

There's No Such Thing as Someone Else's Children: Fanonian Zones of Being and Non-Being in Omar El Akkad's *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This*

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<https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2026.15.3.27>

Abstract

Omar El Akkad's memoir One Day Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This (2025) documents how witnessing the Gaza genocide destroyed his belief in Western liberal values. The book is built around the idea that every child is someone's child; no child should be seen as "someone else's child." This article analyses El Akkad's book through Frantz Fanon's postcolonial lens, focusing on his concept of the "zone of non-being," where colonised people are denied full humanity, and their deaths often go unnoticed. This study analyses how the phrase "there's no such thing as someone else's children" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88) captures Fanon's concept of "zone of non-being" (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 10) while also examining passive voice headlines and numerical abstractions as a technique to hide Fanon's concept of dehumanisation. This research reveals many important aspects. El Akkad's idea that no child can be described as someone else's strongly connects with Fanon's concept of the "zone of non-being". Passive voice headlines by Western media make the colonial violence invisible by erasing the agent of violence. The phrase "tragic but inevitable" and the acronym WCNSF (Wounded Child, No Surviving Family) reduce human suffering to administrative terms. Western liberal complicity is exposed through the lesser evil voting logic. By applying Fanon's 1961 theory to the 2025 text, this study shows that colonialism Fanon witnessed in Algeria is still operating in Gaza.

Keywords: Frantz Fanon, Zone of non-being, Omar El Akkad, Gaza Genocide, Passive Voice.

Introduction

Omar El Akkad's *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025) describes the experience of witnessing a genocide in real time while the Western world looks away. The author is a journalist, born in Egypt but raised in Canada. For many years, he continued to believe in Western values and justice. He covered the war on terror, Guantanamo Bay, and Black Lives Matter. He saw hypocrisy in Western values, yet he still believed the West had a "bedrock of something good" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 2). But after watching the genocide in Gaza from 2023 to 2025, El Akkad lost that belief completely. In his book, he intertwined his personal life with political tensions to illustrate why he stopped believing in Western values and why other Western liberals should reconsider their own beliefs.

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This book does not follow a traditional structure with characters and plot. It is a collection of essays that mixes the personal life manifesto with political criticism. El Akkad writes about his childhood life in Qatar, his immigration to Canada, his life in America, and his career as a journalist. But after his personal account, every chapter comes back to the genocide in Gaza. He writes in his book how Western media uses manipulative language and reports Palestinian deaths just as cold numbers, while reporting Western deaths as stories with names and faces. He uses the example of passive voice headlines: “Palestinian journalist hit in the head by a bullet” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). The agent of violence is erased. El Akkad argues that these techniques show the colonial hypocrisy and refusal to treat Palestinian people as equals to Western people.

The most important line in the book is: “there’s no such thing as someone else’s children” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88). El Akkad uses this line to argue that when Western leaders call Palestinian deaths “tragic but inevitable,” they are implying that Palestinian children are not their responsibility. They are “someone else’s children.” He asks: “How does one finish the sentence: ‘It is unfortunate that tens of thousands of children are dead, but...’” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 104). Every way of finishing that sentence, he argues, is really saying that these children do not matter as much as other children.

To analyse this book, this study draws on Frantz Fanon's postcolonial theory. Fanon was a psychiatrist from Martinique, a French colony in the Caribbean. He worked in Algeria during its war of independence from French colonial rule. He wrote two famous books: *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961). In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon explains that colonialism divides the world into two zones. The coloniser lives in the “zone of being” where life has value and death is mourned. The colonised live in the “zone of non-being” (Fanon, 1961/2004, p. 6); those placed in this zone are denied full human value. Fanon also exposes that colonisers rename their violence as “civilising mission,” “self-defence,” or “counter terrorism.” Western leaders and media use these types of terms to hide colonial violence. Fanon shows the moral sense of liberal people who say, “I feel terrible, but what can I do?” Fanon calls it “bad faith,” which allows them to escape guilt by pretending they have no power when they actually can stop.

