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Ressentiment, Violence, and Colonialism

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by

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ABSTRACT

This project attempts a joint reading of the work of Friedrich Nietzsche and Frantz Fanon. This task, however, is problematic because this body of work is in tension or contradictory. These problems are so acute that a careful reading method is necessary to successfully carry out this reading. In order to facilitate this reading I elaborate and apply a particular philosophical methodology, *Mestizaje*. The methodology is intended to address works that are contradictory by attempting to read the texts as they are presented while at the same time balancing their positions. The goal is to honestly reflect the thought of each thinker and to illuminate a perspective that incorporates but transcends their respective positions.

What the application of Methodological *Mestizaje* finds is that while Nietzsche and Fanon stand in tension to one another, their respective works share several interesting and important convergences. In particular, they share thoughts on *ressentiment*, morality and violence. With *ressentiment*, Nietzsche creates the concept and two manifestations of it, while Fanon works with the concept to develop a third manifestation of this form of moral valuation. Furthermore, their works share the view that morality and violence are fundamental to understanding the origin, development and possible overcoming of a morality.

This work contributes to the area of Africana Studies by offering a picture of Nietzsche that addresses concerns of these areas of study. Additionally, Methodological *Mestizaje* intends to follow in the tradition of non-ideal theory. Finally, while each thinker contributes to the discussion of *ressentiment*, morality and violence, their positions taken together reveal a broad

and thorough perspective on colonialism and its concomitant morality, including their inception,

and consequent progression and persistence in the current world.

INTRODUCTION

Fear and Intelligence. — If it is true, as is now most definitely asserted, that the cause of the

black skin pigmentation is not to be sought in the action of light, could it perhaps *not* be the

ultimate effect of frequent attacks of rage (and undercurrents of blood beneath the skin)

accumulated over thousands of years? While the other *more intelligent* races an equally frequent

terror and growing pallid has finally resulted in white skin? – For degree of timidity is a measure

of intelligence, and frequently to give way to blind rage a sign that animality is still quite close

and would like to take over again. – Thus the original color of man would probably have been a

brownish grey, somewhat like the ape and the bear, as seems proper.

Nietzsche, *Daybreak*[1]

Today, when suffering is always brought forward as the principal argument against existence, as

the worst question mark, one does well to recall the ages in which the opposite opinion prevailed

because men were unwilling to refrain from making people suffer and saw in it an enchantment

of the first order, a genuine seduction to life. Perhaps in those days --- the delicate might be

comforted by this thought - pain did not hurt as much as it does now; at least that is the

conclusion a doctor may arrive at who has treated Negroes (taken as the representatives of

prehistoric man) for severe internal inflammations that would drive even the best constituted

European to distraction—in the case of the Negroes they do not do so. (The curve of human

susceptibility to pain seems in fact to take an extraordinary and almost sudden drop as soon as

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1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 241. Unless otherwise specifically notes, references to works by Nietzsche will refer to the section or aphorism from which the citation is derived.

one has passed the upper ten thousand or ten million of the top human stratum of culture; and for

my part, I have no doubt that the combined suffering of all the animals ever subjected to the

knife for scientific ends is utterly negligible compared with one painful night of a single

hysterical bluestocking).

<div align="right">Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals[2]</div>

I: The Big Problem

These two passages set up the problem of this dissertation. In each passage, Friedrich

Nietzsche makes ignorant claims and derogatory statements about black people. While it is easy

to brush these claims aside by merely positing the ignorance of Nietzsche, for this dissertation it

will not be enough to do this. What this dissertation aims to do is to develop a joint reading of

the work of Nietzsche and Frantz Fanon, and, ignoring or setting aside these comments by

Nietzsche would seem to violate the spirit and work of Frantz Fanon. The first comment may

seem amenable to being discharged because it is an aphorism from *Daybreak*. That is to say, the

aphorism is a passing comment rather than part of a larger argument. This could be some of

Nietzsche's passing ignorance, much like his youthful anti-Semitism is considered something he

eventually overcame. The second claim, however, rests in the heart of the second essay of *On

the Genealogy of Morals*, a work of the mature Nietzsche. He uses the example of the primitive

humanity of black people in order to make a broader claim about the effectiveness of pain as a

mnemonic technique. While this is an older Nietzsche, his thoughts about black people seemed

to not have changed much. Again, these racial claims seem to contradict the very values that

Fanon was attempting to overcome and replace. How can I read these men together in such a

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2. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. W. Kaufman. (New York: Vintage Press, 1989), II: 7. (hereinafter cited in text as GM). References to Nietzsche's text will refer to the text and section or aphorism from which the citation is derived.

way that does not conveniently ignore significant qualities that characterize their thought? And, what is to be gained from such a reading?

II: Initial Possibilities

The philosopher William Preston has considered these thoughts by Nietzsche. His central concern is determining the value of Nietzsche's work for the *black* existentialist philosopher. Initially he asks, "Why should not a black existentialist who is a leftist turn to Nietzsche?"[3] Preston quickly follows that question up by asking, "Can Nietzsche help black existentialists find answers to their own questions?"[4] Generally, this project is parallel to Preston's. While I will attempt to articulate a position that is different from Preston's, I will do it from a standpoint that is not unrelated to his. What I will attempt to do is challenge his position and go beyond his conclusions and prescriptions.

In the starkest terms, Preston would likely find my desire to align the work of Fanon and Nietzsche to be very problematic. Many black existential philosophers are often concerned with questions that relate to the lived, embodied experiences of black people as well as to political projects that espouse egalitarian, democratic ideals. With regard to the leftist political position, Preston finds "leftist Nietzschean" to be a "*contradictio en adjecto*."[5] He interprets Nietzsche's philosophy as thoroughly anti-democratic, elitist, tyrannical and above all else antithetical to any project that may be of interest to philosophers on the spectrum of the political left. In terms of theorizing race, Preston claims that Nietzsche and his philosophy are racist. He demonstrates this by focusing on the few passages where Nietzsche mentions black people and what that

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3. William A. Preston, "Nietzsche and Blacks," in *Existence in Black: An Anthology of Black Existential Philosophy,* ed. L.R. Gordon (New York: Routledge, 1997), 167.
4. Ibid., 168.
5. Ibid.

means within his political philosophy of domination.[6] For Preston, the passages indicate Nietzsche's anti-black racism. The passages associate black people with being representative of primitive humanity as well as lacking in culture. Lacking in culture, furthermore, correlates with the idea that black people have a higher pain threshold than those who are much more sensitive and who have culture.

Still, in his writing, Nietzsche really does not say all that much about black people. The reason, Preston posits, for Nietzsche not including much consideration of black people in his thought is that "the feeling of distinction derived from a sense of superiority towards blacks is not worth much. A man of distinction, on Nietzsche's account, could not feel ecstasy in his pathos of distance from blacks."[7] On Preston's account of Nietzsche, black people are of little worth in distinguishing creators of values because they are barely human. Moreover, Preston points out that Nietzsche often associates race with class and suggests that the bourgeoisie are racially inferior in Nietzsche's racial ontology. Nietzsche, Preston claims, holds hope that the bourgeoisie might overcome their *ressentiment* and slave morality and in doing so positions bourgeoisie overcoming, in part, as a racial overcoming. "Two kinds of racist commitments," Preston concludes, "are manifest in Nietzsche's thought: one, affirming the need to heighten the race-quality of the European bourgeoisie, the other, denying the full humanity of black people."[8] For Preston there seems little that Nietzsche offers that can help the black existential philosopher theorizing and developing conceptual understandings about blackness. In fact, Nietzsche reinscribes the racial superiority of white people over black people and presents a factually false view of black people. What Preston's position highlights is that Nietzsche's thoughts on race,

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6. Preston primarily focuses his attention on the passage in GM II: 7. I will directly focus on this passage in the conclusion of this work.
7. Ibid., 170.
8. Ibid.,170-171.

particularly about the supposed racial inferiority of black people, should be problematic for any anti-racist, leftist black existential philosopher. In the context of this project, this would, accordingly, make associating Fanon, who can fall under the rubric of both leftist as well as a black existential philosopher, with Nietzsche a contradictory, possibly incoherent undertaking. In other words, Preston suggests that that Nietzsche and Fanon cannot and should not be read together.

While Preston offers a very provocative position, I find his argument unsatisfying. Moreover, to dismiss studying the Nietzsche's body of work in the context of the concerns of black existentialist philosophers is quite problematic. Preston points out some very good textual evidence exposing Nietzsche's racist thoughts about black people, yet what he exposes is a very limited view of Nietzsche. In other words, Preston commits the fallacy of composition. He takes a small part of Nietzsche's thought and takes it for the whole of his philosophy. This is not to dismiss what Nietzsche claims or to deny that there are problems with them, but rather to point out that his work is quite complex.

Distinct from Preston's myopic analysis, the philsopher Ofelia Schutte offers a balanced study of Nietzsche's thought. Part of her goal is to see to it that a broad, holistic picture of Nietzsche's philosophy is developed that does not leave aside parts of his work that may represent tensions or inconsistencies in his thought. "My study of Nietzsche's metaphysics and morality," Schutte states, "shows that these cannot be separated (except arbitrarily) from his theory of culture."[9] By separating one can "portray his views on culture favorably if one only draws attention to the role he gives to the artist or the creator of values."[10] What Schutte reveals is a particularly problematic inconsistency in Nietzsche's oeuvre. On the one hand, his

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9. Ofelia Schutte, *Beyond Nihilism: Nietzsche without Masks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), xi.
10. Ibid.

metaphysics and affirmative valuation of creators, artists, and life represents attempts by Nietzsche to revalue and overcome contemporary morality. Schutte argues that Nietzsche is responding to western dualities that have devalued life and deferred meaning onto something other than life. So, for example, Schutte notes that when one reads *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in the context of the idea of the death of God, Nietzsche is offering liberation from the dualisms and alienation.[11] Schutte states: "When many of the best human values are projected onto the essence of a divine and otherworldly being, a dualism is generated between what is divine and what is earthly. The death of God, then, signifies the end of one important manifestation of the dualism between light and dark aspects of existence."[12] In being alienated from the Earth, the death of God represents the healing of the estrangement wrought by the dualism. She also notes that Nietzsche offers a counter-narrative or revaluation through a metaphysics of life as an ever-changing, dynamic whole of which human beings are part and parcel. On the other hand, Nietzsche's metaphysics, notion of overcoming and philosophy of culture relies on a model of domination.

This model of domination, repeated throughout the work of Nietzsche, is that of the strong overcoming the weak, strong valuations from the position of Master, weak, resentful valuations from slave types, strong culture is ascending and weak culture is declining and so on. Schutte notes that "the right of the strong to dominate the weak—the essential premise of Nietzsche's view of the overcoming of morality by higher men—translates itself politically into a justification for a highly authoritarian systems of government."[13] For higher men to overcome morality and provide a foundation for a new, future Master morality for humanity is to engage in a practical struggle. The problem is that if Nietzsche wants to overcome the dualisms that have

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11. Ibid., 4.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., 161.

underwritten the thought, understanding and experiences of Westerners, he fails, because he chooses another, different dualism—the structure of domination—to express an alternative. The structure of domination is another duality that separates in similar ways as other dualisms do: self/world, will/cause, time/eternity, being/becoming, appearance/reality, good/evil and subject/object. The supposed right of the strong to rule over the weak separates one from another as well as from life and, most significantly, it repeats and reinstantiates the problem that Nietzsche is attempting the overcome.

Schutte's balanced study offers to open Nietzsche to his inconsistencies rather than focus on particular passages that seem to suit her position, or to, as in the case of Preston, frame analysis solely in the context of critique. By illuminating the inconsistencies, Nietzsche is revealed to be a complex philosopher who has more to offer than simple racist ideology to be ignored and not studied by people on or associated with the political left, particularly black existentialist philosophers. More importantly, the balance reveals the possibility of aligning the work of Nietzsche and Fanon, around concerns that may not be directly related to the particular political projects, goals or visions of the men. A means of doing this, and Preston seems to not do this as well, is to distinguish between Nietzsche's doctrinal thought and his methodologies.

The philosopher Robert Gooding-Williams notes that Preston's concerns connote older reduced notions of Nietzsche. He states: "specters of the older Nietzsches remain—one of which is Nietzsche, the philosopher of the aristocratic radicalism, but likewise the brutally scathing critic of socialism, feminism, and liberalism—indeed, of all forms of modern egalitarianism."[14] What he notes with Preston is that he represents a tradition of reducing Nietzsche to these concepts. However, Gooding-Williams does not dismiss Preston's claims. Instead, he supposes

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14. Robert Gooding-Williams, "Supposing Nietzsche to Be Black—What Then?" in *Look, A Negro! Philosophical Essays on Race, Culture and Politics*. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 130.

Nietzsche to be black. Explaining what he means by a black Nietzsche, Gooding-Williams states: "To suppose Nietzsche to be black is to suppose that he may be interpreted with an eye to the typical concerns of African American thought; or, more generally, the typical concerns of black studies."[15] Gooding-Williams is not literally supposing that Nietzsche is a black person in the 19th century Europe. Rather, he is taking Nietzsche's thought in light of the questions and concerns of 21st century scholars in the area of Africana Studies.[16] However, echoing the balance that Schutte brings to the analysis of Nietzsche's work, Gooding-Williams does not want to cast aside material that may not serve his purposes. Discussing a series of essays devoted to Nietzsche and Africana thought, Gooding-Williams notes that "they tacitly envision a black studies charmed and unsettled by a seducer (*ein Versucher*), by Nietzsche—a black studies richer in itself, newer to itself than before, full of new will and currents, full of new dissatisfactions."[17] The application of Nietzsche to the questions related to Africana Studies is such that it contains the possibility of illuminating as well as disrupting canons and shibboleths of the discipline. By doing this, Gooding-Williams believes that the discipline can grow and develop further. As a means of beginning this type of work, Gooding-Williams suggests two trails up which to climb: Nietzsche, colonialist desire, and antiracism, and Nietzsche and German nationalism.

Around the theme of Nietzsche and colonialist desire, Gooding-Williams uses the scholar of 19th century German literary and intellectual culture Robert Holub's work on Nietzsche and colonialism. Gooding-Williams notes that the essay "acknowledges that Nietzsche's philosophical imagination becomes a colonialist imagination when it conjures the images of the

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15. Ibid., 129.
16. With the broad concerns and interests implicit in Gooding-Williams use of the term "black studies," a more appropriate term may be Africana Studies. I use "Africana" in the sense that Lucious Outlaw does when he describes it as a term that scholarly interests can gather around to research the experiences, histories, cultures and thought of the diverse peoples of Africa and the Diaspora. See Lucius Outlaw, "Africana Philosophy"; cf. Victor Oguejiofor Okafor, "Africology, Black Studies, African American Studies, Africana Studies, or African World Studies? What's so Important about a Given Name?"
17. Gooding-Williams, "Supposing Nietzshce to be Black", 129.

'good European' and a 'great politics' to envision a caste of 'new philosophers' that would rule Europe and subjugate the entire earth."[18] This rings of the "old Nietzsches" mentioned by Gooding-Williams, yet unlike Preston, the terms are clarified by the biographical data that Holub reveals around Nietzsche's sister and brother-in-law's family stake in a German colony, Nueva Germania, in Paraguay. Holub argues that while Nietzsche did not emigrate to Nueva Germania, he considered colonialism to be a "natural proclivity of groups"[19] and seriously considered the possibility to such an extent that he shared these contemplations in letters to his friends including his pension manager Overbeck.[20] Holub, moreover, posits that Nietzsche considered moving to a colony for climatic reason. He notes: "A central factor in Nietzsche's thinking about possible change of domicile was climate, a veritable obsession during the last decade of his sane life."[21] In the end, Nietzsche did not emigrate, but for Holub this did not mean that he rejected the notion and possibility. Gooding-Williams takes Holub's analysis as providing biographical context to Preston's concerns, which end up disclosing "the white supremacist connotations of Nietzsche's colonialist imagination."[22] But instead of dismissal, Gooding-Williams points to two ways of working with Nietzsche's thought. He states: "progressives may find in Nietzsche's colonialist fantasies an Ariadne's thread leading them into a rich labyrinth of insight that can well serve African American thought. And throughout Nietzsche's writings, they may discover philosophical resources for exposing imperialist and racist ideologies that he himself occasionally echoes."[23] Here Gooding-Williams distinguishes between the doctrinal substance of Nietzsche's thought and his innovative philosophical tools. For example, it is in the

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18. Ibid., 131.
19. Robert C. Holub, "Nietzsche's Colonialist Imagination: Nueva Germania, Good Europeanism, and Great Politics," in *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy*, by eds. S. Friedrichsmeyer, S. Lennox, & S. Zantop. (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 36.
20. Ibid., 37-38.
21. Ibid., 38.
22. Gooding-Williams, "Supposing Nietzshce to be Black", 132.
23. Ibid.

