing (or dictating) *L'An V de la révolution algérienne* and *Les damnés de la terre*, Fanon was close to a milieu of French and Tunisian sociologists.²⁸

Finally, we should grant Fanon the same courtesy we do other authors and consider the books in their library, without of course making any assumptions about textual causality. Fortunately, Jean Khalfa has published an annotated catalogue of the books in the last library of Frantz and Josie Fanon, even indicating which pages were cut in the untrimmed books. Here we find many classics of French sociology that were taken seriously by the sociologists of colonization, who were less enamored of the new postwar Americanizing strands making their way into Europe. Berque wrote that “American techniques” of social research were based on “quantitative excess” and “naïve numeric aspects,” adding that “we Europeans, and especially French sociologists, remain skeptical about this approach.”²⁹ Interestingly, this was in an essay called “Vers une étude des comportements en Afrique du Nord,” published in the Algerian *Revue Africaine* in 1956, which meant that it could have been visible to Fanon.

Fanon's library also contained the following books by sociologists and socioethnologists working in colonial settings, writing on colonialism, or active in anticolonial politics:

A third important aspect of the question of Fanon's relation to sociology was the relative lack of boundaries among the various human sciences in France and especially in the colonies at the time. Many scholars were active in more than one discipline, and many scholarly careers involved movement among disciplines. Sociology did not have an established curriculum or a dedicated university degree until 1958, and anthropology had to wait another decade. This does not mean that sociology was non-existent, but that its disciplinary borders were fluid, and that its university teachers were trained in other disciplines, often philosophy.

Boundaries between disciplines were even more porous in the colonies. “Sociology” was present before “ethnology” in some institutions, such as the Office de la Recherche

Scientifique et Technique Outre-mer, while ethnology preceded sociology at the Dakar-based Institut Français d'Afrique Noire. Individuals could thus be reassigned from one discipline to another based on employment opportunities rather than any aspect of their training or their research. The boundaries were also porous between the natural and human sciences in colonial settings. This was partly due to the applied nature of much colonial research, which was focused on solving problems rather than defending disciplinary prestige. Colonial specialists and research projects were particularly prone to inter- or transdisciplinarity.

Fanon's own skepticism about hard disciplinary frontiers may have been reinforced by the initial rejection of the manuscript that became *Peau noire, masques blancs* as a medical thesis in Lyon. At least, it may have strengthened his resistance to a rigidly medical-scientific approach to psychiatry rather than reigning him in. Fanon's experience in 1952–1953 at François Tosquelles's psychiatric hospital in Saint-Alban, which pioneered a novel form of institutional psychotherapy, was similarly open to experimentation. Fanon exported some of Tosquelles's ideas and practices to Blida and continued to develop them. It is fair to say that Fanon's therapeutic approach and writing overflowed disciplinary boundaries.³⁴

No Balandier, no Bourdieu

Despite Fanon's many ties to the sociology and social theory of his time, there still remains the stubborn fact of the near complete absence of references to sociologists in his writing. He cited the behaviorist Naville for the argument that social facts are sometimes more important than individual facts in determining the content of dreams.³⁵ He referred once to Edmond Douffé, the Durkheimian sociologist of the Maghreb who had died in 1926.³⁶ Fanon never refers to Balandier, even though it is difficult to imagine that he was unaware of him. Balandier famously singled out colonialism as the crucial context for studies of the life of indigenous or settler populations in his 1951 essay on the "colonial situation."³⁷ Fanon uses the phrase "colonial situation" frequently, but this phrase had first been deployed by Octave Mannoni in a more psychoanalytic context in his *Psychologie de la colonisation* (1950). Fanon devoted an entire chapter to excoriating Mannoni in *Peau noire, masques blancs*. Fanon's library does not list any of Balandier's books, although he did own some issues of the *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, including one from 1952 in which Balandier proposed the concept of "situations of dependency." Fanon also owned some of the early issues of the influential journal and publishing house *Présence africaine* which centered on the *Négritude* movement of which Fanon was a lucid commentator and sharp

critic. Fanon published an article in a 1959 issue of the journal, and the “éditions” would publish the first English translation of *Les damnés de la terre* in 1963.