Contemporary scholars have applied Fanon to Gaza. Many scholars have used Fanon’s ideas to understand Gaza’s suffering and dehumanisation. However, no study has yet applied Frantz Fanon’s postcolonial theory to examine Omar El Akkad’s *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025). This research work fills that gap.

Research Objectives

- To analyse El Akkad’s phrase “someone else’s children” in relation to Fanon’s zone of non-being.
- To examine how passive voice headlines and numerical abstraction function as Fanonian dehumanisation.

Research Questions

1. How does El Akkad’s phrase “someone else’s children” reveal that Palestinian children inhabit Fanon’s zone of non-being?
2. How do passive voice headlines and the reduction of deaths to numbers make colonial violence invisible to Western audiences?

Significance of the study

This study makes an original contribution to postcolonial literary scholarship. Omar El Akkad’s *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* was published in 2025 and has received little

to no academic attention. While journalistic reviews have engaged with the book's moral arguments, no peer-reviewed research has systematically analysed the text through a postcolonial theoretical framework. By examining it through Fanon's theory, this article is among the first scholarly works to demonstrate how a 1961 analysis of colonial Algeria helps explain the 2023-2025 Gaza genocide. More significantly, this research takes El Akkad's phrase that "there's no such thing as someone else's children" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88) and treats it not merely as emotional language but as a theoretical concept that directly coincides with Fanon's zone of non-being. This study reveals that dehumanisation operates not entirely through overt racism but through manipulative linguistic mechanisms such as passive voice headlines and phrases like "tragic but inevitable." By exposing these strategies, this research contributes to a broader critical conversation about how liberal publics come to accept genocide without conscious complicity.

Literature Review

The book by Omar El Akkad, *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025), is relatively new; thus, few scholarly works have been published on it. Nevertheless, many researchers have investigated various aspects connected with such notions as media bias, language manipulation, dehumanisation, and psychological consequences of the Gaza genocide. This chapter provides a review of the most relevant literature to help me define the research gap in my study. In particular, I analyse the notion of "someone else's children" used by Omar El Akkad and its correlation with the idea of the zone of non-being developed by Frantz Fanon. Nevertheless, no scholar has analysed El Akkad's book in relation to the theory developed by Fanon.

Scholars have analysed the suffering of Palestinians in light of Fanon's ideas. For example, Rico Montoya published an article titled "La deshumanización del sistema-mundo (Gaza) y la apuesta descolonizadora zapatista." She claims that "the colonial world is a Manichean world in which the coloniser is wholly good, wholly light, while the colonised is wholly evil, wholly darkness" (Rico Montoya, 2025, p. 7). She analyses the case of the Palestinian children in the context of being regarded as sacrificial bodies. However, in her article, she compares Gaza to the Zapatista resistance in Mexico and does not analyse El Akkad's book. Hence, there is an opportunity to prove my thesis statement by applying Fanonian theory to El Akkad's specific term, namely "someone else's children."

Bouguettaia and Debeche (2021) published a master's dissertation titled "Misinformation and Manipulation in Translating Journalistic Articles: Terms Related to Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." The researchers focus on analysing the manipulation strategies used by biased translators when translating articles about Palestine. The study shows that some terms, such as "Apartheid wall" versus "separation barrier" and "martyrdom operation" versus "suicide attack," are totally different in meaning in regard to the translator's stance. The authors highlight several methods of manipulation, such as addition, omission, lexical selection, and the expressive meaning of a term. Such an approach is consistent with my thesis idea since El Akkad discusses similar issues in the context of passive voice headlines hiding the person who kills people. However, the authors discuss the problem within the framework of language translation and do not consider English-language discourse. Their paper does not utilise any of Fanon's approaches. Besides, Bouguettaia and Debeche worked in 2021, before the 2023-2025 Gaza genocide.