Genealogy of Morals that Nietzsche evokes the substantive, but wrong idea that black people represent primitive human beings. This is a recital of the common racist beliefs of many 19th century Europeans. However, it is in the same text that Nietzsche offers one of the most innovative tools in the history of Western philosophy: the genealogical method. While the substance may be antithetical to many of the positions of scholars in Arrficana Studies, the work of Nietzsche can be examined to learn more about the deeper historical problems about their questions. Noting a similar claim made by Edward Said regarding Joseph Conrad, Gooding-Williams states that Nietzsche "did date *Europe*, showing *its* contingency, recording its illusions, violence, and waste. Because Nietzsche declines to flatter European culture, but represents it is the contingent, overdetermined product of slave morality, cruelty, decadence, and nihilism, he remains a useful model for any thinker."[24] In this way, confronting Nietzsche's thought represents a possibility of gaining greater understanding of the world. With regard to Nietzsche's methodologies, Gooding-Williams notes that scholars such as Michel Foucault, Ann Laura Stoler, and Cornel West have used Nietzsche's genealogical method, and James Snead used Nietzsche's metaphysics to critique and reveal white supremacist, racist ideologies.[25] What Gooding-Williams demonstrates is that focusing on either the content or the methodologies of Nietzsche may prove useful to scholars in the area of Africana Studies.

With regard to German nationalism and Nietzsche, Gooding-Williams applies W.E.B. DuBois' *Souls of Black Folk* to the young Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. Gooding-Williams finds that DuBois' notion of double consciousness "summarizes his understanding of the African American experience of modernity."[26] Double consciousness describes an awareness and understanding of self in two distinct frames of reference: that of the American and that of the

24. Ibid.
25. Ibid, 133.
26. Ibid.

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black. The two-ness leaves the African American in a position of attempting to reconcile the

unique "unifying folk spirit that animates the lives of all black Americans" with the broader

modern, American norms.[27] Gooding-Williams notes that a similar theme plays out in

Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. In particular, he points out that Nietzsche claims the music of

Richard Wagner represents "the artistic self-reformation of a self-estranged and German spirit."[28]

For Nietzsche, Wagner represents the apotheosis of cultural transformation of an alienated

German spirit back into itself and thereby whole again. However, this does not mean that

Nietzsche discards the "Socratic ethos of modernity." Rather, Gooding-Williams sees in

Nietzsche' artistic/musical reference to Socrates to Nietzsche pointing to "postmodern culture …

that combines both Socratic and Dionysian elements, a culture that will come into being through

Aufhebung (sublation –in G.W.F. Hegel's sense) of modernity that, while preserving the Socratic

ethos of modernity, will still emancipate the Dionysian, German spirit from the regressive

strictures of the ethos." So while Gooding-Williams reveals the similarities in *The Birth* and

Souls around the notion of a people that "symbolizes a merged, double self that reconciles the

demands of modernity with the spiritual demands of a unique *Volk* (folk, people)," what is of

greater interest to this project is Gooding-Williams' discussion of the "Attempt at Self-

Criticism." In the "Attempt" Gooding-Williams points out that Nietzsche repudiates his beliefs

in German music and its representation of a cultural transformation of synthesis. Williams notes

that for Nietzsche, "supposing that the German *Volk* has an identity that is not a part of the

(decadent) cultural repertoire of modernity, and that could supplement and vitalize that

repertoire, is nonsense."[29] For the older Nietzsche, German culture is decadent and is infected

with the problematic features of modernity as there is nothing outside the cultural impact of

27. Ibid, 134.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., 135.

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modern culture. Gooding-Williams adds that Nietzsche's "Attempt" "suggests that modern

decadence can all too easily nullify cultural distinctiveness."[30] By extension Nietzsche's self-

critique calls into question the possibility of *any* cultural uniqueness developing within the

context of modern culture. Gooding-Williams points out that this includes, "what contemporary

scholars call 'alternative modernities' – in short, to imagine cultures that embrace modernity

without wholly sacrificing their cultural or spiritual distinctiveness."[31] In other words,

"alternative modernities" implicates the possibility of Du Bois' position in *Souls*, as well as that

described by Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic*. What is of importance is not so much the

critique, but *who* is doing the critique. In the case of Nietzsche, Gooding-Williams is

highlighting his rigor, "his relentless if often stressful practice of thinking against himself."[32]

One's own conclusions, for Nietzsche, represent only limits to be questioned and possibly

transgressed. In this final sense, the spirit of Nietzsche's rigorous manner of questioning and

self-reflection represents another possibility in working with Nietzsche's thought in the context

of Africana Studies.

Schutte's analysis demonstrates that when addressing Nietzsche's work balance is

necessary in order to have a deeper, more complex understanding of it. Gooding-Williams

echoes Schutte but then provides an application and future avenues of research and thought

through his supposition of a black Nietzsche. Furthermore, neither Schutte nor Gooding-

Williams, as is the case with Preston, outright dismisses the work of Nietzsche. This project,

however, is not merely approaching the work of Nietzsche and then using it to analyze the

thought of Fanon. Rather, it will attempt what Gooding-Williams and Schutte do not address:

executing a joint reading with the work of Nietzsche and another thinker. While a consequence

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30. Ibid., 135-136.
31. Ibid., 136.
32. Ibid., 137.

of this project will be that it is also a contribution to the area of Africana Studies, this dissertation is more than an application of Nietzsche's work. What is decisive is that I am attempting to set Nietzsche's thought side-by-side with Fanon's work in order to better understand each individual thinker through an exploration of shared themes and concepts. In this way, what I will demonstrate is an insight into each thinker as well as an illumination of some general conclusions that arise out of this form of analysis. This project calls for the balance that both Schutte and Gooding-Williams insist upon – particularly with all the their tensions and contradictions – to avoid a reactionary, dismissive attitude. A project like this, moreover, is needed in order to offer insight into doing this type of cross-textual reading in a way that avoids dismissive reactionariness as well as another imminent danger, conflation.

Take for instance Patrick Ehlen's biography of Fanon entitled: *Frantz Fanon: A Spiritual Biography*. The biography is of note because Ehlen suggests a very strong connection between Fanon and the work of Nietzsche.[33] Ehlen's biography is characterized as "spiritual" in the title. Regarding Fanon's work and suggesting what he might mean by spiritual, Ehlen states: "Whatever contradictions may be found in the pages of… [Fanon's] writings, at no point does he deviate from one premise: that the human mind, the human spirit, and human society are inextricably connected, and that one of these elements cannot be liberated if the others remain in bondage…Liberate the individual, grant autonomy to each spirit, and unity will follow—spirits will merge together. For unity is the natural state of the human spirit, when freed from all chains."[34] Ehlen finds that Fanon holds to several core assumptions about human nature and

33. Several early biographers note that Fanon read and had an interest in the work of Nietzsche. Little is known about the content of the reading; however, biographical evidence suggests that he was familiar with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Fanon, moreover, admits in *Black Skin, White Masks* to reading a version of *Will to Power*. For further biographical discussion see: Geismar, *Fanon*; Gendzier, *Frantz Fanon: A Critical Study*; Hansen,"Frantz Fanon."
34. Patrick Ehlen, *Frantz Fanon: A Spiritual Biography*, (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2001), 12.

overcoming forms of domination. He believes that Fanon assumes that humans are spirits who need one another, but if any one spirit is literally or psychologically colonized then liberation and its "natural state" of unity with other human spirits is inhibited. Still, through each particular spirit overcoming their oppression and becoming free and autonomous the grounds are realized for humans to come together in the mode of freedom and not domination, thereby achieving their natural unified state. The biography can, accordingly, be construed as focusing on Fanon's spiritual overcoming and liberation from the bondage of colonialism. It is within this context that Ehlen discusses Nietzsche's impact on Fanon.

Ehlen notes, as others have, that Fanon found the work of Nietzsche intriguing. He further suggests that Fanon had a predilection for the work of existentialist philosophers. The biographer states: "Though Frantz would not turn to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Jaspers, and Sartre (who later befriended him) until further education, even his earliest years revealed an ardent and almost pious respect for the sanctity of action."[35] It should be no surprise then, Ehlen contends, that Fanon's medical specialty in psychiatry dovetails with his side interests in "the psychological and existential philosophies of Hegel, Sartre, Jaspers, and Lacan." However, Ehlen notes that, "Nietzsche still topped his list of favorites." He believes that Fanon drew great inspiration from Nietzsche's thought as it focused on taking action and owning up to such behavior. Ehlen states: "Nietzsche's descriptions of the transcendent potential of the human will fit perfectly with Fanon's ideas about the vital importance of his own will. Nietzsche spoke with a particular respect for strength and will in the human spirit that Fanon found readily accessible, endowing the will with power to overcome obstacles, if only it could achieve the courage and strength to assume that responsibility." Ehlen, furthermore, finds that Fanon derived a *model*

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35. Ibid., 26.

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and set of values that could allow him to overcome his psychological colonization. Ehlen explains:

> For a man like Fanon, who suffered from feelings of weakness and helplessness in the face of a system of society he could not change, an outward commitment to and display of strength and purpose was his only viable means to rise above defeat and regain confidence in his own spiritual path. From Nietzsche he would obtain a model of not only what a free spirit could be, but also what a free spirit *should* be, a measure by which to evaluate his own life and rightness of his own choices. This model was something that was desperately needed, when his former self-evaluations based on the standard of whiteness were being so violently scorched by his experience of the world around him. The images and ideas so crucial to his self-esteem could only be supplanted by symbols of iron dedication and determination, of a spirit that would erupt into transcendence of his everyday experience of himself, of a will so fired to action that it incinerated all uncertainty.[36]

According to Ehlen, what Nietzsche ultimately provided for Fanon was a viable alternative that could allow him to overcome the colonial framework and concomitant negative self-assessment he had internalized. This alternative could be put into practice, and offers, moreover, an order of rank by which to determine the value of his actions. As such, it is from Nietzsche that Fanon derived the means to liberate his spirit and set in motion the liberation and unity of human spirits all over. Ehlen's biography provides a picture of Fanon being influenced to a very strong degree by Nietzsche's overall philosophy.[37]

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36. Ibid., 94.
37. I am suspicious of Ehlen's scholarship with regard to Fanon's life and work. For example, Ehlen supposes that the signed copy of Fanon's medical thesis for his oldest brother, Felix, contains a quote from Nietzsche. Ehlen states: "On the cover of Félix's copy he offered a dedication with some additional references from Nietzsche: 'I

While the biographical evidence suggests that Fanon read Nietzsche, what Ehlen has

done is to render Nietzsche's thought as internalized, active principles in the life of Fanon. Not

only does Fanon have a reading of Nietzsche's work, but the lessons he learned from it become

practical conventions and ideals by which to conduct his life. In other words, Ehlen attempts to

portray Fanon as a student of Nietzsche's who is attempting to instantiate the overcoming of

humankind/colonialism as an *Übermensch* or free spirit, but he forgets to give a clear and

thorough account beyond their judgments of Fanon's actions and life that could further

substantiate and illuminate Fanon's beliefs about the philosophy of Nietzsche. A broader

consequence of Ehlen's confounding Fanon's behavior with Nietzsche's philosophy is that the

conversation moves from a textual illumination and discussion of Nietzsche's work and Fanon's

reading of them, to applying Nietzschean ideas to the life of Fanon.

Maybe Ehlen's conflation represents a problem that Preston could not articulate because

what Nietzsche has to say is so unsettling, particularly about black people. Rather than balanced

and clear distinctions between the thinkers and their perspective, concerns, ideas, hopes, and

desires, Preston would rather totally avoid a dangerous consequence of conflating the thought of

Nietzsche with that of the projects and concerns of the black existential philosophers. However,

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have a horror of weaknesses—I understand them, but I don't like them. I don't agree with those who think it is possible to live life at an easy pace. I don't want this. I don't think you do either.' The quotes he chose to represent his sentiments are telling of the great value he now placed on notions of strength, and of the resentment he harbored toward weakness and inactivity—especially his own." (pg. 103). Of importance is that other biographers particularly, Geismar, Gendzier and Macy, say that the quote is an inscription written by Fanon. Ehlen even lists the Geismar and Gendzier biographies in his book's bibliography. Ehlen seems to have selected the part of the quote that fits his description of Fanon's development as the unchaining of his spirit but attributes the actual thought to Nietzsche instead of Fanon. The whole note reads:

  "To my brother, Felix,
  I offer this work—
        The greatness of a man is to be found not in his acts but his style. Existence does not resemble a steadily
  rising curve, but a slow, and sometimes sad, series of ups and downs.
  I have a horror of weaknesses—I understand them, but I do not like them.
  I do not agree with those who think it possible to live life at an easy pace. I don't want this. I don't
  think you do either . . .".

The quote reads in a Nietzschean tone especially considering the notes about style and the Heraclitean view of the life and even the fear of weakness harkens to a Nietzschean hard man. However, these are Fanon's thoughts, not quotes of Nietzsche.

it seems that with Schutte's balance and Gooding-Williams' distinction between doctrinal substance and methodologies, conflation can be avoided at the same time. However, a methodology to help manage the difficulties of working with philosophers that are in many ways antithetical to one another is necessary to avoid not only conflation but also the reactionary abandonment. Considering this project, if there is something to be gained it will be through honestly representing the thought of Fanon and Nietzsche without losing one thinker in the thoughts of another thinker.

In order to develop a joint reading of Fanon and Nietzsche, I will be developing a methodology that will address this problem and ones similar to this. I will call this method Methodological *Mestizaje* and will apply it to a reading of the work of Nietzsche and Fanon. What this methodology will allow me to do is to read each philosopher's work carefully and with full recognition of his unsavory or shocking content. This will allow me to maintain the spirit and content of each philosopher's work as well. To put this directly, Methodological *Mestizaje* is a method that is intended to address contradictory or tension filled thought. While it may seem easier to either avoid this type of project or to cast aside material that causes cross-textual dissonance, the challenge is to read Nietzsche and Fanon together by avoiding both of the aforementioned strategies.

III: A Note About Terminology

In this dissertation I will be using the terms Europe, colonialism, colonizer and colonized as generalizations. The same goes with the terms race and racism. While the use of generalizations is dangerous, I will not be claiming that this is the only way by which to analyze the problems I will be addressing in this work. The way that I conceptualize these generalizations is through the work of scholars Anibal Quijano and Lewis Gordon. When I am

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using these terms, they are couched in the historical narrative of the Conquest. What Quijano and Gordon reveal is that Europe and modernity come as a consequence of the 16th century imperial powers move to grab land and resources in the Americas and beyond. It is during this period that the notion of a continental identity signifier, i.e. America, Europe, Africa, Asia, develops. What Quijano and Gordon draw from this historical narrative is that such notions implicate the places and territories the newly conceived Europeans were beginning to claim and develop for pecuniary gain. As Quijano notes, "*America* was the first modern global geocultural identity. *Europe* was second and was constructed as a consequence of America, not the inverse."[38] For Quijano, those who began to be exploited for their labor and resources where named in continental terms, America, and were first to be named in such a way. While it may seem empowering to be first, the perniciousness is in the fact that the people who were named second were those doing the exploiting and the naming of themselves and those in the so-called Americas. They imposed one identity on those they exploited and also bestowed a different identity upon themselves, but these identities are tied to one another and must be understood as mutually implying one another. Gordon makes a similar point when considering continental terms like Europe, Africa, America and Asia. "It is a term from the present that identifies a genealogical link to the past with the understanding that the term itself would be alien to those ancient civilizations."[39] Gordon believes that such terms are attempts to generate a genealogical narrative that helps to explain how the present came about from such cultures and civilizations that would not have understood or used such terms. However, the narrative provides an explanation of the current state of affairs. With the term colonialism, it refers to a broad

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38. Anibal Quijano, "The Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America," *Nepantla: Views from the South*, 1.3 (2000): 552. (Emphasis added).
39. Lewis Gordon, introduction to *An Introduction to Africana Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 15.

relationship between (e.g., between Europe and America or Europe and Africa) those who are doing the naming and the exploiting and those who are named and exploited. Generally, colonizer refers to those who do the naming and exploiting, and the colonized represent those being named and exploited. With the term race, I am also following Quijano in the sense that I will assume that with the creation of these new identities and peoples came also the rise of racialized consciousness. That is to say, concomitant with the development of colonialism in the context of global capitalism was the development of the pernicious racial categorizations that plague present day culture and awareness.

I repeat: this project represents one of the many possible ways to conceptualize and think about the problems of colonialism and race. While this project may seem to utilize strict dichotomies that I will later claim to want to avoid, I readily understand that the local and particulars of colonialism will reflect unique and different experiences that could illuminate its general features. However, in using these terms in such a general fashion, I am hoping to convey important points about political or cultural processes that otherwise could not be seen or analyzed as succinctly. Principally, the advantage of using these terms in the aforementioned manner is that by doing so, I have created a space that incorporates both Nietzsche and Fanon. That is to say, with these terms, both thinkers can be understood within the same broad context and concerns. They both live under and within the context of European domination of the world. In this way, they share a common history and narrative theme.