Balandier, who was not only a regular contributor to *Présence Africaine*, but one of its co-founders and editors, had articles in most of the journal’s issues between 1947 and 1951 that are in Fanon’s library. The first issue, from 1947, contained Balandier’s article “Le noir est un homme,” where he discussed the historical evolution of European racism in the context of colonialism. Balandier analyzes some of the most rebarbative racist slurs, drawing examples from his personal experience. He then traces the evolution of European views of Africans from the early “disdainful” language to the interwar period in which Europeans “became more tender,” shifting to a discourse of the exotic and the “noble savage.”³⁸

Balandier’s article “Erreurs noires” in a subsequent issue of *Présence africaine* returned to the masochistic form of self-reflexivity found in “Le noir est un homme.” Here Balandier scrutinizes the stereotypes he brought with him to Africa, which he said “shaped my responses to real blacks.”³⁹ Along with *Peau noire, masques blancs*, these articles are among the bluntest discussions of French racism in the postwar period, and they certainly represent the most searing indictment of colonial racism by a white Frenchman.

In another issue of *Présence africaine*, Balandier reviewed the prose-poem *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal* by Aimé Césaire, Fanon’s *lycée* teacher in Martinique and a target of his later, though ambivalent criticism. Balandier presented Césaire’s text as inaugurating a “renaissance of the literature of violence,” restoring connections with the interwar surrealism movement, which had been “buried by the recent events.”⁴⁰ This specific aspect of the surrealist context was also important for Fanon, as is clear from his early unpublished play “L’Œil se noie”.⁴¹ Whether this surrealist context is important for Fanon’s discussion of violence in *Les damnés de la terre* is a different question.⁴²

The absence of references to Bourdieu is less surprising. Bourdieu was still a relatively unknown quantity at the time. His empirical refutation of Fanon’s glorification of the Algerian rural masses and Lumpenproletariat as “one of the most spontaneously and radically revolutionary of a colonized people” was not published until just after Fanon’s death, in three articles in 1962. In an article in *Les Temps Modernes*, “Les sous-prolétaires algériens,” Bourdieu argued that the sub-proletariat was not genuinely revolutionary because they were “not detached enough from their condition to posit it as an object.”⁴³ Where Fanon insisted that “in colonial countries only the peasant is revolutionary,”

Bourdieu countered that in Algeria, as the first “victims of colonialism,” the peasantry cannot be a true revolutionary force.⁴⁴ Only the proletarians who are regularly employed and have social insurance are able to forge a different attitude toward the world, based on a rational conduct of life and a planned orientation towards the future, Bourdieu contends. The stably employed do not tend to regard the colonial era as a “poisoned chalice” (*un cadeau empoisonné*) all of whose traces must now be eliminated. Specifically, Bourdieu suggested that the postcolonial government should not roll back social programs simply because they were created by the Europeans during their “developmentalist” period.⁴⁵ The culmination of this line of research was Bourdieu’s “Étude sociologique,” in the collective œuvre *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie*.⁴⁶ It is likely that Fanon, in the last months of his life, had no idea that this critique was in the offing.

Conclusion: *Les damnés de la terre* as Culmination of the Postwar Sociology of Colonialism

Fanon’s texts from 1959 through 1961 present sociological portraits of a revolutionary social process. This means that Fanon was at least obliquely tied to the emerging formation of “sociologie de la colonisation,” and that his texts can best be understood by reading them against this context.⁴⁷ It also means that there are many arguments in Fanon’s late texts that can be used for a contemporary sociology of colonialism and empires. Most of these come from *Les damnés de la terre*, Fanon’s most sustained social analysis. Colonialism is described here as a dualistic, Manichaeic world. The colonial world is not hegemonized, but rather governed by sheer violence; there is no legitimacy, as in the metropolitan states. As in *Peau noire, masques blancs*, the central structure of the colony is racism. Race determines class position. The ruling class is defined here first by its foreignness, secondarily by ownership of the means of production, which stem from the first factor.

In the colony, Fanon argues, there are no national cultural innovations or creativity. Instead, culture becomes “an inventory of behavioral patterns, traditional costumes, and miscellaneous customs.” Magic, dance, and rites of possession all play the role of safety valves, “ensuring the stability of the colonized world”: the outburst is followed by peace. However, the colonized are not petrified “on the inside”; instead, they are constantly ready to boil over. Colonial society is protean and unbalanced, but also “rigid in the extreme, congealed, and petrified.”⁴⁸ This shearing tension within society is replicated within each colonized individual. Mental illness is caused by colonialism, as Fanon argued in earlier essays and *Peau noire, masques blancs*, and it cannot be resolved without national and

collective liberation.