In "Highlighting Biased Western Media Discourse on Israel-Palestine: A Textual Analysis of News Articles by Mohammed El-Kurd," Amin and Al-Saggaf (2025) discuss how El-Kurd combats the Western media's use of biased language through active voice, negative expressive value, repetition, and overwording. Their findings indicate that the use of the passive voice by Western media allows

them to obscure Israeli violence, which directly supports El Akkad's claims regarding headlines such as "Palestinian journalist hit in the head by a bullet." In addition, the two scholars highlight the normalisation of Palestinian deaths with adjectives such as "quotidian" used by the Western media, similar to El Akkad's criticism of the term "tragic but inevitable." While the research focuses solely on how El-Kurd responds to the biased language of Western media, not on El Akkad's work, it also ignores Frantz Fanon's theories. As such, there is an opportunity to examine similar linguistic features through Fanon's theory of invisible colonial violence.

In "European Media Propaganda in Support of Israeli Genocide in Palestine 2024," Wafi and Zaini (2025) identify ways in which European media propagandise for Israeli genocide through two techniques: obfuscation of facts and manipulation through rhetoric aimed at branding Hamas as terrorists. The authors give examples of how newspapers such as *Le Figaro*, *Der Spiegel*, and *France24* deploy denial of responsibility, scapegoating, and negative framing to legitimise Israel. Additionally, they reveal how the labelling of "terrorism" is used to depersonalise Palestinians. This is important for my research since it is similar to what El Akkad discusses in terms of language sanitising the process of violence to make genocide acceptable to liberal audiences. However, in contrast to my thesis, Wafi and Zaini are concerned with political aspects of European media propaganda rather than with literary criticism and postcolonial discourse à la Fanon. They neither refer to El Akkad's work nor quote him.

Based on a thorough analysis of the sources cited above, an interesting research gap emerges. Although scholars such as Rico Montoya (2025) have used Fanon's theory of dehumanisation in relation to Gaza, they do not cite El Akkad's book. Similarly, Bouguettaia and Debeche (2021), as well as Amin and Al-Saggaf (2025), discuss language manipulation in the media, but not as it pertains to El Akkad's book. Wafi and Zaini (2025) analyse European media propaganda without reference to postcolonial theories. This is the gap my thesis will fill. No study has taken El Akkad's phrase "there's no such thing as someone else's children" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88) and analysed it through Fanon's zone of non-being. No study has examined El Akkad's critique of passive voice headlines using Fanon's theory of invisible colonial violence. This is the gap my thesis will fill.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses the postcolonial theory of Frantz Fanon because his main concern closely aligns with what Omar El Akkad argues in his book *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025). Fanon asks how colonialism decides whose life matters and whose death is ignored. El Akkad asks the same question when he writes about Gaza.

The Zone of Non-Being

The "zone of non-being" is a key concept in this study. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952/1986), Fanon discusses how colonialism creates the zone of non-being. Fanon explains that this is not a physical space but a conceptual condition in which colonised people are positioned. Fanon states that Black men live in "a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinarily sterile and arid region" (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 10).

Fanon describes that colonialism splits the world into two distinct zones. The zone of being and the zone of non-being. In the zone of being, people are fully human, and life has value. While in the zone of non-being, life has no value, deaths are expected and not mourned. Fanon describes: "The black man wants to be white. The white man slaves to reach a human level" (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 11).

This concept by Fanon is central to understanding El Akkad's famous phrase "there's no such thing

as someone else's children" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88). When Western leaders call Palestinian deaths "tragic but inevitable," they are saying that they are not our responsibility or our problem. This places Palestinian children within the zone of non-being, where they are viewed as outside moral responsibility. El Akkad asks: "How does one finish the sentence: 'It is unfortunate that tens of thousands of children are dead, but...'" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 104). He argues that every way of finishing that sentence says that these children do not matter as much as others.

The Manichean Division

Fanon adopts the term "Manichean" from an old religious philosophy that splits the world into absolute good and absolute evil. In the colonial context, the coloniser is good, civilised, and human. The colonised is evil, barbaric, and animal-like. In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961/2004), Fanon discusses: "The colonial world is a Manichean world... he turns the colonised into a kind of quintessence of evil" (Fanon, 1961/2004, p. 6). The colonist refers to the colonised using "zoological terms" such as "hordes, the stink, the swarming" (Fanon, 1961/2004, p. 7).