IV: Chapter Summaries

In the first chapter, the goal will be to develop my reading methodology, Methodological *Mestizaje*. What I desire to do is jointly read Fanon and Nietzsche in a manner that does not conflate their particular thought and spirit. As such, I need a methodology that can handle

contradictions and tension-ridden thought. What I will demonstrate is that Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* offers insight into theorizing such material through an analysis of her new *mestiza* concept in relation to her revaluation and illumination of the Virgin of Guadalupe. From this reading and analysis, I will develop my notion of Methodological *Mestizaje*. I will use her concept "borderlands" to identify the problem and the associated concerns that a joint reading of Fanon and Nietzsche represents. I will then adapt the notion of *mestizaje* as the process and goal of the methodology. *Mestizaje* means a mixing of different, often contradictory components but also is a product of such mixing. As such, the goal is a blending of differential values that moves beyond the particulars that compose it. The final component of the methodology is the manner of theorizing, which I will call *nepantla*. While Anzaldúa uses this term to identify a problem associated with borderlands, I will be looking to James Maffie's work on Conquest Era Nahua philosophy to supplement the meaning of this term. What will be shown is that *nepantla* is, for the Conquest Era Nahua, a term that both describes existence and offers a mode in which to live salubriously and well. This mode confronts existence in its midst and does not look at it from a god's eye's perspective, and finds balance to be the hallmark of living well. Accordingly, I will adapt this term to the way that Methodological *Mestizaje* ought to be conducted: with recognition of being in the midst of the problem and looking to balance the contradictory material that one is confronted with and in the midst of.

In the rest of the work, I will attempt to apply Methodological *Mestizaje* to the work of Fanon and Nietzsche. The coming together of their thought is a borderland. In being such a space, their work can easily be misconstrued. However, this methodology asks that nothing be prematurely cast aside. In this way, I will look at the text from which Preston developed his argument about the value of Nietzsche's work for the black existentialist philosopher: *On the*

Genealogy of Morals. In particular, I will focus on Nietzsche's first two essays. These essays are closely connected and it is in the second essay that Nietzsche invokes his thoughts on black people. Through this approach, I will neither conveniently avoid the work that helps to make clear that the joint reading of Fanon and Nietzsche is a borderland, nor will I prematurely jettison any thought or values that may be of use to developing a *tertium quid*, a third product, out of their work. I will look at each essay and then bring to bear any thought or concerns that Fanon may have about this. With Nietzsche's first essay, I will focus on Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*, while with his second essay, I will focus the joint reading on Fanon's chapter "On Violence" from *Wretched of the Earth*.

In Chapter Two, I will begin to develop a joint reading with a focus on Nietzsche's first essay of *On the Genealogy of Morals* and on Fanon's, "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" in *Black Skin, White Masks*. The central concentration of the chapter is around the relationship of their thought to the notion of *ressentiment*. What will be argued is that Nietzsche develops two forms of *ressentiment*: that of the individual guided by slave morality and that of the Master type devolving into *ressentiment*. I will further argue that a consequence of this distinction is that Nietzsche is offering two narratives for the possibility of *ressentiment* that can explain both the propensity of slavish masses to reactionary ways of being, and how they acquired their current moral configuration. The acquisition of the current dominant moral configuration, one noted to be rooted in *ressentiment*, is understood as a problem connected with the relationship between Master types. Accordingly, Nietzsche's dual narratives converge in representing broadly what he finds to be the current state of affairs with European morality. After discussing Nietzsche, I will address Fanon's work. What will be argued is that Fanon accepts Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* with the added desire to overcome this form of moral valuation. Yet,

what his theorization of the pernicious consequences of colonialism reveals is a third type of *ressentiment* that is neither related to slave morality nor to the devolution of Master morality. In this way, the types of *ressentiment* correspond to the types of analysis that Fanon is responding and adding to. Fanon is coming out of the tradition of psychology casting human problems in terms of phylogeny and ontogeny. What will be concluded is that Nietzsche offers the phylogenetic and ontogenetic conceptualization of *ressentiment*, while Fanon supplements these with the sociogenetic development of *ressentiment*.

Finally, in Chapter Three, I will focus attention on the relationship between morality and violence. This chapter continues a reading of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals* by looking at the second essay, as well as addressing Fanon's "On Violence" from *Wretched of the Earth*. What will be articulated is that Fanon and Nietzsche share the basic assumption that morality and violence mutually imply one another. However, each thinker focuses his attention on different aspects of this mutual implication. That is, Nietzsche focuses on the establishment and development of a morality, while Fanon focuses on overcoming an established morality. As such, Fanon and Nietzsche share the same project with regard to the creation of new values, but more importantly, their thoughts supplement one another in significant ways. I will argue that Nietzsche provides the form and content of the morality that Fanon is attempting to overcome, while Fanon offers Nietzsche insight into how such morality is transformed in the colonial world.

To conclude this work I will directly address what seems to have been avoided — Nietzsche's thoughts on black people. While a simple dismissal of his ignorance ought to suffice, I will argue that attempting to understand and contextualize Nietzsche's thoughts on black people is a form of apologetics. After this brief discussion, I will delineate the

contributions this work makes to the field of philosophy and the academic world. The first

contribution relates to how Methodological *Mestizaje* represents an attempt to create and apply a

methodology that follows in the tradition of non-ideal theory. The second contribution relates to

Gooding-Williams' notion of a "black Nietzsche." This reading of Nietzsche offers a Nietzsche

that can address concerns related to the experiences, thoughts and concerns of philosophers and

thinkers in the area Africana Studies. The final contribution that the work offers is a well

developed perspective on the origin, development, persistence and possibility of overcoming

colonialism.

     With these considerations in the background, I will now move to offer a reading of Gloria

Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* from which I will develop Methodological *Mestizaje*.

CHAPTER ONE

ANZALDUA'S BORDERLANDS AND METHODOLOGICAL *MESTIZAJE*

I: Introduction

In this chapter I will explain why Anzaldúa's concepts of the borderlands and philosophical *mestizaje* are helpful in pointing out the way to a workable joint reading of Nietzsche and Fanon. To develop the methodological grounds for such a joint reading, the chapter will follow Anzaldúa's description and analysis of her *new mestiza* consciousness as one embedded in the experience of the physical and psychological borderlands where opposite and contradictory values create a zone of confusion and instability. By studying closely the process that takes Anzaldúa from confusion to self-knowledge and from oppression to creation it is possible to extract and develop a methodology—Methodological *Mestizaje*—which will help to mediate and resolve the difficulties of philosophizing at the "borderlands" of texts by Fanon and Nietzsche.

In what follows, I will begin by developing Anzaldúa's notions of the *mestizaje* and borderlands. What will be demonstrated is that the *new mestiza* is both a narrative of overcoming oppression and gaining self-knowledge. Within the context of the narrative, it is revealed that borderlands represent a set of problems to overcome or avoid, while *mestizaje* is a solution to the borderland problems Anzaldúa encounters. After this, I will show how Anzaldúa applies these concepts to the icon the Virgin of Guadalupe to create a new understanding of the image that transcends the contradictoriness of the borderlands. Finally, I will move to formalize

Methodological *Mestizaje* developing what borderlands and *mestizaje* represent and supplementing these concepts with a deeper analysis of the term *nepantla*. It will be shown that for Methodological *Mestizaje* borderlands represent the problems that it addresses, while *mestizaje* provides for the process and goal of the methodology, and *nepantla* offers a mode in which to conduct the process and arrive at *mestizaje*.

II: Anzaldúa's *New Mestiza*

Throughout Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* the theme of self-transformation plays-out. This transformation is most evident in Chapter 5 "Towards a New Consciousness," but it is built in throughout the text. What this narrative reveals are two important concepts that will be important to this project: borderlands and *mestizaje*. In what follows, I will offer a reading of Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* in light of this narrative of transformation discussing her method of theorizing as well as her application of this to the icon the Virgin of Guadalupe.

In an interview with Karin Ikas, Gloria Anzaldúa discusses her process of theorizing and philosophizing. For Anzaldúa, her philosophy and her spirituality share a common root: "I would describe it [my philosophy] the way I describe my spirituality. My spiritual reality I call spiritual *mestizaje*, so I think my philosophy is like a philosophical *mestizaje* where I take from all different cultures—for instance, from the cultures of Latin America, the people of color, and also the Europeans."[40] Anzaldúa does not take for granted the cultures and the peoples that she can take from to think and philosophize, but instead is openly acknowledging that she theorizes using a plurality of thought. From the plurality, Anzaldúa creates a philosophy that is mixed. To call her philosophy a form of *mestizaje* is to point out two important things. First, *mestizo* has typically referred to people of mixed ancestry, particularly having an indigenous and Iberian

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40. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, 2nd ed., (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1999), 238-239.

parent. The use of *mestizo* then connotes the notion of the coming together of different cultures to create another, new term. Anzaldúa is calling attention to the idea that new knowledge comes about from the plurality of ideas she chooses from. Second, the particular product or "*mestizo*" result reveals a process from which it arose. By Anzaldúa naming her philosophy a form of "*mestizaje*" as opposed to "*mestizo*" philosophy, she calls attention to the process being primary and most important. Thus far, two important characteristics of philosophical *mestizaje* come to the fore. First is that philosophical *mestizaje* involves a plurality of thought. Second is that philosophical *mestizaje* is a process. Considered as such, *mestizaje* is a process that involves combining the thoughts and values from different cultures to create a product that is distinct yet represents the plurality from which it developed.

For Anzaldúa, the process of philosophical *mestizaje* begins with her concrete feelings and emotions. Noting this she states: "First there has to be something that is bothering me, something emotional so that I will be upset, angry or conflicted. Then I start meditating on it…Usually I come up with a visual of what I am feeling…[,] and I try to put that into words. So behind this feeling there is this image, this visual, and I have to figure out what the articulation of this image is. That's how I get into the theory. I start theorizing about it. But it always comes from a feeling."[41] The grounds for philosophical *mestizaje*, for Anzaldúa, are in her feelings and emotions that she uses to construct images to represent them. It is after the feelings and the development of their symbolic representation that Anzaldúa takes to writing about them in order to begin to disclose deeper problems to which the feelings correspond. Accordingly, the final important feature of philosophical *mestizaje* is that it is rooted in the experiences and concerns of the particular individual. That which is meaningful to theorize is not imposed upon by another but is rather based on the experience and concerns of the agent.

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41. Ibid, 236.

An important image that Anzaldúa elaborates on and uses to theorize and develop her narrative of self-transformation, is the borderlands. For Anzaldúa, the image of the borderlands is rooted in her experience living in the physical borderlands of the Southwest United States. The physical borderlands represent one type of borderland, but it is this space that engendered Anzaldúa's emotions, which are what provides her the grounds to begin theorizing. In her analysis, the worlds that come together in the physical borderlands are not complementary, but rather contradictory. Her experience in the physical borderlands of the Southwest border region provides the image that Anzaldúa uses to articulate other forms of borderlands -- sexual, psychological, intellectual, etc. About the notion of borderlands in general (physical and otherwise), Anzaldúa claims that they are "physically present wherever two or more cultures edge one another, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the spaces between two individuals shrinks with intimacy."[42]

Borderlands, generally, share the characteristic of being a product of differing values and cultures encountering or existing with one another. To say that borderlands are "physically present" does not mean that Anzaldúa is specifically referring only to the physical borderlands. Physical borderlands are only one type of borderland and are the territories where differing values or cultures encounter and cross over into the other's world. It is people who have culture and values, so it is that borderlands are not inherent in nature but developed through human interaction. The physicality of the borderlands, then, relates to their presence being dependent upon embodied, cross-cultural human interaction. The borderlands can then be instantiated in the physical landscape only after human interaction and coexistence. Borderlands, considered as

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42. Ibid., 19.

such, can exist in relationships between people of different cultures and within an individual whose background is of mixed cultural heritage.

So while Anzaldúa's theorizing is rooted in the particularities of the physical borderlands of Texas/México, other types of borderlands—psychological, spiritual, and sexual—can be found beyond this context. Regardless, for Anzaldúa, it is in the physical borderlands that she encounters the clash of these tension-ridden values and attitudes. The physical borderlands are both images and instantiations of the problems to which her feelings allude. Noting the feelings associated with the imagery the Southwest border region, Anzaldúa notes that "[i]t's not a comfortable territory to live in, this place of contradictions. Hatred, anger, and exploitation are the prominent features of this landscape."[43] The image of the physical borderlands, as such, captures many of the contradictory feelings and emotions that come up in Anzaldúa, while at the same time it is a model from which to further develop other seemingly more abstract types of borderlands (spiritual, sexual and psychological). In particular, I will now focus attention on psychological borderlands.

Before continuing, however, it should be duly noted that the joint reading of Nietzsche and Fanon represents an instance of a borderland. Fanon and Nietzsche each come from differing eras, races, cultures, languages and values. Reading them together, Fanon and Nietzsche occupy the same territory with their differing perspectives and concomitant values. In this sense, the comingling of their thought is an intellectual borderland. With this consideration, it seems that the significance of Preston's analysis of the value of Nietzsche for the black existential philosopher is that he delineates some of the contradictions and tensions that are apparent in having these differing perspectives come together. To put it differently, Preston

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43. Ibid, 19.

begins to elaborate some of the content of this borderland, but he also responds in such a way that Anzaldúa is critical of and attempts to overcome.

The psychological borderlands represent the types of awareness and experience that come out of living in physical borderlands. The psychological borderlands repeat the interaction of different values in the internal space, the psychology, of the agent. Yet, this internalization of the differential values does not mean that the values are harmonious and sit consistently together. For Anzaldúa, the values she has encountered in the contradictory physical borderlands are internalized and seem to be competing for supremacy. Regarding this Anzaldúa notes: "The ambivalence from the clash of voices results in mental and emotional states of perplexity. Internal strife results in insecurity and indecisiveness. The *mestiza's* dual or triple personality is plagued with psychic restlessness."[44]

Anzaldúa points out that the physiological consequence of living in the borderlands is great psychological discord and confusion that can engender three problems that she wants to avoid or overcome. These problems are *mental nepantalism*, *choque*, and counterstance. Anzaldúa describes the overriding feeling of having to choose decisively between value systems as *mental nepantalism*.[45] Anzaldúa notes that the meaning of the term means "torn between ways."[46] While this meaning will be shown to be consistent with Nahua thought and suits her needs to explaining a problem that can develop with psychological borderlands, the meaning Anzaldúa ascribes to *nepantla* is, unfortunately, rather narrow. Accordingly, just ahead I will be taking up a more complex philosophical explanation of *nepantla* offered by Maffie. Regardless, the notion of *mental nepantalism*, Anzaldúa argues, is a false dichotomy. The psychological borderlands also engender the possibilities of a clash between cultures and their related values.

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44. Ibid., 100.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.

"The coming together," Anzaldúa notes, "of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes 'un choque,' a cultural collision."[47] When things crash into one another, they can become mangled and indistinguishable from one another. In this way, a deeper problem with *choque* is a conflation and confusion of values and their provenance.

The final problem is counterstance and connotes a reactionary way of being. As an example of counterstance, Anzaldúa points out that in Chicana culture, which she visualizes as a borderland culture, this is a common problem. She notes: "Within us and within *la cultura chicana*, commonly held beliefs of the white culture attack commonly held beliefs of the Mexican culture, and both attack commonly held beliefs of the indigenous culture. Subconsciously, we see an attack on ourselves and our beliefs as a threat and we attempt to block with a counterstance."[48] Chicana culture is composed of competing values systems (Anglo, Mexican, indigenous) that are hostile towards one another. Many times Chicanas believe that the values that denigrate other values are actual attacks on their personal being, which engenders reactionary behavior (counterstance).

Although Anzaldúa finds counterstance to be a move into the right direction toward self-transformation, it is not the ultimate answer even though it is a reaction to the seemingly authoritative veneer that the values are coated in. In a comment consonant with the thought of both Fanon and Nietzsche, Anzaldúa claims that, "All reaction is limited by, and dependent on, what it is reacting against."[49] With counterstance one may feel active but the person will not move beyond what it is s/he is reacting against because what they are reacting to sets the standard. Reactionary behavior stems from that to which it responds and therefore limits or inhibits agency. These three problems associated with the borderlands (*mental nepantalism*,

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47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.

choque, and counterstance) set the stage for the possibility of devaluing, disregarding or erasing the apparently competing values. For Anzaldúa to transcend these problems she will not attempt to get outside of the borderlands. Rather, her narrative of self-transformation begins with, uses, and is sustained by the content of the borderlands.

