Summary in English:

Through the use of the first-person singular *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon makes use of an idiosyncratic method in which the subject and the object of the enunciation are one and cannot be disassociated. If there is a subject who could claim having been refused the status and the full experience of human subjectivity before Fanon’s book, it is the Black man. The Black man is the antithesis of the “total man.” Fanon’s psychiatric training certainly would have encouraged him to the study of the inner workings of the mind. But Fanon does not conform to the usual separation of the subjective and the objective. On the contrary, he subverts this binary by placing himself on the border that supposedly divides the inside from the outside: the color line, that which defines skin and its masks. This was revolutionary because it allowed him to deconstruct racialization in its social and “scientific” processes. Conversely, Fanon refuses to employ the methods of anatomy, those that specialize in the science of dissecting cadavers. It is a well-established fact that European scientific and medical traditions were animated by a scopic desire that steered away from tactile perception and oral exchange, to such a degree that the living body was solely perceived and conceived through the lens of the inanimate body. These anatomical disciplines emphasized the significance of skin, treating it either as a veil to be removed or as a measure of quality—negative quality, if black. If Fanon refuses to work as an anatomist, it is because the very paradigm of the study of both the animate body and the living subject is the clinic. The term “clinic” comes from the Latin *clinice*, referring to medical treatment given at the patient’s sickbed. Clinical practice implies not only observation—satisfying that scopic desire—but care, health and illness, equilibrium and neurosis. Restoring the subject to life and a clinical approach go hand-in-hand. To write the history of mankind requires, at the very least, understanding which *men* are implicated, not which *man*.

Like Tosquelles, Fanon believed that the conditions in which individuals lived had profound effects on their subjectivity and psychological profile. There, he met individuals whose bodies expressed what their lips couldn’t: muscular spasms, stomach aches, and migraines were then common ailments and constituted signs of the patients’ deep psychological suffering, as Fanon explained at great length in *The Wretched of the Earth*. He thus used the hospital of Blida-Joinville the way Tosquelles used Saint-Alban: not as a place of psychiatric misery, but as a state of exception through which he would understand the psychiatry of misery. To do so, Fanon needed to decolonize psychiatry itself, by fighting against the colonial practice of psychiatry that was, in the studies of his time, called the “The Algiers School.” Without any knowledge of the culture, religion, or language of Algeria, and though a stranger to the society and psychiatry as it was practiced there, Fanon was nevertheless not a stranger to the colonial situation and the segregation that came with it. It was crucial to turn colonial subjects into agents of their own existence—individually as well as collectively. After all, the right to self-determination is nothing more than the will to take one’s life into one’s own hands. In his resignation letter to Robert Lacoste in 1956, Fanon wrote: “Insanity is one of man’s means of losing his freedom. And I can say that, situated in this context, I have measured, with great chagrin, the extent of the alienation experienced by this country’s inhabitants. If psychiatry is a medical technique that claims to allow man to no longer be a stranger to his environment, I must conclude that the Arab, a permanent alien in his own country, lives in a state of complete depersonalization. What is Algeria’s situation? It is a systematic dehumanization.”

Fanon’s ideas travelled. They became influential beyond the place from which they emerged—a place which was itself mobile, folded over in time and space, encompassing both Martinique and Algeria, as well as France and Tunisia, not to mention Ghana. And this during the time of great geopolitical upheaval known as “anti-imperialism.” Fanon’s geopolitically localized reflections were later decontextualized, treated as if Fanon had philosophized from the comfort of a library armchair, far from danger. This couldn’t be further from the truth. Moreover, *The Wretched of The Earth*, as well as *Black Skin, White Masks*, were addressed directly to the subjects it described, not to an exterior and supposedly “impartial” party. Che Guevara read *The Wretched of the Earth* and requested that it be distributed in Cuba. In the United States, Elridge Cleaver and Stokely Carmichael made it their own. The Kanak students in New Caledonia immediately appropriated it. Ever since its publication, this book has circulated across the globe. It reached Tokyo thanks to the FLN, was translated, and inspired Japanese intellectuals who revolted at Japan’s treatment of the Koreans living and working in their territory. Subjective and objective dimensions intertwine in Fanon’s analysis, allowing for both strong identification and differentiated application to a range colonial situations.