El Akkad's book shows how the same logic works today. He writes: "Colonialism demands history begin past the point of colonisation precisely because, under those narrative conditions, the colonist's every action is necessarily one of self-defence" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 104). The coloniser always labels colonised people as aggressors and shows that they are always defending against the savage. They labelled their violence as self-defence.

Colonial Violence and Erasure of Language

Fanon makes an observation that the coloniser uses constant violence but never actually calls it violence. Instead, he renames it "self-defence," "civilising mission", or "counter terrorism." Fanon says that "colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking... It is naked violence" (Fanon, 1961/2004, p. 23). Fanon argues that the coloniser screams only when the colonised fights back against the violence.

One of El Akkad's sharpest observations is how news headlines do this. He gives an example: "Palestinian Journalist Hit in Head by Bullet During Raid on Terror Suspect's Home" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). This passive voice headline hides the violence. The journalist was killed by a bullet, but who fired the bullet? The agent of violence is erased. Omar El Akkad argues in his book that this language "cleans the consciences of onlookers" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). He writes about the passive language in this way: "To watch the descriptions of Palestinian suffering in much of mainstream Western media is to watch language employed for the exact opposite of language's purpose—to watch the unmaking of meaning" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). This is the same point that Fanon described. Language made the colonial violence invisible.

The Bad Faith of the Liberal Coloniser

This is Fanon's most uncomfortable concept, but it is key to understanding El Akkad's target audience. Fanon argues that the liberal who says, "I feel terrible, but what can I do?" is worse than the open racist. He argues that these liberals keep the colonial system running while feeling morally clean. Fanon calls this "bad faith", pretending to have no power when you actually have.

El Akkad attacks this directly. He writes about Western liberals who say, "It is unfortunate that tens of thousands of children are dead, but..." (El Akkad, 2025, p. 104), and El Akkad argues that every way of finishing that sentence really means "They would have killed more of Ours". He also critiques "lesser evil" voting logic. He argues that liberals prioritise their own safety over opposing genocide. The liberal who says they feel bad but does nothing is not innocent.

Research Methodology

This study uses the qualitative research methodology. The primary source is Omar El Akkad's book *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025). The secondary sources include Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961/2004) and *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952). The secondary sources also include peer-reviewed journal articles.

The research is conducted through a close reading of book *One Day Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025) by Omar El Akkad and textual analysis. This study employs Frantz Fanon's post-colonial theory to analyse the text.

Textual Analysis

This chapter uses Frantz Fanon's concept of the zone of non-being to analyse Omar El Akkad's novel, *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025). The research primarily focuses on El Akkad's important concept that we cannot consider any child to be someone else's. This phrase is not just emotional language. It is a precise description of what Fanon meant when he wrote about the zone of non-being, where colonised people are treated as less than.

“Someone Else's Children” and the Zone of Non-Being

In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952/1986). Fanon writes that the Black man exists in “a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinarily sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born” (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 10). Fanon describes this place not as a physical place but a moral location where colonised people are placed. In this zone, their lives have no value, death is expected and not mourned. The coloniser does not have to feel guilty because the people in this zone are considered less than human.

Omar El Akkad's phrase “there's no such thing as someone else's children” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88) directly challenges this zone. He argues that no child is someone else's child; every child is someone's child. When Western leaders call the Palestinian deaths “tragic but inevitable,” they are placing the Palestinian children in a zone of non-being. They are considering the Palestinian children as someone else's children. They are considering them as Palestinian children, who are not really our problem, not our responsibility. El Akkad, in his book, poses a painful question: “How does one finish the sentence: ‘It is unfortunate that tens of thousands of children are dead, but...’” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 104). Western leaders and Western media end this sentence by saying “... Hamas started this war,” “...we support Israel's right to exist”, or “...war is complicated.” He argues that every way of finishing that sentence is really saying that these children do not matter as much as their children.