The concept of the *new mestiza*, according to Anzaldúa, represents the new self that she creates out of the psychological borderlands, the midst of which she caught in. The *new mestiza* comes out of a process of *mestizaje* and avoids the problems associated with the psychological borderlands, *mental nepantalism*, *choque* and counterstance. For Anzaldúa, the process of *mestizaje* is not a passive transformation whereby the subject is worked on by outside forces. Rather, the *new mestiza* arises out of a process where the agent is assumed to be active and creative. This sets it apart from being a reactionary state of being that characterizes counterstance. As Anzaldúa notes: "The possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not react."[50] The possibilities that Anzaldúa refers to are related to the values one encounters when situated in a borderlands context. Instead of perceiving that there are only two solutions (either to embrace one morality or the other morality), by assuming the agency of the individual, the presupposition is that the agent can choose not just whole systems of values, but also, and more importantly, *particular* values. Anzaldúa will choose feminist values to undergird her choices and by doing so, can reject particular values that denigrate women, minorities, and the underclass. By this choice, she demonstrates that *mental nepantalism* is a false dichotomy. Again, her agency and transformation will be guided by feminist values. About this Anzaldúa claims: "The struggle of the *mestiza* is above all a feminist one."[51] This means that the *new*

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50. Ibid., 101.
51. Ibid., 106.

mestiza values difference, critical thinking and analysis as well as equal regard for the dignity of all people.

The critical thinking and analysis can take many forms, as there is no specific canon to follow. "*La mestiza*," Anzaldúa writes, "constantly has to shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking, characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals and toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes."[52] The *new mestiza* provides Anzaldúa a way of conceptualizing herself that can embrace her borderlands without falling into its dangers and traps, while at the same time offering the chance to illuminate rather than erase, respect rather than disregard, and create rather than react. She does all this while moving between different forms of thought and communication. So while the process of theorization begins with negative feelings that she visualizes and theorizes as borderlands, Anzaldúa has grounded her narrative of overcoming in the context of adhering to the feminist values of agency and plurality. These are the values that provide a foundation from which to begin the process of *mestizaje*, i.e., that process of self-transformation.

For Anzaldúa, an upshot of the feminist-pluralistic foundation of the process of *mestizaje* is that "nothing is thrust out, the good, the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned."[53] The contradictory moral systems and associated values are each recognized as values. All of these values, from either morality, are up for evaluation, affirmation and use. The *new mestiza* comes out of a process that takes agency to be of the utmost importance. So with developing a new self, Anzaldúa assesses the values in the spirit of an inventory. The inventory looks to clearly distinguish the values and their origin. With regard to this evaluation of

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52. Ibid., 101.
53. Ibid.

competing moralities Anzaldúa notes: "Her first step is to take an inventory. *Despojando, desgranando, quitando paja*. Just what did she inherit from her ancestors? This weight on her back—which is the baggage from the Indian mother, which the baggage from the Spanish father, which the baggage from the Anglo?"[54]

What this inventory does is dust off and confront the condition and origin of the various values. There is, furthermore, an awareness that some of the values may have an origin that has been erased or obscured by the dominant value systems. Anzaldúa states: *"Pero es difícil* differentiating between *lo heredado, lo adquirido, lo impuesto*." Anzaldúa finds it difficult distinguishing which values are inherited, acquired or imposed. This is because the values that seem to originate with one group, for example, the Spanish and their Catholicism may seem imposed, but an inventory will shed light on what may have been overlooked, misrepresented or forgotten, e.g. the indigenous roots of the Catholic Matriarch Mary in México. Anzaldúa says of the *new mestiza* that "[s]he puts history through a sieve, winnows out the lies, looks at the forces that we as a race, as women, have been part of. *Luego bota lo que no vale, los desmientos, los desencuentos, el embrutecimiento. Aguarda el juicio, hondo y enraízado, de la gente antigua.* This step is a conscious rupture with all oppressive traditions of all cultures and religions. "[55]

The critical analysis of the values includes rejecting the values that will continue to perpetuate oppressive conditions. Implicit is that those values must be recognized, but Anzaldúa reveals how these false oppositional values justified lies, disenchantments, and imposed ignorance. The inventory moves from illuminating the values from which she can choose, to recovering and saving values of the peoples and cultures that have been lost or forgotten. And furthermore, Anzaldúa consciously chooses to discard those values that perpetuate oppressive

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54. Ibid., 104.
55. Ibid.

ways of being in the world. From the inventory, moreover, she is provided the opportunity to

rethink and reconstitute values. Anzaldúa notes: "She reinterprets history, and using new

symbols, she shapes new myths." The inventory is significant in that it provides the opportunity

to distinguish and clarify the content of the moralities. It, furthermore, provides the chance to

see again the material that one can use to create and develop new histories, visions, and signs.

Anzaldúa then points out that "[s]he adopts new perspectives toward the darkskinned, women

and queers."[56]

  With the commitment to cut ties with oppressive ways of being and thinking, the *new*

mestiza is no longer encumbered by racist ideological predispositions that life in her borderlands

includes. Because of this, she no longer apprehends the stigmatized and oppressed with

negative, stereotypical notions. Anzaldúa continues: "She strengthens her tolerance and

(intolerance) for ambiguity." With the inventory she is able to see and experience values that she

may have otherwise overlooked, which engenders feelings of ambiguity. However, in keeping

consistent with feminist values, the intolerance is around those oppressive thought patterns that

she has previously rejected.   The process continues with her being "willing to share, to make

herself vulnerable to foreign ways of seeing and thinking. She surrenders all notions of safety, of

the familiar. Deconstruct, construct."[57]

  Mestizaje requires that the agent let go of anxieties and concerns over difference so the

agent will be open to different ways of understanding and knowing the world. From this letting

go, one's own previously safe and secure worldviews are now seen in a different light, but with

the new insight, she will be able to further create. It is quite important to point out that this

process of *mestizaje* is fluid and can navigate among destroying, creating and recreating. "She

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56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.

becomes a *nahual* [disguise or mask], able to transform herself into a tree, a coyote, into another person. She learns to transform the small 'I' into the total Self. *Se hace moldeadora de su alma. Según la concepción que tiene de sí misma, así será.*"[58] In this process, the focus is on the agent being the creator of continuous self-transformation. The notion of the self is the desire to transform into and become the things that she becomes. So while it seems that she becomes particular instantiations of apparent categories, it is the process of *mestizaje* that makes the instantiations a representation of a greater self. Her constant, conscious transformations reveal the multidimensional background from which Anzaldúa creates the *new mestiza*.

For Anzaldúa, the *new mestiza* represents a self-transformation out of the borderlands condition in which she is situated both physically and, more importantly, psychologically. While the process of *mestizaje* values critical, creative agency, the choice and creation of values are founded in feminist values. In having these values as a guide, Anzaldúa is forced to confront many presuppositions she took for granted prior to her *mestizaje*. In this sense, Anzaldúa is following the advice given by Antisthenes as described by Diogenes Laërtius: "When asked what was the most necessary thing to take up, he [Antisthenes] replied 'to unlearn what is bad.'"[59]

In the context of *mestizaje*, this means becoming aware of and rejecting oppressive paradigms. For Anzaldúa, in particular, this involves the struggle to "unlearn the *puta/virgin* dichotomy" that is prominent in the patriarchal Chicano and Mexican cultures.[60] This process of unlearning and creating (i.e. the process of *mestizaje*) is revealed by Anzaldúa's evaluation and analysis of the prominent Mexican/Chicano icon the Virgin of Guadalupe. In a broader framework, accordingly, Anzaldúa's *new mestiza* examines the possibility of the human

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58. Ibid., 104-105.
59. Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, Book VI, 7, quoted in Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena,* ed. and trans E.F.J. Payne, (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 2000), 630.
60. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 106.

condition overcoming the psychologically denigrating effects of binaries involving social prejudice. This theme will be taken up in the proceeding chapter with an analysis of *Black Skin, White Masks*.

III: *Mestizaje* **and the Virgin of Guadalupe**

Anzaldúa offers a representation of the process of *mestizaje* through her illumination of the icon the Virgin of Guadalupe. About the Virgin of Guadalupe, Anzaldúa points out that she "is the single most potent religious, political, and cultural image of the Chicano/*mexicano*." The image does not merely stand for a religious symbol but cuts across different spheres of Mexican and Chicano culture. The strength of the icon lies in its ability to engender conflicting and deep emotion. Anzaldúa continues: "she, like my race, is a synthesis of the old world and the new, of the religion and culture of two races in our psyche, the conquerors and the conquered."[61] By identifying the potency and historical narrative of the crossing of the cultures, religions and races of the Spanish and the Indians around the image, Anzaldúa begins to identify the symbol of the Virgin of Guadalupe as a borderland. This is further revealed by the fact that the Conquest did not occur harmoniously. It did not meld the different cultures through some peaceful, mutually beneficial process. Instead, the conquest of the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas by the Spanish demonstrates a mortal competition. Not only did the Spanish take their land, but the Spanish replaced indigenous customs and religions with Spanish/European practices and Catholicism. So while the iconic Virgin of Guadalupe seems to be a benevolent image, what the image engenders in Anzaldúa and other Chicanas are emotions related to conquest and oppression.

The process of *mestizaje* begins with an inquiry into the conflicting emotions that the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe evokes in Anzaldúa and other Chicanas and Chicanos. By

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61. Ibid., 52.

doing this, Anzaldúa conceptualizes the icon as a borderland. Her identification of the Virgin of Guadalupe with a borderland allows her to further articulate an inventory that will uncover the image's differing and overlooked attributes that contribute to its history and meaning. In this way, Anzaldúa can continue the process of *mestizaje* without reactionary emotions. She is only illuminating the provenance of the values without assuming that what she discovers are personal attacks, nor is she decisively picking one way to view and understand the image.

Anzaldúa's inventory finds that the Virgin of Guadalupe has a Nahua name *Coatlalopeuh. Coatlalopeuh* is a goddess that is either descended from or an aspect of the ancient Mesoamerican goddess *Coatlicue. Coatlicue* literally translates to "Serpent Skirt" and is a primordial goddess of the earth and fertility. Moreover, she is also a totality that combines both feminine and masculine aspects as well as other traditionally significant dualities. "*Coatlicue*. . . contained and balanced the dualities of male and female, light and dark, life and death." Although she is the mother of many gods and goddesses, of particular importance is her son *Huitzilopochtli* who is the god of the sun and war as well as the primary deity of the Aztecs. "*Huitzilopochtli*," Anzaldúa notes, "assigned the Azteca-Mexica the task of keeping the human race (the present cosmic age called the Fifth Sun, *El Quinto Sol*) alive."[62]

Cosmologically, the Aztecs believed that their primary god mandated that they unite the different peoples of the world and guard against the dying-off of the Fifth Sun. In order to sustain life and power, the Aztecs instituted flower wars that captured enemy men in a prearranged, ceremonial manner and later would sacrifice them to *Huitzilopochtli* at the *Templo Mayor*. The Aztecs were a patriarchal, militaristic people. In the founding myth of the Aztecs, *Huitzilopochtli* commanded that they roam the Valley of Mexico until they find the sign indicating where they should establish their settlement. The sign was to be an eagle with a

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62. Ibid., 54.

serpent in its beak atop a prickly pear cactus growing out of rocks. "The eagle symbolizes the spirit (as the sun, the father); the serpent symbolizes the soul (as the earth, the mother). Together, they symbolize the struggle between the spiritual/celestial/male and the underworld/earth/feminine. The symbolic sacrifice of the serpent to the 'higher' masculine powers indicates that the patriarchal order had already vanquished the feminine and matriarchal order in pre-Colombian America."[63] This is the central image on the Mexican flag. While this sign is ostensibly an image of national and ethnic pride, when dusted off it points to an indigenous narrative of male conquest and devaluation of feminine qualities.

Continuing the inventory, Anzaldúa points out that the Aztecs may not always have been patriarchal and militaristic. Several ceremonial and symbolic customs and mores indicate some traces of an erased legacy of the high esteem held for women and feminine qualities. Anzaldúa states: "Matrilineal descent characterized the Toltecs and perhaps the early Aztecs. Women possessed property, and were curers as well as priestesses. According to the codices, women in former times had the supreme power in Tula [the city of the Toltecs], and in the beginning of the Aztec dynasty, the royal blood ran through the female line. A council of elders of the Calpul headed by the supreme leader, or *tlactlo,* called the father and mother of people, governed the tribe. The supreme leader's vice-emperor occupied the position of "Snake Women" or *Cihuacoatl,* a goddess. Although the highest posts were occupied by men, the terms used were feminine, and evidence of the exalted role of woman before the Aztec nation became centralized. The final break with the democratic Calpul came when the four Aztec lords of royal lineage picked the king's successor from his siblings and male descendants."[64] It was a slow process that drove the feminine qualities underground and devalued them.

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63. Ibid., 27.
64. Ibid., 55.

The Toltecs, with whom the Aztecs liked to claim genealogical and cultural links, valued

women as they were in prominent positions of status and power. Also, many of the ceremonial

names used to designate high positions like vice-emperor or leader of the council of elders, point

to women being held in high esteem in ancient indigenous communities. Anzaldúa notes,

moreover, that prior to the patriarchal, masculinization of Mexica culture, "the principle of

balanced opposition between the sexes existed."[65] However, by the time of the apotheosis of the

Aztec culture and empire, the feminine had long been subjugated by masculine values.

Anzaldúa's inventory, thus far, exposes the foundation and rise of the Aztec people to be

grounded, in part, by the elevation of masculinity at the expense of the feminine qualities.

What the Aztecs did to further degrade women was to split and pit feminine qualities

against one another. Regardless of the tendencies of some of the indigenous peoples to honor the

maternal, feminine goddesses, Anzaldúa notes that the Aztec patriarchy "[d]rove the powerful

female deities underground by giving them monstrous attributes and by substituting male deities

in their place, thus splitting the female Self and the female deities. They divided her who had

been complete, who possessed both upper (light) and underworld (dark) aspects. *Coatlicue,* the

Serpent goddess, and her more sinister aspects, *Tlazolteotl* and *Cihuacoatl* were 'darkened' and

disempowered."[66] In this way, the feminine became its own antithesis. *Tonantsi* became highly

revered by the Nahuas while the darker aspects of the feminine—*Coatlicue, Tlazolteotl* and

Cihuacoatl—were denigrated. *Tonantsi*, was the ideal mother who took care of her people and

provided them succor and sustenance. Anzaldúa notes: "The Nahuas, through ritual and prayer,

sought to oblige *Tonantsi* to ensure their health and the growth of their crops. It was she who

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65. Ibid., 53.
66. Ibid., 49.

gave Mexico the cactus plant to provide her people with milk and pulque."[67] However, in spite

of this undercurrent of praise and honor for *Tonantsi,* the Aztec elite developed a society around

the hierarchical dichotomies between men and women and the rulers and the ruled. The upshot

of Anzaldúa's analysis is that the Virgin of Guadalupe's indigenous genealogy demonstrates that

she became a representation of a borderland prior to the Spanish Conquest.

The Conquest did not inaugurate patriarchy, but instead continued with the denigration

and splitting of the feminine that was already a part of Aztec culture. However, what began with

the Spanish was the erasure of indigenous culture. The erasure is most evident with the Spanish

practice of destroying indigenous monuments and buildings, and replacing them with

monuments and buildings that reflected the culture they intended to impose upon the indigenous.

Take for example the *Zocalo* of México, D.F.. Underneath this grand plaza, upon which the

National Palace and the National Cathedral currently sit, is the Aztec *Templo Mayor* complex.

In a similar way the Aztec mother, *Tonantsi* was covered over by the Catholic Virgin of

Guadalupe. Anzaldúa notes: "After the Conquest, the Spaniards and their church continued to

split *Tonantsi/Guadalupe*. They desexed *Guadalupe,* taking the *Coatlalopeuh,* the

serpent/sexuality, out of her. They completed the split begun by the Nahuas by making la *Virgen*

de Guadalupe/Virgen Maria into chaste virgins and *Tlazolteotl/Coatlicue/la Chingada* into

putas."[68] The Conquest covered over indigenous representations and at the same time

consolidated the dichotomy between the dark and light aspects of the feminine that had already

been problematic in indigenous culture into the irreconcilable virgin/*puta* binary.

The strength of the indigenous belief in the sacred mother is not totally erased though.

There are traces and hints that seep through and show their indigenous roots. The appearance of

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67. Ibid.
68. Ibid., 49-50.

the Virgin of Guadalupe to the humble Indian Juan Diego occurs at the very location where

Tonantsi "had been worshipped by the Nahuas and where a temple to her had stood."[69] Also, the

Virgin introduced herself as *María Coatlalopeuh*.   Anzaldúa notes that, "[b]ecause

Coatlalopeuh was homophonous to the Spanish *Guadalupe*, the Spanish identified her with the

dark Virgin, *Guadalupe*, patroness of West Central Spain."[70] In doing this the Spanish attempted

to cover over the indigenous aspect of the Virgin of Guadalupe. "Thus," Anzaldúa states,

"*Tonantsi* became *Guadalupe,* the chaste protective mother, the defender of the Mexican

people."[71] This synchronicity, however, between the indigenous mother and the Catholic Virgin,

speaks to the indigenous roots of this feminine representation and how it remained operative in

the psychic economy of the Mexican people. Even as the patriarchal cultures attempted to

downplay and degrade the indigenous mother, she has always been instantiated, even if

unknowingly.