All of the different strands of sociological, ethnological, and psychological research on colonies that had accumulated since the late 1930s reach a kind of climax in Frantz Fanon's final work. The overeager messianism around peasants and the Lumpenproletariat, and the questionable arguments about violence as "absolute praxis," can be sectioned off from this brilliant social portrait of a late colony. What is more, they do not necessarily follow from it. *Les damnés de la terre* is the culmination of the postwar sociology of colonialism and a move beyond it, by connecting psychic and social processes. This is a text that the contemporary sociology of colonialism cannot afford to ignore.

Endnoten

1. Ann Laura Stoler's concept of "aphasia" is inadequate for grasping this process. "Aphasia" has an individual and linguistic orientation, and elides the collective and individual psychic process involved in burying memory as well as the *moral* dimension in discussions of forgetting. See Paul Ricœur, in *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Chicago 2004, p. 412–56; Ann Laura Stoler, *Colonial Aphasia: Race and Disabled Histories in France*, in: *Public Culture* 23 (2011), 1, p. 121–156.
2. George Steinmetz, *Begriffsbeben. Von der Geschichte der Wissenschaft zur historischen Soziologie der Sozialwissenschaften*, in: *Mittelweg* 36 29 (2020), 3, p. 94–115.
3. Jacques Berque, *Dépossession du monde*, Paris 1964, p. 93, n. 6.
4. Georges Balandier, *Histoire d'autres*, Paris 1977, p. 190. French students "therapeutically" turned to protesting the American war in Vietnam, leading to the events of May 1968, even though the French colonial wars had not sparked much campus unrest. Jean-Pierre Duteuil, *Nanterre 68: vers le mouvement du 22 mars*, Mauléon 1988; B. S. Keenan, "The US Embassy Has Been Particularly Sensitive about This": Diplomacy, Antiwar Protests, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs during 1968, in: *French Historical Studies* 41 (2018), 2, p. 253–273.
5. Methodological nationalism is implicit in all forms of scientific metrocentrism, but it is not the same thing. Social scientists in peripheral states may also engage in methodological nationalism, for example, yet they are clearly not metrocentric, since their national states do not belong to the global core.
6. Philippe Masson / Cherry Schrecker, *Sociology in France after 1945*, London 2016, p. 57.
7. Leroi-Gourhan, *Qu'est-ce que c'est ... l'ethnologie?*, in: *Bulletin du Centre de formation aux recherches ethnologiques* 5 (1953), p. 1–7, here p. 1. Leroi-Gourhan was the founder of a national training program for ethnography with funding from the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS) and was therefore extremely well informed about this. See Gerald Gaillard, *Répertoire de l'ethnologie française: 1950-1970*, 2 vols., Paris 1990, vol. 2, p. 30–31; Jacques Gutwirth, *La professionnalisation d'une discipline: Le centre de formation aux recherches ethnologiques*, in: *Gradhiva* 29 (2001), p. 25–41.

8. Olivier Godechot, La formation des relations académiques au sein de l'EHESS, in: Histoire et mesure 26 (2011), p. 223–260.
9. David Macey, Frantz Fanon, New York 2000, p. 398. An English translation of Fanon's book on Algeria was published in 1965 under the title "Studies in a Dying Colonialism", which was shortened to "A Dying Colonialism" when reissued in the widely circulated paperback edition published in 1967 by Groove Press.
10. The Africanist ethnologist Claude Tardits criticized the style of Balandier's books for this exact quality, contrasting it with lengthy, stationary fieldwork with one "tribe." Tardits wrote to Eric de Dampierre in 1957: "J'ai lu le Balandier. Ceci est strictment entre nous: ce *travelling* n'est pas bon du tout." (I read Balandier's book. Strictly entre nous: this travelling [in English in the text] is not good at all.) Claude Tardits to Eric de Dampierre, October 30, 1957. In folder "1956-1957," Eric de Dampierre papers, Nanterre.
11. George Steinmetz, Sociology and Colonialism in the British and French Empires, 1940s–1960s, in: Journal of Modern History 89 (2017), 3, p. 601–648; G.S., Soziologie und Kolonialismus- Die Beziehung zwischen Wissen und Politik, in: Mittelweg 36 29 (2020), 3, p. 17–36; G.S., The Colonial Origins of Modern Social Thought: French Sociology and the Overseas Empire, Princeton, NY 2022 (forthcoming).
12. Macey, Frantz Fanon, p. 485, 232, 473.
13. Frantz Fanon, Studies in a Dying Colonialism, transl. Haakon Chevalier, New York 1965, p. 64.
14. Frantz Fanon, Wretched of the Earth, transl. Richard Philcox, New York 2004, p. 90.
15. Ibid., 90.
16. Fanon, A Dying Colonialism, p. 70, 80, 127, 129.
17. Ibid., 173; Pierre Bourdieu, Les conditions sociales de la production sociologique: sociologie coloniale et décolonisation de la sociologie, in Henri Moniot (ed.), Le mal de voir, Paris 1976, p. 416–427. Fanon does not seem to have owned any of Bousquet's books, according to the list compiled by Jean Khalfa, "La bibliothèque de Frantz Fanon,"