El Akkad shows this dehumanisation through the mention of the acronym “WCNSF—Wounded Child, No Surviving Family” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 25). This acronym was created in Gaza by doctors for placing children whose entire family has been killed. It is horrifying because it reduces human suffering to bureaucratic terms, turning emotional loss into numerical data. This is exactly Fanon's concept when he mentions the zone of non-being. These children are placed in this zone where no one is left to mourn, no one is left to cry at your grave. These children are placed in a zone of non-being, erased from moral human concern.

El Akkad describes that he was watching footage of a girl “pulled out of the rubble after an Israeli airstrike” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 12), not much older than his own daughter. He was watching this when his own daughter was making a sketch of an imaginary town and asking him to check the spelling of “Welcome” for it (El Akkad, 2025, p. 12). This contrast is contradictory. One's daughter is safe, drawing parks for stuffed animals, while the girl in Gaza is being pulled from rubble. One child's life

is in the zone of being, while another's is in the zone of non-being.

El Akkad further argues that the media contributes to maintaining this zone of non-being. He writes: "To watch the descriptions of Palestinian suffering in much of mainstream Western media is to watch language employed for the exact opposite of language's purpose—to watch the unmaking of meaning" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). He argues that the media should present reality clearly, but in this case, it hides the truth instead of revealing it. You see language that hides the truth rather than reveals it. When a headline says "Palestinian journalist hit in head by bullet" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). The question is who fired the bullet. The agent of violence is erased. The victim becomes a passive receiver of violence. It seems like the violence comes from nowhere. El Akkad argues that this kind of language "cleans the consciences of onlookers" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). By erasing the killer from the sentence, the media allows the readers to witness violence without feeling responsible.

The most shattering example El Akkad mentions is the story of five-year-old Hind Rajab. He says: "On the second weekend of February 2024, the decomposing body of five-year-old Hind Rajab, whom the Israeli military murdered, is found in a car with her family, next to a burned-out ambulance that was dispatched to rescue her" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 102). He also adds: "An independent investigation will find 355 bullet holes in the car Hind was in" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 102). But here is what makes this tragedy even more heartbreaking. Before the body was found, the media reported Hind as a missing person. El Akkad mentions: "She had called for help. She had picked up a phone and begged for help. She cried, said she'd wet herself. She was five years old" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 102). El Akkad tells us that she called for someone to save her. She was alone; her family lay dead around her. And yet her suffering was not treated as an emergency. Because she was a Palestinian child. She was "someone else's child." If a five-year-old white girl in London or New York had called for help while her family lay dead around her, the world would have stopped. There would be non-stop news coverage.

This is the perfect example for Fanon's "zone of being" and "zone of non-being" (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 10). Palestinians are treated as someone else's children and placed in a zone of non-being.

Invisible Colonial Violence and Erasure of Language

Fanon makes a crucial observation. He argues that the coloniser commits constant violence but never calls it violence. In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961/2004), Fanon writes: "colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body endowed with reason. It is naked violence and only gives in when confronted with greater violence" (Fanon, 1961/2004, p. 23). He says that the coloniser renamed it as "civilising mission," "maintaining order," "self-defence," or "counter-terrorism." He hides what he is really doing behind these respectable words. The coloniser only starts screaming about violence when the colonised fights back. Then suddenly, he calls it "terrorism."

El Akkad shows this is exactly how the Western media covers Gaza. He gives the example of a headline which shows a Palestinian journalist is reported dead, without clearly stating who caused it. He points out the passive voice. Who fired the bullet? The headline does not say "Israeli soldier shot journalist" or "sniper killed reporter." The journalist was simply "hit" by a bullet. The person responsible for the violence is deliberately left out. El Akkad argues that the use of passive voice here is not an accident of grammar. It is an independent choice to hide responsibility. He says: "Anyone who works with or has even the slightest respect for language will rage at or poke fun at these tortured, spineless headlines, but they serve a very real purpose" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). He argues that these are not weak mistakes but serve a very important purpose. That purpose is to allow the reader to shrug and say, "Yes, it's all so very sad, but you know, it's all so very complicated" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 52). They allow the reader to feel sad without feeling responsible.