    During this process, Anzaldúa does not ignore or conveniently set aside facts or problems

that may present even the sacrosanct Virgin of Guadalupe in an unsavory light. Anzaldua notes:

"Guadalupe has been used by the Church to mete out institutionalized oppression: to placate the

Indians and the *mexicanos* and Chicanos. In part, the true identity of all three has been

subverted—*Guadalupe* to make us docile and enduring, *la Chingada* to make us ashamed of our

Indian side, and *la Llorona* to make us long-suffering people. This obscuring has encouraged the

virgen/puta (whore) dichotomy."[72] She is pointing out that while the Virgin of Guadalupe is the

great ameliorator for many Mexicans and Chicanos, some of the amelioration comes at the

expense of being an instrument for maintaining Catholic patriarchy. Anzaldúa believes that by

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69. Ibid., 50.
70. Ibid., 51.
71. Ibid., 50.
72. Ibid., 53.

being such an instrument, the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe devalues and erases the other aspects that are implicit and present in her such as *La Chingada* and *La Llorona*. *La Chingada* literally means "the Fucked," and is among other things, a derogatory name for *Malinali* (*Doña Marina*), who was Cortés' slave servant who helped facilitate communication between the Spanish and Nahua tribes who despised the Mexica (the tribe at the head of the Aztec Empire). This ability to communicate with the Mexica's enemies was a contributing factor to the Conquest. These facts about *Malinali* and the Conquest are interpreted by patriarchal Mexican culture as a betrayal. *Doña Marina* was a traitor who allowed the Spanish to conquer the Americas with the caveat that she seduced or desired to be with Cortés and have his child. This brings forth shame in the indigenous past that Mexicans share historically and hereditarily.

The image of the chaste Virgin represents not only the triumph of Western/Spanish/Catholic values, but also the image of the ideal woman. The Virgin of Guadalupe, accordingly, stands in opposition to the *puta* or *La Chingada* image of a woman who is associated with being unchaste and not properly exhibiting the impossible expectations to live up to, or be in the likeness of the mother of Jesus Christ. This dualistic distinction between the good and evil woman erases the *La Llorona* aspect of the Virgin of Guadalupe image. *La Llorona* is the wandering mother who is crying out for the children she drowned as well as the lover who has abandoned her. She is a complicated image incorporating both sexual desire and motherly longing, qualities assumed to be irreconcilable. The Virgin as the ideal image of a woman is imposed by the patriarchal Catholic Church, and is a false dichotomy as it presents only two ways for women to be while, in fact, there are many ways to be. This is much like the situation Sor Juana describes in her "Poem 92". She sings:

Whose behavior would be odder

than that of a stubborn man

who himself breathes on the mirror,

and then laments it is not clear?[73]

Definitions and valuations of women are dictated and imposed by men. However, the valuations

are such that women cannot possibly meet expectations created by men. As such, men can never

be satisfied with the behavior of women while at the same time many women feel compelled to

continue trying to meet those expectations. This leaves women stuck in the middle of imposed

values with the upshot that patriarchy demands that women affirm or deny their position in the

dichotomy.

Anzaldúa's analysis shows that the patriarchal connotations for the Virgin of Guadalupe

actually devalues and erases her indigenous aspects. Thus the indigenous woman is doubly

stigmatized as representing the conquered culture and woman. Anzaldúa states: "The dark-

skinned woman has been silenced, gagged, caged, bound into servitude with marriage,

bludgeoned for 300 years, sterilized and castrated in the twentieth century. For 300 years she has

been a slave, a force of cheap labor, colonized by the Spaniard, the Anglo, by her own people

(and in Mesoamerica her lot under the Indian patriarchs was not free of wounding). For 300

years she was invisible, she was not heard."[74] In pointing out this split of the feminine in

indigenous culture, Anzaldúa is demonstrating that a common perspective about the Conquest in

Mexican and Chicano cultures is false. Anzaldúa notes: "Thus the Aztec nation fell not because

Malinali (la Chingada) interpreted for and slept with Cortes, but because the ruling elite had

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73. Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz, "Poem 92", in *Latin American Philosophy for the 21st Century*, eds. J.J.E. Gracia &
E. Millán-Zaibert (New York: Prometheus Books, 2004), 59.
74. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 44-45.

subverted the solidarity between men and women and between noble and commoner."[75] It was not *Doña Marina/la Malinche/Malinali/la Chingada* that allowed for the Aztecs to be decimated and conquered, but it was the Aztec culture itself that sowed the seeds of its demise with its structure of dichotomous domination. The Aztec culture was already split when the Spanish conquistadors arrived. The Conquest only further complicated the split and created another between indigenous and Spanish/European culture. As such, patriarchal culture uses women as a facile scapegoat to avoid or deny the deeper cultural problems that provided for women to be blamed in the first place.

The many lost, misunderstood, overlooked or devalued aspects of the Virgin of Guadalupe are illuminated by Anzaldúa's process of *mestizaje*. Anzaldúa identifies the Virgin of Guadalupe as a borderland, the crossing of culture and values. She examines the image in the interest of rejecting oppression, but doesn't toss it aside or ignore it if the icon reveals such pernicious values. She does not react to the image assuming that its features are attacks on her personal being. Moreover, she avoids a dichotomous view of the Catholic matriarch and is able to distinguish different features of her without conflating what values stem from which culture. A result of the process of *mestizaje* is that Anzaldúa reclaims the long lost identity and history of *Coatlalopeuh*. With this and other elements of the inventory, Anzaldúa creates a new myth about the Virgin of Guadalupe that transcends the duality it traditionally represents and presents a vision of her that overcomes the implicit dichotomy. "*Guadalupe,*" Anzaldua states, "[is] the virgin mother who has not abandoned us, *la Chingada (Malinche),* [is] the raped mother whom we have abandoned, and *la Llorona*, [is] the mother who seeks her lost children and is a combination of the other two." The Virgin no longer stands against the *puta* but the new myth incorporates different aspects of the feminine that patriarchal cultures have attempted to deny

75. Ibid., 56.

and dichotomize. She is, furthermore, an instantiation of indigenous values and symbols that the Catholic patriarchal connotations attempted to cover over. "She is the symbol," Anzaldúa states, "of the *mestizo* true to his or her Indian values."[76]

By illuminating these lost aspects of the Virgin of Guadalupe, she becomes a symbol that stands in resistance to the very powers that used her image to maintain patriarchal and racist domination. Finally, the Virgin is also a symbol of the "ethnic identity and of the tolerance for ambiguity that Chicanos-*mexicanos*, people of mixed race, people who have Indian blood, people who cross cultures, by necessity possess."[77] For Anzaldúa, borderlands represent the crossing of differing and often contradictory values and cultures. While on its face, this seems like a problem, what Anzaldúa has done is take the borderland instance of the Virgin of Guadalupe and turned the problem into a solution unto itself. Borderlands now signify the possibility of enduring the associated confusion and difficulties, rather than falling into reactionary counterstance and succumbing to false dichotomies. As such, to create out of the borderlands is to make the borderlands the solution to the problems to which they correspond.

I have been attempting to think about how to work through contradictory material, particularly with the work of Nietzsche and Fanon. What I have found is that Anzaldúa provides some theoretical and methodological concepts that help to begin to address this problem. Anzaldúa's analysis names the circumstance, i.e., the problem is a borderland, the coming together of differing, contradictory, and tension-ridden values. Anzaldúa suggests a possible solution to this problem, philosophical *mestizaje*. This solution attempts to avoid conflation, reactionariness and false dichotomies, while at the same time revealing the deeper connections and confluences of the differing values. The result of the process, moreover, transcends the

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76. Ibid., 52.
77. Ibid.

particularities that compose it. In this way, Anzaldúa is providing a model for how to illuminate and develop beyond the contradictory material with the contradictory material. However, what needs to be done still is to better formalize Anzaldúa's philosophical *mestizaje* so as to be able to coherently apply this to the work of Fanon and Nietzsche.

IV: Outline of Methodological *Mestizaje*

Methodological *Mestizaje* is derived from Anzaldúa's narrative of self-overcoming and transformation and adapts a major concept from Conquest Era Nahua philosophy. Anzaldúa's terms borderlands and *mestizaje* are central to the methodology that I am developing. I will also be working with the term *nepantla* insofar as it allows me to find a middle ground or third space from which to review conflicting or antithetical positions adopted by Nietzsche and Fanon. For Anzaldúa, borderlands are spaces (physical, psychological, sexual, intellectual, among others) where contradictory, tense-ridden values and cultures encounter one another. The encounter, Anzaldúa observes, engenders the possibility of a set of problems that she attempts to avoid or overcome: *choque* (crash/conflation), *mental nepantilism* (exclusionary, binary thought patterns), and counterstance (reactionariness). For Methodological *Mestizaje*, borderlands represent the types of problems that the methodology addresses. The methodology can be applied to instances where borderlands are present. This includes borderlands that are created by an agent. In this case, my joint reading of Fanon and Nietzsche creates an intellectual borderland.

In working through their thoughts together, there is a great possibility of one of the several problems arising. Preston's analysis of the value of Nietzsche's work and Ehlen's description of the influence of Nietzsche on Fanon are examples of these types of problems occurring. Preston's analysis presents a false dichotomy: Nietzsche either is or is not of value to the black existentialist philosopher. If he is not of value, Nietzsche's philosophy ought to be

jettisoned. Ehlen confuses Fanon's liking of Nietzsche's work with Fanon being an acolyte of Nietzsche. This is most evident when he suggests that what Fanon ultimately gained from Nietzsche's work was a set of values with which he overcame colonialism. In this way, Ehlen conflates and confuses their thought. The notion of borderlands intends to represent the types of problems that Methodological *Mestizaje* examines with the added understanding that borderlands instances contain the possibility of several pernicious consequences if one is not careful about their analysis. The resolution to this problem is *mestizaje*, while the mode of theorizing to arrive at this is *nepantla*.

Anzaldúa's notion of *mestizaje* represents both a process and its outcome. The outcome is a blending of values and ideas from differing cultures and ways of being that transcends the particular parts that compose it. The focus on process emphasizes the subject's agency and commitments. The agent is committed to feminist values and deliberative choices. In this way, the process of *mestizaje* involves an inventory of the borderland problem. The inventory demands that none of what is up for examination be thrown out because of contrary or tension-ridden thoughts. Yet, that doesn't mean that what is examined is accepted without critical analysis. Rather, Anzaldúa rejects and unlearns any values that perpetuate oppressive paradigms.   It is from the new values that Anzaldúa creates the new self, the *new mestiza* that transcends the pernicious binaries she seemed to have first encountered.

For Methodological *Mestizaje*, *mestizaje* is both the process and goal. The process will focus on developing an inventory in order to properly distinguish the differing perspectives that are being analyzed and read together. In this way, the agent can pick which aspects of thought to consider together and further develop. What is gained from this process will be knowledge or understanding that is beyond the particular philosopher's thought that I am discussing. Their

work together will form a blending of ideas and values that is undergirded by feminist values. While the feminist values help to ward off oppressive values and thoughts patterns, this doesn't totally diminish the possibility of the three major problems occurring. To better avoid this, Methodological *Mestizaje* needs a manner or mode of theorizing that will combat this. This mode of theorizing is called *nepantla*. Anzaldúa uses *nepantla* in a very limited sense. She notes that the term means "torn between two ways."[78] While this definition does a great job of describing a problem commonly encountered in the borderlands, Anzaldúa's use is a bit impoverished. What will be shown is that the Conquest Era Nahua philosophical term carries with it some theoretical power to help manage and guide the process of Methodological *Mestizaje*. So while Anzaldúa's use of *nepantla* accurately describes a problem concomitant with borderlands, it will be demonstrated that its significance is beyond this providing a means by which to avoid the problems she describes.

The Nahua proverb, "it is slippery, it is slick on the earth," expresses the Conquest Era Nahua philosophical understanding of existence and alludes to how they conceived of living well within it. James Maffie observes that the Nahua call earth *tlalticpac,* which literally translates to "on the point or summit of the earth."[79] The folk wisdom of the Nahua saw "the earth… [to be] an extremely perilous place for human beings… [where] humans lose their balance easily while walking upon the earth and as a consequence suffer pain, hunger, thirst, sorrow, disease, and madness."[80] Although I am focusing on the proverb, this is not to say that the Conquest Era Nahua lacked philosophers. Maffie points out the Conquest Era Nahua had the equivalent of philosophers or sages who were called *tlamatinime* (*tlamatini* singular) and believed that the

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78. Ibid.,100.
79. James Maffie, "Pre-Colombian Philosophies", in *A Companion to Latin American Philosophy*, eds. O. Bueno, S. Nuccetelli and O. Schutte, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2013), 17.
80. Ibid., 12.

purpose of philosophical inquiry was to offer "practicable answers to what they saw as the central question of human existence: 'How can humans walk in balance and so flourish upon the earth?'"[81] For the Nahua, they conceived of existence as delicate and fraught with difficulties where one can easily lose their balance and fall down the summit. For the Nahua, it is the *tlamatinime* who developed the metaphysical description of existence as well as offered values (ethical, epistemological and aesthetic) that allow one to manage life's difficulties and live well. What will be shown is that *nepantla* reflects and represents both the metaphysics and value theory of the Nahua, and it is from this that I will use the term for Methodological *Mestizaje*. But in order to understand *nepantla,* one must first be familiar with Conquest Era Nahua metaphysics.

Maffie notes that the term *teotl* is what the Conquest Era Nahua called existence. *Teotl* is the "single, dynamic, vivifying, eternally self-generating sacred power or force... [that is] always active, actualized, and actualizing energy-in-motion. The cosmos and all its constituents are constituted by, as well as ultimately identical with the sacred force of *teotl*. *Teotl* permeates, configures, and vivifies the entire cosmos and its content."[82] The notion *teotl*, similar to Heraclitus' conceptualization of being, conveys an imminent, ever becoming, dynamic creative force that makes up and makes the totality of reality. The Nahua did not see existence as static or stable but rather understood that it lacks any permanence in order or structure.[83] *Teotl*, furthermore, creates existence from itself out of itself with the creations (human existence, the cosmos, nature, etc) representing "self-presentations" of itself that are identical with *teotl*.[84]

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81. Ibid.
82. Ibid., 13.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.

Moreover, as Maffie highlights, "*teotl* is nonpersonal, non-agentive, and non-intentional."[85] In this way, the Nahua do not attribute to existence an agenda for or against particular objects or agents which avoids anthropomorphizing existence as well as assigning it static meaning.

Yet the Conquest Era Nahua, as Maffie notes, have several metaphysical folk axioms that help to further illuminate *teotl*. In terms of realism, the Nahua assumed that that which is real is that which becomes, and that which is real is that which can make things happen. This folk wisdom represents *teotl* as real. *Teotl* is that which becomes, and it is *teotl* which creates (does things) out of itself all that becomes (all that is real). As such, *teotl* is the source and power of all that exists including itself. Nahua folk wisdom, furthermore, is guided by the assumption that what a thing is follows from its supposed purpose (i.e., what is does). While the Nahua generally make these claims about *teotl*, epistemologically, they seem like pyrrhonists in that they do not believe that reality is directly or apodictically knowable. Rather, such knowledge of *teotl* is "irreducibly ambiguous."[86] The ambiguous nature of *teotl* and by extension all its manifestations led the Nahua to conceive of human, earthly existence as "dreamlike."[87] Maffie explains that the Nahua "spoke of the dreamlikeness of earthly life in order to make the epistemological point that the ordinary, pre-reflective epistemic condition of humans is to be deceived by *teotl's* disguise and hence to misunderstand *teotl*."[88] The human condition necessitates that normal cognition is to misapprehend, misjudge and confuse the creations and masks of *teotl* for what *teotl* is.

The Conquest Era Nahua's assumptions about *teotl* and its knowability reveal that dynamic, ever-flowing processes are the key to understanding their metaphysics. "Activity, motion, flux, time, change, and transformation," Maffie notes, "are the principal notions for

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85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid., 17.
88. Ibid.

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understanding things."[89] So for the Conquest Era Nahua, what is evident and the truth is that

reality is an ever-changing, confusing flux where one can easily lose balance. While this may

seem to leave the Nahua agent in a position of fear and angst, they used the term *nepantla* to

manage this.