in: Jean Khalifa / Robert J. C. Young (eds.), *Frantz Fanon: Écrits sur l'aliénation et la liberté*, Paris 2018, p. 366–386.

18. Frantz Fanon / Jacques Azoulay, *Social Therapy in Ward of Muslim Men*, in: Khalifa and Young, *Fanon: Alienation and Freedom*, p. 363.
19. Marcel Mauss, “Fragment d’un plan de sociologie générale descriptive (1934),” in M.M., *Oeuvres*, Vol. 3, Paris 1969, p. 303–358, 353–354.
20. Fuyuki Kurasawa, *The Durkheimian School and Colonialism: Exploring the Constitutive Paradox*, in George Steinmetz (ed.), *Sociology and Empire*, Durham, NC 2013, p. 188–209.
21. Georges Balandier, *The Sociology of Black Africa. Social Dynamics in Central Africa*, transl. Douglas Garman, Westport, CT 1970, p. 8, 22.
22. Khalifa, *La bibliothèque*, p. 616.
23. Pierre and Claudine Chaulet, *Le choix de l’Algérie: deux voix, une mémoire*, Algiers 2012.
24. Jean Duvignaud, *Chebika. Mutations dans un village du Maghreb. Étude sociologique*, Paris 1968; Jacques Berque, *La pratique de la sociologie dans les pays décolonisés*, in: *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 34 (1963), p. 165–174.
25. Rapport de M. Jacques Berque, professeur au Collège de France, sur la mission qu’il a effectuée en Tunisie de novembre à décembre 1959, en vue du développement de l’enseignement et de la recherche dans le domaine des sciences sociales, au titre du programme de participation aux activités des États membres de l’Unesco, in: *UNESCO Archives*, Paris, document UNESCO/ss/Mission/Tunisie 59.
26. Ben Salem’s notes on Fanon’s course are reproduced as: *Rencontre de la société et de la psychiatrie*, in Khalifa / Young, *Écrits sur l’aliénation*, p. 430–456 [Read the German translation of this text included in our dossier [here](#)]. See also Khalil Zamiti, *Aux origines de la sociologie en Tunisie*, in: Mohamed Kerrou (ed.), *Abdelkader Zghal: l’homme des questions*, Tunis 2017, p. 229–238.
27. Lilia Ben Salem, ‘Propos sur la sociologie en Tunisie.’ Entretien avec Sylvie Mazzella, in:

Genèses: sciences sociales et histoire 75 (2009), p. 125–142; Zamiti, Aux origines de la sociologie en Tunisie. On Laks's expulsion from Algeria in 1965 see: Les Français détenus à Alger vont être libérés, in: Le Monde, 23.9.1985.

28. Marie-Jeanne Manuellan, *Sous la dictée de Fanon*, Paris 2017.
29. Jacques Berque, Vers une étude des comportements en Afrique du Nord, in: *Revue Africaine* 100 (1956), p. 523–536, 528.
30. Michel Leiris, *Scratches [Biffures]*, transl. Lydia Davis, New York 1991, 29.
31. André Leroi-Gourhan / Jean Poirier, Le problème des contacts culturels, in: Leroi-Gourhan/Poirier, *Ethnologie de l'Union française (territoires extérieurs)*, vol. 2, Paris 1953, p. 959–996.
32. Rodinson criticized René Maunier's *Sociologie coloniale* for overlooking the “revenge of the colonized,” ignoring Marxist theories of colonialism, failing to analyze the “real motives of colonization,” the “hierarchy” of these motives, and their causal “mechanisms,” and for proposing transhistorical categories rather than specifying the unique character of modern European colonialism. See: *Année Sociologique*, 3rd series, vol. 1 (1948–1949), p. 271–275.
33. Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, transl. Pierre Collier, Cambridge 1988, p. 152.
34. Alice Bullard, The Critical Impact of Franz Fanon and Henri Collumb: Race, Gender, and Personality Testing of North and West Africans, in: *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 41 (2005), 3, p. 225–248; Jock McCulloch, *Black Soul, White Artifact: Fanon's Clinical Psychology and Social Theory*, Cambridge, MA 1983.
35. Pierre Naville, *Psychologie, Marxisme, Matérialisme*, Paris 1948.
36. Frantz Fanon / François Sanchez, L'attitude du musulmane maghébin devant la folie, in: Khalfa / Young (eds.) *Écrits sur l'aliénation*, p. 356–360, here p. 359, n. 2.
37. Georges Balandier, La situation coloniale: approche théorique, in: *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 11 (1951), p. 44–79.