El Akkad also critiques how Palestinian deaths become cold numbers while Western deaths become human stories with faces. When a Western child dies, the media gives us a name, a face, a family, a story. We are asked to feel something. But when Palestinian children die, they become statistics. The media reports “30,000 dead in Gaza” and moves on. A number does not make us cry. A number does not make us angry. A number allows us to look away. El Akkad explains the reason why this happens. He writes: “In the earliest days of the genocide, virtually no correspondents from these outlets will be able to see what happens inside Gaza. They will instead report from hotel room balconies in Tel Aviv or go on guided tours with the same military whose own killing spree they are prohibited from covering firsthand” (El Akkad, 2025, pp. 30-31). This means that the only information reaching Western audiences is filtered through the Israeli military. The same military that was doing the killing was also controlling what the journalists could see and report.

El Akkad discusses how the term “terrorism” varies depending on who is doing the violence. He writes: “When a white man kills dozens of people in a concert or a synagogue or a school, it’s a crime. A hate crime, sometimes. But terrorism requires a distance between state and perpetrator wide enough to fit a different kind of fear” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 97). This double standard is exactly what Fanon meant by invisible colonial violence.

El Akkad discusses another example to illustrate this concept. He writes about a British television newscaster who described a scene at an Israeli checkpoint: “Accidentally, a stray bullet found its way into the van ahead, and that killed a three- or four- year- old young lady” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 67). El Akkad comments: “It was tragic, he says” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 67). The passive voice here is even more extreme. The bullet “found its way” into the van. It seems like no one fired the bullet. The bullet found its own way and killed a three or four-year-old girl. The language makes this tragedy sound like an accident by nature. This reflects what Fanon describes as hidden or normalised forms of colonial violence.

The Bad Faith of the Liberal Coloniser

Fanon argues that the liberal coloniser who says, “I feel terrible, but what can I do?” is actually worse than the open racist. They pretend to have no power when they actually have. He has the power to boycott, to protest, to refuse to vote for anyone who supports genocide. But he chooses not to. Fanon calls it “bad faith.”

El Akkad directly challenges this mindset. He says about the common liberal argument that one should vote for the “lesser evil.” He writes in his book: “For a lot of people, genocide is that point. Suddenly, an otherwise very persuasive argument takes on a different meaning: ‘Vote for the liberal though he harms you because the conservative will harm you more’ starts to sound a lot like ‘Vote for the liberal though he harms you because the conservative might harm me, too’” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 45). El Akkad is trying to show how the focus changes from the people being killed in Gaza to the voters themselves. It is no longer about protecting Palestinians from bombs. It is about protecting oneself from a bad president.

El Akkad also criticises Western politicians for offering empty gestures rather than real action. He points to the Biden administration creating a “task force on Islamophobia” while actively supporting the genocide in Gaza. He asks a simple but devastating question: “Without looking it up, can you recall a single thing this task force has done? Does it still exist?” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 43). The task force has done nothing. It was never meant to do anything. El Akkad calls this “hollow gesturing” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 43). The liberal politician wants to be seen as caring without actually doing anything that would cost them power or votes. This is Fanon’s bad faith at the level of governance. The administration pretends to care about Muslims while funding the persecution of Muslims.

El Akkad describes the moment he realised he could no longer go through normal life while genocide was happening in Gaza. He writes: “I stand in a ballroom amid hundreds of cheerful, celebratory people, and it occurs to me I’ve lost the ability to be here” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 107). He says he spent his whole life putting on different masks to make white Westerners comfortable around him, but now he has nothing left to wear.

El Akkad ends the book with the call for “negative resistance.” He writes: “Negative resistance—refusing to participate when the act of participation falls below one’s moral threshold—matters” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 114). This negative resistance call challenged Fanon’s bad faith.