Maffie points out that *nepantla* "plays a central role in Nahua metaphysics' descriptive

account of the nature of reality and of the human condition, and a central role in Nahua value

theory's (i.e., ethics, epistemology, and aesthetics) conceptions of good conduct, good cognizing,

good art, and the good life for human beings."[90] For the Conquest Era Nahua, the term *nepantla*

represents *teotl* and stands as a key term to understanding Nahua value theory. *Nepantla*, as

such, is a general term that captures the Nahua description of reality as well as how one ought to

live well in such a context. [91] Traditionally, the term *nepantla* has been found to simply mean

"in between," "in the middle of," or "neither… nor." This is the limited sense in that Anzaldúa

uses the term to explain the borderlands problems' propensity to fall into the trap of false

dichotomies. Maffie points out, however, that the term "primarily modifies activities, processes,

doings, and becomings.[92] Maffie continues: "It tells us how, when, or where an agent(s) or

thing(s) acts, behaves, or does something; or how, when or where process occurs. *Nepantla-*

processes take place 'in the middle of,' betwixt and between,' or 'in the balance between' two or

more things. They place people or things in *nepantlatli*, i.e., in the middle of, or betwixt and

between, two endpoints. *Nepantla*-processes are also middling in the sense of actively middling

their *relata*. *Nepantla* also conveys a sense of abundant reciprocity or mutuality; one that derives

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89. Ibid., 13.
90. Ibid.,13.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid., 13-14.

from being 'middled.' *Nepantla*-processes occupy, use, and apply the middle as well as create a middle product. They are '*nepantla*-middling' or '*nepantla*-balancing.'"[93]

The concept is complex but intends to convey how the particular things presently are in the midst of *teotl* and its diverse manifestations. However, *nepantla* insinuates that the relationship between things is not antagonistic but rather of overflowing sharing. Beyond being in the midst of *teotl*, when existence is conceived of in light of being a *nepantla*-process, things, including agents, are in the midst and part of the process out of which things are created. Maffie also points out that "*Nepantla*-processes are simultaneously destructive *and* creative and hence essentially transformative."[94] The processes don't merely produce middle products, but rather the products represent how all that is in the midst of *teotl* is in the process of constantly changing and eventually being annihilated. "*Nepantla*-processes," Maffie notes, "suspend things within a dynamic, unstable, and destabilizing *ontological zone* between conventional categories: a zone in which things become ill-defined, ambiguous, and anomalous; a zone in which things disappear into the interstices between conventional categories; and finally, a zone from which emerges a novel *tertium quid*."[95]

In being conceived as a process, *nepantla* takes into account that when things comingle and middle together, things become difficult to distinguish and ambiguities arise that would not normally arise if things were clearly set apart from one another. Instead, by things middling together, the objects move beyond their strict definitions creating a product that transcends that which comingled to create it. With *teotl* considered as a *nepantla*-process, Maffie notes that it "is at bottom ontologically ambiguous since it is neither being and non-being yet simultaneously both being and non-being. That is, it is becoming. Similarly, *teotl* is neither ordered (determined

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93. Ibid., 14.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.

or governed top-down by laws or principles) nor disordered (chaotic) but rather *unordered*. It captures an ontological *tertium quid*: unorderliness."[96] In the context of *teotl* as a *nepantla*-process, what seems to be lost is any sort of ground upon which to stand, however, what arises out of this vacillation are terms that transcend those particular categories.

In terms of value theory (particularly ethics and aesthetics), Maffie highlights that this area of Conquest Era Nahua philosophy is grounded in their metaphysics. He states: "They regarded *teotl* as *nepantla*-process as the ideal normative model *for* human behavior since they regarded *teotl* as *nepantla*-process as the ideal model *of nepantla* behavior. They accordingly enjoined people to live their lives in a *teotl*-like, *nepantla*-balancing way, and based their prescriptive claims regarding how human beings *ought* to conduct their lives upon *teotl's* example. *Nepantla* thus figures prominently in Nahua normative conceptions of the good life for human beings, good conduct, good cognition, and good art."[97] Taking *teotl* as its normative model, *nepantla* both describes and prescribes good conduct in the world. It is the manner by which one can look to properly live theirs lives. As such, *nepantla* represents the way in which one should properly conceive of and live, in existence. As such, Nahua knowledge or wisdom, *tlamatiliztli*, is primarily about practical living and flourishing. Maffie notes that knowledge is "active, creative, practical, concrete, situational, and performative… It consists of knowing *how* to act middlingly, *how* to maintain one's balance, and *how* to flourish as one walks upon the jagged path of life."[98]

For Methodological *Mestizaje*, the term *nepantla* intends to convey the mode of theorizing. By mode, the Latin root to the word helps to signify the meaning I am attaching to *nepantla* for the purposes of this methodology. *Modus* means "measure, standard, way, size,

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96. Ibid.
97. Ibid., 18.
98. Ibid., 19.

limit of quantity or method." *Nepantla* represents the proper manner in which the methodology ought to proceed. Methodological *Mestizaje* intends to analyze and work through borderlands. The process and goal are *mestizaje*. By borderlands representing the confluence of contradictory values and cultures, theorizing in the mode of *nepantla* takes for granted the space of theorizing, i.e., in the midst or in the middle of the values and cultures. The term also emphasizes the process of theorizing as Methodological *Mestizaje* conveys the process of the coming together of values that are at variance to produce something that is beyond the particular parts that compose it. This process, furthermore, calls for a sense of balance. That is, although the components that are coming together are contradictory, in order to theorize well, balance is needed to avoid the problems associated with borderlands. What undergirds the initial judgments about the inventory concerns the recognition and rejection of ways of thinking that will take the balance out of the investigation. The resolution of the problem arrives as disclosure of the real rather than an imposition of a preconceived or preordained meaning of existence.

For the remainder of this work, I will attempt to apply Methodological *Mestizaje* to the work of Fanon and Nietzsche. The coming together of their thought is a borderland. In such a space, their work can easily be misconstrued. However, this methodology asks that nothing be prematurely cast aside. In this way, I will look at the text from which Preston developed his argument about the value of Nietzsche's work for the black existentialist philosopher: *On the Genealogy of Morals*. In particular, I will focus on Nietzsche's first two essays. These essays are closely connected and it is in the second essay that Nietzsche invokes his thoughts on black people. In this way, I will not conveniently avoid the work that helps to make clear that the joint reading of Fanon and Nietzsche is borderland, nor will I prematurely jettison any thought or values that may be of use for developing a *tertium quid*, a third product, out of their work. I will

look at each essay and then bring to bear any thought or concerns that Fanon may have about this.

In the next chapter, I will examine the thought of Nietzsche and Fanon, and the idea of *ressentiment*. What will be argued is that Nietzsche develops two forms of *ressentiment*: that of the individual guided by slave morality and that of the Master type devolving into *ressentiment*. After that I will address Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* and demonstrate that his theorization of the pernicious consequences of colonialism reveals a third type of *ressentiment*. In this way, the types of *ressentiment* correspond to the types of analysis that Fanon is responding and adding to. That is, Nietzsche offers the phylogenetic and ontogenetic conceptualization of *ressentiment*, while Fanon supplements these with the sociogenetic development of *ressentiment*.

In the final chapter, I will address the thoughts of Nietzsche and Fanon around the notions of violence and morality. I will articulate that Fanon's and Nietzsche's basic assumptions are that morality and violence mutually imply one another. However, their particular focus differ in that Nietzsche focuses on the establishment and development of a morality, while Fanon focuses on overcoming an established morality. As such, Fanon and Nietzsche share the same project, but more importantly, their thoughts supplement one another in significant ways. I will argue that Nietzsche provides the form and content of the morality that Fanon is attempting to overcome, while Fanon offers Nietzsche insight into how such morality is transformed in the colonial world.

CHAPTER TWO

***RESSENTIMENT* AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS**

I: Introduction

This chapter will be the first application of Methodological *Mestizaje* in the development

of a joint reading of the work of Fanon and Nietzsche. The mode of investigation is *nepantla*.

That means I am aware that the coming together of Fanon and Nietzsche's thought is a

borderland and can give rise to serious problems. What is desired in *nepantla* is a balanced

analysis that constructs bridges between their work in a way such that each thinker is illuminated

but that the overall result is greater than the sum of the two philosopher's particular thoughts.

This first application will primarily focus on Nietzsche's first essay of *On the Genealogy*

of Morals, "'Good and Evil,' 'Good and Bad'" and on Fanon's, "The Lived Experience of the

Black Man" in *Black Skin, White Masks*. The central concern of the chapter is the relationship of

their thought to Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment*. I will demonstrate that Nietzsche has one

concept of *ressentiment* that is rooted in the human condition, but that he offers two differing

narratives of its expression and consequences. Furthermore, these two narratives converge to

form the narrative of the state of affairs concerning European morality. After that, I will discuss

ressentiment in relation to Fanon's work. I will establish that Fanon accepts *ressentiment* as

reaction, and that his description of his experience reveals the other characteristics of the

concept. Furthermore, I will show that the expression that Fanon describes differs in type from

the two that Nietzsche describes. In this way, the types of *ressentiment* correspond to the types of

analysis that Fanon is responding and adding to. Fanon is coming out of a tradition in the discipline of psychology that casts human problems in terms of phylogeny and ontogeny. What will be concluded is that Nietzsche offers the phylogenetic and ontogenetic conceptualizations of *ressentiment*, while Fanon supplements these with the sociogenetic development of *ressentiment*.

II: Nietzsche and *Ressentiment*

A. General Considerations

Most broadly, *ressentiment* represents a reactionary form of moral valuation. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche notes that moral valuations represent "physiological demands for the preservation of a certain type of life."[99] While this statement seems to suggest a naturalistic thesis about the need for the organism to survive, it is couched within the context of Nietzsche's critiques of traditional Western philosophical assumptions about their origin and truth-value. Paraphrasing traditional reasoning regarding the origin of values Nietzsche wryly states: "the things of the highest value must have another, *peculiar* origin –they cannot be derived from this transitory, seductive, deceptive, paltry world, from this turmoil of delusion and lust. Rather from the lap of Being, the intransitory, the hidden god, the 'thing-in-itself'–there must be their basis, and nowhere else."[100] That which is good is assumed to have some otherworldly grounds or origins while the becoming of human existence is understood as not being the source of such values and even antithetical to them. The origin of the values that are supposed to guide the living is believed to be outside of human existence. This model of the origin of values displaces the creation of meaning onto an otherworldly source. While erecting a myth that helps to justify and guide existence, life itself is deemed a secondary world of appearance and illusion. Yet Nietzsche holds that this form of valuation, like all others forms of morality including those

99. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 11.
100. Ibid, 10.

indicative of *ressentiment,* is a "physiological demand" indicative of a particular type of existence and survival.

While Nietzsche's comment from *Beyond Good and Evil* evokes naturalistic logic, what the reference to physiology does is recover something lost with the displacement of the creation of value onto an otherworldly source. That something is the body which for Nietzsche is the seat or the origin of values. This conceptual move by Nietzsche allows him to begin the discussion of valuation that places life as the primary focus. That human existence demands that humans create values means that human existence is the ground for all values. These values, however, are not universal. Rather, for Nietzsche, the values are reflections of the particular sort of bodies and their distinct ways of being in the world. What these differing orders of rank share are the limits and restraints inherent to human existence. With the dissolution of the assumption that values are founded in an otherworldly source, the stakes of the values are no longer in terms of and about otherworldly considerations. A consequence of the displacement of the source of value onto an ethereal entity is that lived life matters only to the extent that it serves otherworldly sources; life is at the service of values that consider it secondary. But with the invocation of naturalistic language, Nietzsche is able to recover life as what is ultimately at stake and primary. For Nietzsche, accordingly, any discussion of values, even the values that come out of the reactionary mode of valuation that he calls *ressentiment,* will be about particular types of human life and the distinct values that their life demands.

Nietzsche's conceptualization of the broad meaning of values as "physiological demands for the preservation of a certain type of life" also provides for understanding three further facets of morality in general and by extension *ressentiment.* As will be demonstrated in a moment, the first feature pertains to the metaphysics of the origin of morality, i.e. Nietzsche's notion is

soundly supported by metaphysical assumptions that correspond to the human condition and lived experience. While having the power to explain value creation writ large, these metaphysics demonstrate the grounds for the possibility of varying types of morality. Second, Nietzsche's notion of morality assumes several meta-ethical narratives. Meta-ethics examines, in part, the grounds, justification and legitimacy of values. Instead of assuming the grounds for values in some otherworldly place, Nietzsche's recovery of humans as the seat and source of values allows him to tell meta-ethical stories about the origin of values that places the activity of humans valuing as the focal point. As such, the origins of *ressentiment* and other forms of valuation are cast as being knowable in the sense that one can follow the values back to the particular type of bodies that expressed them. *Ressentiment*, accordingly, is *prima facie* not to be understood as some strange paradox or mystery or some type of personal problem, but rather a possibility consistent with the givens and limits of the human condition. The final facet of Nietzsche's model of morality is its practical dimension. The values are lived out expressions of different ways of being in the world. For *ressentiment*, this means that it can be understood in its empirical dimensions both in terms of particular valuations as well as in the socio-culture and structural contexts within which they develop.

B. Morality, *Ressentiment* and the Human Condition

Nietzsche broadly casts the source of values as either from active or reactive bodies. Generally identifying *ressentiment* with a reactionary mode of valuation suggests the obvious connection between *ressentiment* and reactive bodies. While this will be shown to be the case, the appearance of *ressentiment* is a possibility in either type of body. This is because the possibility of this form of valuation rests with the conditions of human existence that all bodies share. Nietzsche reveals this and the additional characteristics of *ressentiment* in the scene in the

second part of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* entitled "On Redemption." In what follows, I will

provide a brief outline of the scene and then a demonstration of how it reveals the conditions for

the possibility of *ressentiment* and its characteristics.

The scene begins with Zarathustra crossing a bridge and encountering a hunchback who

is a representative for a group of physically disabled people. The hunchback asks that

Zarathustra perform the miracle of removing their crippling disabilities noting that this will

convince the masses to believe what Zarathustra says. Zarathustra insinuates that by claiming

the knowledge of the masses, the hunchback has overlooked the masses' belief that considers the

removal of the disability as the possible gateway to other vices and sins that previously

precluded them. Continuing his dialogue with the hunchback, Zarathustra explains that from his

perspective he has seen all kinds of humans missing all kinds of body parts, but even worse are

what he calls "inverse cripples." Zarathustra states that these types are "missing everything

except the one thing they have too much of." He describes these people as appearing as "one big

eye, or one big maw or one big belly." These are humans who have one particular overgrown

part that dominates their existence. What is more, the masses believe that "inverse cripples" are

exemplary human beings. [101]

After addressing the hunchback, Zarathustra turns to his disciples and becomes very

upset. He then begins to explain how he walks amongst what amounts to pieces of human beings

and he is scared because he believes humans are "in ruins and scattered about as if on a battle

field or a butcher field." This imagery is indeed frightening, but what is "most unbearable" for

Zarathustra is that when he thinks about the present and the past, he observes the same state of

affairs. What allows him to endure this problem is that he is also a "seer of that which must

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101. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. A. Del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), page 109.

come." He proclaims that he is a variety of other identities including "a willer, a creator, a future unto himself and a bridge to the future." After this he asks his students which Zarathustra they wish to know. Zarathustra then embraces the fragments of human beings that he seemed to be at first upset by, and states that the fragments are "of the future; that future that I see." What his effort and creation amounts to is taking all the fragments and accidents that he encounters and putting them together to create a whole. If he were not able to create, piece together and solve what he perceives as "now fragment and riddle and grisly accident," then Zarathustra would not be able to "bear being a human being." He then proclaims what redemption is: "to redeem those who are the past and to recreate all 'it was' into 'thus I willed it.'"[102]

After Zarathustra declares the meaning of redemption, he then moves to a lesson about how the will can be a "liberator and joy bringer" but is instead "still a prisoner." About this problem Zarathustra notes: "The will cannot will backward; that it cannot break time and time's greed – that is the will's loneliest misery." What keeps the will chained down are the memories of past events. The past, for all agents, is something that one is powerless to change, and such powerlessness can create a sense of anger and misery. Zarathustra reiterates that the "willing liberates" but questions how the will will liberate itself from this situation. He then seems to humorously hint that all wills will eventually be released from existence. "Alas, every prisoner becomes a fool! Foolishly as well the imprisoned will redeems itself." Zarathustra then points out that this problem has led the will to be a "doer of harm; and on everything that is capable of suffering it avenges itself for not being able to go back." The past represents a limit to the will that frustrates and traps it thereby sparking a desire for revenge. Zarathustra describes revenge as such: "the will's unwillingness toward time and time's 'it was.'" Despite the rational impossibility of taking revenge on the past, Zarathustra points out that this silliness is a

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102. Ibid., page 110.

significant problem for all of humankind. Noting this Zarathustra states: "Indeed a great folly lives in our will; and it became the curse of all humankind that this folly acquired spirit!" That this silliness obtained "spirit" suggests that it became an implicit model of the world and how to live in it. "The spirit of revenge: my friends, that so far has been what mankind contemplate best; and wherever there was suffering, punishment was always supposed to be there as well." Zarathustra is pointing out that humans have sought different ways of attempting to take revenge for their past suffering and in doing so often deemed existence itself as a form of punishment. However, Zarathustra believes that it is a form of madness to assume that suffering is a representation of how life is inherently hostile to one's existence. Zarathustra then reminds his disciples that he has taught them that the will is a creator and "all 'it was' is a fragment, a riddle, a grisly accident – until the creating will says to it: 'But I will it thus! I shall will it thus!'"[103]

In the final moments of the scene, Zarathustra questions if the will has redeemed the past and overcome the spirit of revenge. He also questions who taught the will this form of overcoming as well as another form that transcends reconciliation. He then questions if "the will to power must will something higher than any reconciliation" and how one would teach the will to will backwards.[104] At this point, he falls silent and carries a look of extreme disgust. He peers into the eyes of his students and then laughs saying that it is hard for him to keep silent considering that he likes to talk so much. Meanwhile, the hunchback had covered his face with his hands but continued to listen to Zarathustra's entire lesson. After Zarathustra is finished speaking, the hunchback asks him why he speaks differently to the disabled people than he did to his students, and why he seems to speak to himself differently than to both groups.

