

"A B! LACK

MAN?

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH

5:00 PM

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

STEVENSON HALL

ROOM 303

701 S. MORGAN ST

SPEAK?

? F? MARX"

In the years immediately following World War II French intellectuals Jean-Paul Sartre and Frantz Fanon turned their attention to racism, anti-semitism and anti-black racism. Both men were engaged with both. Neither wrote from identity, but rather both sought to link their reflections to Marxism, to its failure and possible reconstitution. The texts Sartre and Fanon wrote during the years 1945-1952 – primarily *Anti-Semite and Jew* and *Black Orpheus* by one and *Black Skin, White Masks* by the other – remain

enigmatic, resisting assimilation to the canons of identity politics. Unlike later writings taken up by the New Left in the 1960s, above all Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* with Sartre's notorious preface, the writings from the immediate post-war years are rarely revisited today and, insofar as they cannot be rendered mere precursors to the later works, they are ignored.

This talk seeks to recover the concerns of Sartre and Fanon regarding racism in the post-war years and, if possible,

to estrange these writings in the process. That is, it seeks to raise as a question what has since become falsely naturalized: How did Sartre and Fanon intend their writings on racism not as contributions to the dismantling of Marxism, but to its reconstitution?

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