More significantly, this research takes El Akkad’s phrase that “there’s no such thing as someone else’s children” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88) and treats it not merely as emotional language but as a theoretical concept that directly coincides with Fanon’s zone of non-being. This study reveals that dehumanisation operates not entirely through overt racism but through manipulative linguistic mechanisms such as passive voice headlines and phrases like “tragic but inevitable.” By exposing these strategies, this research contributes to a broader critical conversation about how liberal publics come to accept genocide without conscious complicity.

Discussion of Research Findings

This research reveals several significant findings. First, El Akkad’s phrase “there’s no such thing as someone else’s children” (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88) is a direct expression of Fanon’s “zone of non-being” (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 10). When Western media call the Palestinian death “tragic but inevitable”, they are placing the Palestinian children in a zone of non-being. Second, passive voice headlines like “Palestinian journalist hit in the head by a bullet” hide the agent of violence and make colonial violence invisible. These passive voice constructions prove Fanon’s concept that colonisers always rename and hide the colonial violence. Third, the acronym WCNSF (Wounded Child, No Surviving Family) turns human tragedy into administrative language. It reduces the death of children to statistics and converts the emotion into cold numbers. Fourth, Western liberal complicity is exposed through the “lesser evil” voting logic. El Akkad argues that it is really about protecting one’s own interests rather than opposing genocide. Fifth, at the end of his book, El Akkad calls for “negative resistance.”

These findings demonstrate that Fanon’s mid-twentieth-century understanding of colonial violence is remarkably relevant to modern media discourse. El Akkad’s demonstration of how passive voice headlines remove Israeli responsibility is a 21st-century form of what Fanon called “invisible colonial violence.” The colonisers still hide their violence by using neutral language. Similarly, the WCNSF acronym confirms what Fanon described decades ago. When the colonised people are placed in a zone of non-being, they stop being seen as fully human. This is not just an accidental linguistic mistake, but an intended purpose of language use under colonialism. The findings also expose the reality of Western Liberals. The “lesser evil” voter, the individual who says, “I feel terrible, but what can I do?” and the politician who organises a task team that does nothing are all implicated. Fanon described this as “Bad Faith”. El Akkad describes it as “hollow gestures “. El Akkad’s demand for “negative resistance”. It rejects the pretence, refuses complicity. It states, “I will not participate in this.” El Akkad states that he cannot pretend that everything is good while a genocide is happening in Gaza.

Conclusion

This paper showed how the memoir book *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This* (2025) by Omar El Akkad can be analysed using the notion of the zone of non-being formulated by

Frantz Fanon. The findings based on Fanon's postcolonial theories demonstrated at least five important insights in the book analysed. First, the phrase from the novel, "there's no such thing as someone else's children" (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88). fully corresponds to the idea of the zone of non-being, where Palestinians are considered less than human beings whose deaths cannot be mourned. Second, the use of passive voice headlines and the expression "tragic but inevitable" may be regarded as the mechanisms of invisible colonial violence, which serve to hide the killer and sanitise the mass murders committed by him. Third, the "lesser evil" rationality of voting for a candidate criticised by El Akkad is exactly the kind of "bad faith" Fanon mentions, which involves pretending to have no influence on anything while maintaining the colonial system. Finally, it has been shown that the book discussed is among the first examples of literary interpretation of Fanon's theory applied to the 2023-2025 Gaza genocide. The biggest problem with the current research is that it focuses solely on one book by El Akkad, without comparing it with other Palestinian and Arab authors. Further analysis may include applying Fanon's theoretical framework to other literary works about Gaza or to earlier Palestinian books written during the postcolonial period. In conclusion, this thesis argues that El Akkad's book cannot be reduced to an account of suffering. It can be treated as a piece of literature that should be studied together with Fanon, as the main idea of El Akkad, "there's no such thing as someone else's children," (El Akkad, 2025, p. 88), suggests the need for recognising all children regardless of their place of birth.

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