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103. Ibid., pages 110-112.
104. Ibid., pages 112.

While the scene seems to be ostensibly Zarathustra's rebuttal of a tenet of the masses and then a lesson about the state of the will, there is more to this. The problem of the scene centers on making sense of and giving meaning to accident. The overt lesson is that to give value to the present and past is to take the position of believing that one has purposely created the present as it is currently instantiated. While this seems to be a solution for Zarathustra, the scene then offers a lesson about a problem still plaguing the will, particularly that the will is still imprisoned by the past that it is repetitively and without success responding to. This observation about the will is problematic because of the impossibility of changing the past, yet Zarathustra claims that it has developed into the well thought out and seriously contemplated "spirit of revenge." These tendencies are rooted in the human condition that confronts all bodies. Humans have a memory of past events and are physically impotent in the face of the past. The prison of the will, as such, is the memory of the agent. Moreover, the agent remembers an order of rank as well as particular events, actions, and consequences. The agent uses the order of rank to understand and judge the aforementioned. While the agent may do something that transgresses the order of rank they remember, the impossibility of ever taking back or making up for some such event wreaks havoc on the individual. In this way, some memories confront the agent as something s/he is powerless against. The past stands as an immovable object that no one can do anything about. Yet, humans often remain single-mindedly focused on the past. In this way the human condition provides for the development of *ressentiment*. That is to say, considering that humans are temporal beings who have memories and live according to values by which we understand and judge the present as well as the past, these conditions set the stage for the development of a reactionary mode of valuation. As such, the scene reveals a form of reactionariness rooted in our human existence.

With the possibility of *ressentiment* rooted in the conditions of human existence, what Zarathustra says about the problem of the will reveals other characteristics of this reactionary mode of valuation. One other characteristic of *ressentiment* is that it is oriented outward. The past is what it is responding or reacting to and the response to the past is a reaction. The past is not *inside* the individual, but rather *outside* him or her. In this way, the grounds reveal that reaction to things outside follows from the problem of the imprisoned will. Another quality is the desire for revenge. It seems to be obvious that the imprisoned will should desire to take back or attempt to make up for past events, i.e., the deed. This desire, however, stands in tension with the impossibility of willing backward. While Zarathustra seems to be offering a model of redemption and overcoming the desire for revenge through the creative force of the will, his alternative stands in distinction to the "spirit of revenge" which "mankind contemplates best."[105] This contemplation has spawned different ways of attempting to overcome the past and thus is revealed to be a creative force giving birth to values and ways of being. Finally, the scene alludes to the last characteristic of *ressentiment*: its repetitive nature. Even though this may be a creative act, this form of valuation is a product of repetition, because the creation comes out of repeated attempts to exact revenge for (i.e., to take back or make up for) past events. In this way, the scene, "On Redemption," reveals how *ressentiment* can be understood such that the feeling of the desire for revenge can be persistent and repetitive because of the impossibility of ever being able to get revenge for past events. Additionally, reactionariness, the focus on the outside, the desire for revenge, creativity and repetitiveness are found to be the basic characteristics of *ressentiment*.

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105. Ibid., page 111.

C. Meta-Ethical Narratives of the Origin of Values

With the first essay of the *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche casts the origin of values as two distinct meta-ethical stories that each begin with the assumption that humans, first and foremost, are the source and creators of values. In the most apparent sense, the use of dual narratives reveals that humans will create differing systems of values. Additionally, particular types will have values in relation to what their life demands. However, each narrative describes a form of *ressentiment*. The first narrative distinguishes between two forms of valuation: Master morality and slave morality. These differences, for Nietzsche, are couched in terms of the bodies of the agents. The particular types express forms of valuation that are indicative of the sort of life that their existence insists. In this way, this narrative ties *ressentiment* directly to reactive bodies. The second narrative is about the story of the rivalry of knightly and priestly castes, and conveys the progressive decline to *ressentiment*. This narrative is set in the context of a relationship. While these narratives can seem to be distinct and possibly mutually exclusive, these meta-ethical narratives converge to offer a third meta-ethical narrative pertaining to the dominant morality in European culture.

Master morality is a noble form of valuation. The point of value begins in this type of morality with the creator of the values. Nietzsche states: "The noble type of man experiences *itself* as determining values."[106] Master morality is founded on the agent creating values and judging in accordance with the demands of the life of the particular agent. Master morality, Nietzsche states, "acts and grows spontaneously."[107] This morality is not reactionary, but rather an impetuous action, reflecting a self-referential way of being in the world. Master morality is a "morality of self glorification…[in which] the noble human being honors himself as one who is

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106. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 260.
107. Nietzsche, *GM*, I: 10.

powerful, also as one who has power over himself."[108] Nietzsche further adds that: "the noble

man…conceives the basic concept 'good' in advance and spontaneously out of himself and only

then only creates for himself an idea of 'bad'!"[109] Good in the master morality configuration,

then, stands out as a mark of distinction and affirmation of the agent's creative capabilities and

powers. These types are those who know they can act and do act; these types are not reactive,

but active agents. The point of valuation begins with the particular Master type and expresses

valuations that are in the interest and glorification of their lived life.

Slave morality, or a morality of *ressentiment*, on the other hand, is a reactionary form of

valuation and reflects a reactionary form of life. Nietzsche writes: "this *need* to direct one's view

outward instead of back to oneself – is of the essence of *ressentiment*: in order to exist, slave

morality always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, physiologically speaking, external

stimuli in order to act at all – its action is fundamentally reaction."[110] Considered as such, slave

morality is inherently reactionary, but only to particular bodies. These types need some form of

outside impetus to begin their valuation.   What is more, the *ressentiment* of slave morality is

responding and reacting to what is outside of it, the conditions of life. For Nietzsche, this type of

ressentiment is rooted in a physiological need to discharge feelings that arise from the inherent

suffering of existence. Nietzsche states: "For every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his

suffering; more exactly, an agent; still more specifically, a *guilty* agent who is susceptible to

suffering."[111] A person who suffers looks to find meaning for their suffering by assigning blame

on someone or something. By doing this, the sufferer has an object to direct its vengeful desires.

What this ultimately accomplishes is a temporary numbing of their pain. Nietzsche asserts that:

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108. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil,* 260.
109. Nietzsche, *GM*, I: 11.
110. Ibid., I: 10.
111. Ibid., III: 15.

"This alone … constitutes the actual physiological cause of *ressentiment*, vengefulness, and the like: a desire to *deaden pain by means of affects*."[112] Nietzsche continues: "a need to *deaden*, by means of more violent emotion of any kind, a tormenting secret pain that is becoming unendurable, and to drive it out of consciousness at least for a moment: for that one requires an affect, as savage an affect as possible, and, in order to excite that, any pretext at all."[113] What Nietzsche claims to be the cause of *ressentiment* speaks to particular bodies whose drives are organized in such a way as to require a numbing of their pain through the exercise of strong counter-feelings in order to briefly gain some relief from their suffering. Yet, the revenge is directed at an object and so gives the subject of slave morality the opportunity to simulate the taking of vengeance for having suffered. This only offers a moment of respite though as this desire appears again because the person continues to suffer. Most generally, the group that Nietzsche tends to associate with the *ressentiment* of slave morality is the herd/the masses/the rabble. It is the masses who are served by this form of *ressentiment* because it is intended to maintain their way of life.

Nietzsche is very critical of the masses and believes "within the herd…the most dangerous of all explosives, *ressentiment*, is constantly accumulating."[114] This growing *ressentiment* of slave morality views that which is outside with skepticism and wariness. Nietzsche contends that "in the soul of the subjected, the powerless . . . every *other* man . . . counts as inimical, ruthless, cruel, cunning, ready to take advantage. Evil is the characterizing expression for man, indeed for every living being one supposes to exist."[115] The *ressentiment* of slave morality assumes evil to exist as an outside force that is assumed to be part of existence.

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112. Ibid.
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
115. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 45.

And assigning evil to the outside world is the foundation of their order of rank. "Slave morality," Nietzsche insists, "from the outset says No to what is 'outside,' what is 'different,' what is 'not itself'; and this No is a creative deed . . . and here precisely is his deed, his creation: he has conceived 'the evil enemy,' '*the Evil One*,' and this in fact is his basic concept, from which he then evolves, as an afterthought and pendant, a 'good one'—himself!"[116] In this moral framework, the point of reference is not from within, but from without, and it is from first positing an outside evil that this morality moves to affirm a good. The good, in this case, is merely a negation of what is evil; the good is not evil; the good is not different, the good is the herd. In this way, this type of valuation, evil/good, stands as the creative product of the herd. What then corresponds to the good are values that concern the thriving of the herd. As such, what is esteemed as good is what is amenable to the safety and survival of the community. Nietzsche states: "Slave morality is essentially a morality of utility."[117] What is good is useful for the existence of the masses (conformity) while what is evil is anything that might call into question those values. Contravening those values and going outside them is not merely a transgression of a rule, but an act that is perceived as threatening the survival of the community, and therefore evil.

Although *ressentiment* is a quality of the common, herd type morality, it is also what leads to what Nietzsche calls the "slave revolt in morality."[118] This is Nietzsche's second meta-ethical narrative about *ressentiment*. Instead of beginning with the being of those cast as slave types (i.e. the rabble), this story begins with Master morality and centers on the relationship between the two Master types: the knight and the priest. About this relationship Nietzsche notes: "the priestly mode of valuation can branch off from the knightly-aristocratic and then develop

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116. Nietzsche, *GM*, I: 10.
117. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 260.
118. Nietzsche, *GM*: I: 7.

into its opposite; this is particularly likely when the priestly cast and the warrior caste are in jealous opposition to one another and are unwilling to come to terms."[119] Branching off from the knightly-aristocratic caste suggests that the priestly-aristocratic caste is a noble, actional value creator. However, their values are in some ways oppositional to one another and their jealous rivalry cannot be reconciled. The knightly types were prominent for their superior physical power and possessions. The priestly caste, although powerful, were distinct from the knights because their bodies were different. "The knightly-aristocratic value judgments," Nietzsche states, "presupposed a powerful physicality, a flourishing, abundant, even overflowing health, together with which that serve to preserve it: war, adventure, hunting, dancing, war games, and in general all that involves vigorous, free, joyful activity. The priestly-noble mode of valuation presupposes, as we have seen, other things: it is disadvantageous for it when it comes to war."[120] Their values – what their particular bodies demanded – greatly differed from one to the other. While physical thriving was the bodily need of the knightly caste, for the priestly types, physicality was a detriment to their way of life. The priestly caste, as such, needed to abstain from activities. Nietzsche states: "the 'pure one' is from the beginning merely a man who washes himself, who forbids himself certain foods that produce skin ailments, who does not sleep with dirty women of the lower strata, who has an aversion to blood—no more, hardly more!"[121] Accordingly, the knightly mode of valuation is characterized as an overflowing, active agency, while the priestly mode has the quality of inaction and abstention from activities. Either way, these noble forms of valuation, are rooted in and affirm the particular forms of life insisted upon by their type of bodies. Although the priest abstains from some activities, it is done so in order to express joy in their existence. What happens, from Nietzsche's perspective, is that the

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119. Ibid.
120. Ibid.
121. Ibid., I: 6.

Master morality types, the knight and the priest, diverge because the differences engender irreconcilable envy, particularly on the part of the priestly-aristocratic caste.

The priestly form of valuation begins as a Master morality, however it turns into its opposite. The jealously that spawns this development begins with the knightly-valuation that the knights are good and what is not them is bad. In a noble order of rank, what is good comes as an affirmation of the agent's own physical being, while what is bad demarcates what the agent is not. In the case of the knightly-aristocratic types, what is good is vigorous activity and what is bad is what is not that. Accordingly, from the perspective of the knights, their fellow nobly esteeming priests were bad. While both may be noble forms of valuations, from the perspective of the knightly valuation, those who do not affirm in the manner in which they esteem (i.e. those who are not them), are bad. Nietzsche states: "it [a noble type] seeks its opposite only so as to affirm itself more gratefully and triumphantly—its negative concept 'low,' 'common,' 'bad' is only a subsequently-invented pale, contrasting image in relation to its positive concept."[122] The priests, accordingly, are not inherently bad but bad because they were not equal to what the knight's bodies demanded. Understood in this way, the priests are poor imitations of the good knightly-aristocrats. Yet, when the priests are called bad, it is only the knights affirming their way of being through distinction and difference. Regardless, the priest's body cannot, and must not, partake in vigorous activities that the knight's body demands. That would be a detriment and counter to the underlying values that their form of existence insists upon. As a result of their particular being, for the priest to take exception to being called bad and take immediate physical revenge would to be to risk certain pain and possibly death and it is counter to their type of existence. This means that their revenge cannot take place within the realm of lived life, but within something else, the realm of values. The resulting jealously over their lack of physical

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122. Ibid., I: 10.

prowess, or rather, having comparatively weak bodies, spurns on the priests' hatred of the body. Nietzsche states: "It is because of their impotence that in them hatred grows to monstrous and uncanny proportions, to the most spiritual and poisonous kind of hatred."[123] While the priestly caste began as noble brothers of the knightly caste, they cast off the noble valuations and developed an order of rank indicative of *ressentiment*.

Similar to the *ressentiment* of slave morality, the priestly form of *ressentiment* is a creative act. Nietzsche states: "The slave revolt in morality begins when *ressentiment* itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge."[124] What occurs is that the priests cannot requite immediately because that would be a detriment to their existence. The feeling of *ressentiment* is not a total aberration for the noble type though. Rather Nietzsche notes that in the case of the noble development of *ressentiment* "if it should appear in the noble man, consummates and exhausts itself in an immediate reaction, and therefore does not poison."[125] With the priests, however, their inability sets the grounds for repeated feelings of their relative impotence, which stems from an inability to take immediate revenge through physicality. They respond by revaluing Master and slave moralities. Regarding this revaluation, Nietzsche states: "to hang on this inversion with their teeth, the teeth of the most abysmal hatred (the hatred of impotence), saying 'the wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent, lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly ones are pious…and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable."[126] This sets the knights and the masses on the same footing with the upshot that the knights are evil incarnate while the

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123. Ibid., I: 7.
124. Ibid., I: 10.
125. Ibid.
126. Ibid., I: 7.

masses remain the good. Noble valuation is revalued as evil while "good" is associated with the reactionary weakness. The priestly types revalued the noble values taking "the most spiritual revenge" by creating the distinction of evil/good that turned upside-down the good/bad noble distinction. The revaluation that the priestly caste makes is through first calling evil what is not them, i.e., the life affirming values of the knightly noble type. The morality moves to affirm as good and universal the antithesis of Master morality, the morality of herd *ressentiment*.

The priestly revaluation is where the two meta-ethical narratives meet. What they raise to good is the morality of the herd, slave morality. The morality indicative of the character and concerns of the masses becomes the morality that all ought to follow. This levels the previously distinguished and unique modes of Master moralities. For Nietzsche, the Platonic Judeo-Christian tradition is the most outstanding exemplar of a slave revolt in morality. Regarding this broad assessment of Western culture, Nietzsche sarcastically notes how a "free spirit" and "democrat" agrees with the pith of his judgment: "the people have won—or 'the slaves' or 'the mob' or 'the herd' or whatever you like to call them… 'The masters' have been disposed of; the morality of the common man has won out."[127]

While Nietzsche associates *ressentiment* with both the bodies of the priest and the rabble, the vengeance on the part of the priestly type develops in distinction from the *ressentiment* of the masses in that this movement starts in the realm of noble, master morality, but degenerates into a reaction against this form of morality. Furthermore, this movement is engendered by a relationship between Master morality types. On the other hand, Nietzsche tends to associate the general slave morality of the masses with what their particular bodies demand: safety and security. Nevertheless, what Nietzsche shows is that *ressentiment* cuts across the domains of moral valuation, Master and slave. These domains and *ressentiment* share several qualities. The

127. Ibid.

first is the reactionary character of the behavior. Both the Master and slave demonstrate this quintessential quality of *ressentiment*. The priestly-aristocratic types are reacting to a slight from their knightly-aristocratic brothers, while the slavish masses are reacting to the stimulus of the outside world. The second characteristic these forms of *ressentiment* share is that the valuations are directed outward. While the masses direct their *ressentiment* toward existence, the priestly aristocratic nobles direct their *ressentiment* toward the knightly aristocratic caste. Yet with both, the focus of the valuations that each creates begins outside. The third quality of *ressentiment* is the desire for revenge. For the masses, this desire is a component of their latent *ressentiment*. The desire to take revenge against that which is outside, stems from the need to assign responsibility and blame for their suffering. The priest's desire for revenge, on the other hand, stems from a desire to return the affront of knightly-aristocratic caste. While they cannot immediately take physical revenge, they do this by changing the rules of the game of valuation. They made those who are inherently reactionary the winners of the game while making the knights, who are creators of morality, the losers by subverting noble valuation through its replacement with slave morality. This mode of valuation places the knights in distinction to and against the rabble. The fourth quality is that *ressentiment* is creative. The masses created the concept of the "the evil one" while the priestly caste revalued knightly Master morality as evil. Both these incidents stand as unique contributions to how and why particular values exist in the world. The final quality is around the repetition and persistence of this *ressentiment*. With the masses, a repetitive desire for revenge is rooted in being moved to action only through reaction to stimulus and their desire to assuage suffering via strong counter-feelings that allow for blame and numbs their pain. With the priests, however, the repetition is a product of an inability to immediately exhaust their feeling through action as they re-experience their inability to

immediately react in the face of their perceived slight by their knightly-aristocratic brothers.