38. Georges Balandier, *Le noir est un homme*, in: *Présence africaine* 1 (1947), p. 31–36, here p. 31. Of course Balandier is painting with a very broad brush. The European depiction of colonized populations as “noble savages” reached back at least to the early 18th century; see Steinmetz, *The Devil’s Handwriting*. But French Africanists did not converge around a so-called *indigénophile* posture until the 1940s, observes the Africanist Jean-Pierre Dozon in: *Georges Balandier dans l’histoire et l’épistémè de l’africanisme*, in: *Recherches sociologiques* 33 (2002), 2, 21–29, 24.
39. Balandier, *Erreurs noires*, p. 394.
40. Georges Balandier, Review of *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal*, in: *Présence africaine* 1 (1947), p. 177–178, here p. 177.
41. Frantz Fanon, *L’Œil se noie*, in: Jean Khalifa / Robert J. C. Young (eds.), *Frantz Fanon: Écrits sur l’aliénation et la liberté*, Paris 2018, p. 65–90.
42. Although Fanon does not return to Hegel in the chapter “On Violence” in *Les Damnés de la terre*, another possible interpretation of his understanding of violence as “absolute praxis” is that Fanon continued to take Hegel’s master-slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* extremely seriously. Here, the slave has to risk death in order to achieve recognition.
43. Pierre Bourdieu, *Les sous-prolétaires algériens*, in: *Les temps modernes* 18 (1962), 199, p. 1031–1051, here p. 1048. See also Pierre Bourdieu, *La hantise du chômage chez l’ouvrier algérien. Prolétariat et système colonial*, in: *Sociologie du travail* 4 (1962), 4, p. 313–331; and P.B., *De la guerre révolutionnaire à la révolution*, in: François Perroux (ed.), *L’Algérie de demain*, Paris 1962, p. 5–13.
44. Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 23; Pierre Bourdieu, *De la guerre révolutionnaire*, p. 8.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
46. Pierre Bourdieu / Alain Darbel / Jean-Paul Rivet / Claude Seibel, *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie*, Paris 1963. The important survey results in this text have been deleted from the book’s recent republication.
47. For the distinction between “sociologie coloniale” and “sociologie de la colonisation” see

Eugène Enriquez, De la sociologie coloniale à la sociologie de la colonisation et des pays sous-développés: l'œuvre de Georges Balandier, in: Critique 134 (1958), p. 641–651.

48. Fanon, Wretched of the Earth, p. 17, 20, 172.

George Steinmetz

George Steinmetz ist Charles Tilly Collegiate Professor of Sociology an der University of Michigan und korrespondierendes Mitglied am Centre de Sociologie Européenne in Paris. Zahlreiche Publikationen zu den kolonialen und imperialen Ursprüngen und Verstrickungen der Soziologie, zu Sozial- und Gesellschaftstheorie, sozialwissenschaftlichen Forschungsmethoden, Kultur und Staat. Sein 2007 in der University of Chicago Press erschienenes Buch „The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial State in Qingdao, Samoa, and Southwest Africa“ wurde vielfach ausgezeichnet, u.a. mit dem Barrington Moore Award. Bei Princeton University Press erscheint 2022 „The Colonial Origins of Modern Social Thought: French Sociology and the Overseas Empire.“ Zusammen mit Michael Chanan drehte Steinmetz 2012 den Dokumentarfilm „Detroit: Ruin of a City.“ (Foto: Annette Hornischer)

Dieser Beitrag wurde redaktionell betreut von Samir Sellami.

Artikel auf soziopolis.de:

<https://www.sozopolis.de/an-oblique-encounter-with-sociology.html>