III: Colonial *Ressentiment*

A. Balancing Fanon and *Ressentiment*

Nietzsche's conceptualization of *ressentiment* reveals two different forms of this reactionary form of valuation. However, to simply apply one of these two types of *ressentiment* to the work of Fanon would be to greatly risk the possibility of missing the originality of Fanon's work by reducing it to a derivation from Nietzsche's thought. What Fanon does is to illuminate a third type of *ressentiment*.

Nietzsche's conceptualization of *ressentiment* is both implicitly used and explicitly evoked in Fanon's work, particularly *Black Skin, White Masks*. In the final comments of his discussion of "The Black Man and Recognition," Fanon states, "Man's behavior is not only reactional. And there is always resentment in *reaction*. Nietzsche has already said it in *The Will to Power*. To induce man to be actional, by maintaining in his circularity the respect of the fundamental values that make the world human, is the task of the utmost urgency for he who, after a careful reflection, prepares to act."[128] This passage ends Fanon's reflection upon the possibility of recognition in a racialized world. It captures both the problem and the desired resolution. As to the problem, Fanon cites Nietzsche to claim that in all reaction *ressentiment* is present. His desired solution is that people become actional through being provoked into refocusing their attention on the basic values that ground the human world, the world of mutual recognition. Reactionary *ressentiment* is thus a central theme of Fanon's thoughts.

B. Philosophical Dimensions of the Problem of Black Existence

Early in the chapter "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" Fanon notes:

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128. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Mask*, Trans. R. Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), 197. (hereinafter *BSWM*)

any ontology is made impossible in a colonized and acculturated society… In the

weltanschauung [sic] of a colonized people, there is an impurity or a flaw that prohibits

any ontological explanation. Perhaps it could be argued that this is true of any individual

but such an argument would be concealing the basic problem. Ontology does not allow

us to understand the being of the black man, since it ignores lived experience. For not

only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man. Some

people will argue that the situation has a double meaning. Not at all. The black man has

no ontological resistance in the eyes of a white man. From one day to the next, the

Blacks have to deal with two systems of reference. Their metaphysics, or less

pretentiously their customs and the agencies to which they refer, were abolished because

they were in contradiction with a new civilization that imposed its own.[129]

I have quoted Fanon at length because these claims provide context to this process of

understanding the consequences and dramas of colonialism and this then sets up *ressentiment* as

a central consideration of the chapter.

Ontology, which delineates and examines being, is *impossible* when one considers the

colonized subject. This seems to be a bombastic claim by Fanon as any philosopher or

ontologist may argue that the idea of being is examined from a universal point of view and that

the experiences of those colonized can be understood within such ontological frameworks.

Although this may be the intention, what this conceals is that ontology is also for and about

particular subjects that qualify as being considered part of the universal. One only has to think of

Hegel's universal history and how the continent of Africa "is a continent enclosed within itself,

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129. Ibid., 90.

and this enclosedness has remained its chief characteristic."[130] About the inhabitants of the

continent Hegel notes that the "characteristic feature of the Negroes is that their consciousness

has not yet reached an awareness of any substantial objectivity – for example, of God or the law

– in which the will of man could participate and in which he could become aware of his own

being."[131] Hegel is thus offering a universal understanding of being that even accounts for

"African experience." There is a line of being that those who are considered inferior cannot

move beyond.   For Hegel, black people have not risen to the level of consciousness that

provides for a state, laws or religion, all of which have, for him, ontological significance; they

are stuck in an inferior state of being. These fairly direct assumptions deny the facts of existence

for the inhabitants of the African continent and the historical roots and traditions for those of the

Diaspora. As such, the implicit indigenous ontologies cannot be accessed philosophically

because of the hegemony of the philosophical precepts of the colonizers.

Fanon argues that there is "an impurity or flaw" in the worldview of the colonized that

precludes the possibility of ontology being the study of their being. What Fanon is referring to is

the notion that colonization is both internal and external. On the one hand, there is the

expropriation of land, resources, and labor from indigenous populations. However, the human

beings appropriated by the colonizers have new forms of values imposed on them by their

colonizers. The old system of values is valued within the imposed order of rank as inconsistent

and contradictory to such values, and in the process of colonization, the colonized person

internalizes the colonizers' values. These values, unlike the ones that are denigrated and

destroyed, are not rooted in the existence of their cultures, but impositions upon them and

fictions about them, forced upon them by those who colonized them. Thus, when Hegel

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130. G.W.F. Hegel, "Geographical Basis of World History," quoted in *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader*, ed.
E. Emmanuel (Cambridge, MA: Black well, 1997), 122.
131. Ibid., 127.

examines history and explains the essential qualities of Africa and black people, it is these presupposed values that are imposed and which act as intermediaries between the philosopher and being as such. Universal ontology does not so much examine existence but instead has already determined the nature of existence and has taken to clarifying aspects of it. Ontology, in the sense of describing being, cannot arrive at being because what it intends to describe is prescribed. In other words, ontology reveals itself to be a method of applying preconceived notions, as opposed to being a method of describing existence, which it claims to be doing.

Again, the worldview of the colonizers is imposed upon the colonized from without and cannot reflect the lived experience of the colonized in any meaningful way. Thus, to ontologize the being of black people would be to suppose that there are "black" experiences rooted in the actual lived existence, "black" as understood from the position of the colonized. However, it is only after the process of colonization has begun that the colonized can begin to think in terms of the order of rank of the colonizer. Prior to colonization their being did not exist in reference to Europe, whiteness, Enlightenment, etc. These people existed as what they called themselves: Igbo, Akan, Ashanti, Wolof, etc. In reference to this fact of colonialism Fanon states, "Beneath the body schema I had created a historical-racial schema. The data I used were provided not by 'remants of feelings and notions of the tactile, vestibular, kinesthetic, or visual nature' but by the Other, the white man, who had woven me out of a thousand details, anecdotes, and stories."[132] What Fanon highlights is a psycho-social consequence of colonization. It is "beneath" his physiological body that he has to go to understand this ordering of himself in relation to the people and things around him. What one expects to find below physiology is more physiology. Fanon, however, finds a history. He does not find universal being, but instead the lived experiences of colonization. It is the lived experience that ontology cannot access because of the

132. Fanon, *BSWM*, 91.

presumptive interpretative lens created to construct the existence of those now called black, native or other in the colonial paradigm. As Fanon's teacher Aimé Césaire notes "colonization = 'thingification.'"[133]   Instead of determining their own existence and values, they become things in the colonial value system that have meaning and value determined by the colonizer, things within the ontologies of the colonizer.

The colonized subject also stands in relation to other colonized subjects who all find their point of valuation within the order of rank of the colonizer. Again, Fanon notes that "not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man…the black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man."[134]   In the white valuation of blackness, blackness is merely another thing and cannot provide any resistance in the sense that their being bears down on the being of a white person. In terms of recognition, the conditions for its possibility cease when black and white entities encounter one another because white encounters black as an object and not as another being-for-itself and in-itself. Yet, Fanon's desire "is quite simply to be a man among men. I would have liked to enter our world young and sleek, a world we could build together."[135] Within the context of colonization, there is an impediment because the expectations that come with the valuation of blackness provide an immovable block that is difficult to overcome. "The white world, the only decent one, was preventing me from participating. It demanded that a man behave like a man. It demanded of me that I behave like a black man—or at least like a Negro."[136] The white order of rank has ranked black as different from and inferior to whiteness.   Much more, the white order of rank has a particular concept of black and has particular expectations of what black is like. So while Fanon's desire is to be man

133. Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 42.
134. Fanon, *BSWM*, 90.
135. Ibid., 92.
136. Ibid., 94.

amongst men, he is relegated to the station of "Negro." Fanon is constantly aware of his position

in the colonizer's hierarchy of externally imposed values because the values internalized become

expectations about how one should behave. Thus, within the context of a racist order of rank,

agents continually impose expectations upon him because of the appearance of black skin. What

brings this to the fore is the actual experience of having particular expectations about one's being

decided and imposed by those who colonized them. Fanon attempts to convey this throughout

the chapter with the intermingling of theory, expressions of desires and emotions, and

experience. What Fanon does is to provide some content to living in the context of these

expectations that others have of him and which he seems unable to change.

C. Repetitive Racial Drama

The initial line of "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" directly reflects the notion

of one's own being having been determined for them externally, from without. Fanon states:

"*Sale nègre!" ou simplement: "Tiens, un nègre.*"[137] Philcox translates this as "Dirty nigger!" or

simply "Look! A Negro!"[138] Philcox seems to be offering a nuanced translation that looks to

make obvious an implicit translation that Fanon may or may have not attempted to convey. The

French term 'nègre' is what people use to convey the term "nigger" or "Negro" or "black" in

English. The term also refers to ghost writers and its use came about in the 1700's during the

beginning of French colonial endeavors.[139] Regardless, "nègre" is typically a pejorative term.

As such, "nègre" is at the very least, an ambiguous term to translate into English because the

terms "Negro" and "black" do not carry the hurtful, pejorative connotations that "nigger" carries.

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137. Frantz Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1952), 88.
138. Fanon, *BSWM*, 89.
139. Jake Lamar, "How Do You Say the N-Word in French," *The Root* [blog], October 28, 2010.
http://www.theroot.com/views/how-do-you-say-n-word-french-0.

To put this differently, "Negro" was and "black" is now the preferred nomenclature in academic writing, while "nigger" has not been.

Being called a *nègre* focuses on the fact that the world that Fanon has been thrown into pegs him with a particular form of being, that of the "nègre." Yet, being apprehended as such is opposed to his true desire. Fanon states:

> I came into this world anxious to uncover the meaning of things, my soul desirous to be at the origin of the world, and here I am an object among other objects. Locked into this suffocating reification, I appealed to the Other so that his liberating gaze, gliding over my body suddenly smoothed the edges, would give me back the lightness of being I thought I had lost, and taking me out of the world put me back in the world. But just as I get to the other slope I stumble, and the Other fixes me with his gaze, his gestures and attitude, the same way you fix a preparation with a dye. I lose my temper, demand an explanation. . . Nothing done. I explode. Here are the fragments put together by another me."[140]

I have quoted Fanon at length again because this passage reveals not only his desire, but also the arrangement of the drama that the other "me" constructs as he reflects upon such experiences. Fanon also alludes to the Hegelian development of consciousness. Fanon reached the point where the only thing that could provide for recognition is another consciousness. While this movement seems in some way necessary for Hegel, what Fanon's experience reveals is that not all humans may experience recognition. This stems from how the Other interprets the other consciousness. The Other does not come with some faculty that allows them to automatically detect other forms of consciousness like itself. Rather, what Fanon is bringing to relief is that consciousness comes with a morality that it uses as a compass to understand and act in the world. It is the order of rank that reflects colonialism and anti-black racism that Fanon encounters in the

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140. Fanon, *BSWM*, 89.

Other as determining his being. This, unfortunately, puts Fanon in the problematic position of being "recognized" as *nègre*. In such a situation Fanon reacts again and again but there is never any resolution to the drama.

Fanon notes that "In the twentieth century the black man on his home territory is oblivious of the moment when his inferiority is determined by the Other."[141] While the black man is around people who seem similar to himself, there is no pressure to wonder about the origin and experience of the expectations to perform and to be a particular sort of way. However, when confronted with the presumptuous white gaze there is always something left that is desired by the Other. This desire on the part of the Other is revealed in how a child calls out that there is a *nègre* several times concluding with "*Maman*, look, a Negro; I'm scared!"[142] For their roles in the drama, children have learned to expect that the *nègre* is scary and Fanon is experienced by the Other as such, while having done nothing to create the notion. So while the experience began as a working through of the dialectic between body and space, it gave way to being recognized as *nègre*. "As a result," Fanon states, "the body schema, attacked in several places, collapsed, giving way to an epidermal racial schema."[143]

At this moment in the drama, Fanon becomes disoriented and laments how the Other eludes him. In response to this, Fanon thinks: "I was responsible not only for my body but also for my race and my ancestors. I cast an objective gaze over myself, discovered my blackness, my ethnic features; deafened by cannibalism, backwardness, fetishism, racial stigmas, slave traders, and above all, yes, above all, the grinning *Ya bon Banania*."[144] Recall that part of the colonial drama is the internalization of the Other's order of rank. A consequence is that the

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141. Ibid., 90.
142. Ibid., 91.
143. Ibid., 92.
144. Ibid.

colonized know and understand the colonizers' order of rank with the further upshot that the colonized can take the order of rank and apply it to their own being. When Fanon applies this lens to himself he implicitly accepts the Other's valuation of his own being. However these are fictions created by the other and are not valuations engendered from his very being. Fanon realizes and acknowledges this about the experience when he states, "Yet this reconsideration of myself, this thematization, was not my idea."[145] In keeping with the methodology of sociodiagnostics that Fanon uses throughout *Black Skin, White Masks*, his realization situates this problem as one engendered by the colonial situation. However, his hand is forced because he still is in the position of either accepting the values or rejecting them. Understood in this way, it becomes clear that the colonial, anti-black valuation that is imposed upon the colonized peoples provides the grounds for a reactionary response to such a dominant worldview. What Fanon reveals here is a third type of *ressentiment*, colonial r*essentiment*. While Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* tends to locate the problem in types and relationships, Fanon highlights the ways in which this phenomenon is engendered by the structure and process of colonialism. The colonizers impose *the* order of rank and the colonized *must* respond or react to it. Thus far, we have seen that colonial *ressentiment* has the reactionary quality characteristic, present also in the other forms of *ressentiment*. Furthermore, there is the quality of the reaction being directed outwardly. In this case, it is directed toward the values that denigrate Fanon's very existence.

Fanon decides to accept the order of rank but only on the condition that he is received as man amongst other men. "I wanted to be a man," Fanon claims, "and nothing but a man. There were some who wanted to equate me with my ancestors, enslaved and lynched: I decided that I would accept this."[146] At this moment however, Fanon's acceptance of his appearance is

145. Ibid.
146. Ibid.

understood in the context of a form of universalism whereby he shares a common history and set of experiences much in the same way a person who has reached a level of success and can look back on their personal genealogy and legacy. This seems to calm the situation and Fanon begins to reflect on the different experiences and expectations as related to this social context. However, as he reflects, a "student colleague … from Algeria" states, "[a]s long as the Arab in treated like a man, like one of us, there will be no viable answer." This comment is followed by the person claiming not to be guided by color prejudice and ends by him stating: "'It's not because he's black that he's less intelligent than we are.' 'I had a Senegalese colleague in the regiment, very smart."[147] In these reflections and comments two things are occurring. First, although Fanon has personally accepted his circumstance and now considers it in the context of overcoming struggles, this in no way changes the Other's expectations and preconceived notions about the world. Second, while the comment is not directed at him, it reminds him of his own situation.

Fanon further reflects and asks: "Where do I fit in? Or, if you like, where should I stick myself?"[148] He is then called out as a *nègre* by a little boy and third a person responds by stating "Ssh! You'll make him angry. Don't pay attention to him, monsieur, he doesn't realize you're just as civilized as we are."[149] With this Fanon notes that his body "was returned to me spread-eagled, disjointed, redone, draped in mourning on this white winter's day."[150] What has happened is that Fanon attempted to accept and move on, but others, including seemingly innocent white children appearing earlier in the racial drama, still operate with inappropriate expectations (as reflected in the mother's apology), schemas or stereotypes about blackness.

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147. Ibid., 93.
148. Ibid.
149. Ibid.
150. Ibid.

"The Negro is trembling with cold, the cold that chills the bones, the lovely little boy is trembling because he thinks the Negro is trembling with rage, the little boy runs to his mother's arms: '*Maman*, the Negro's going to eat me.'"[151] His being, as such, is continually being thrown back at him as a reminder of his bodily stigma about which he can do nothing. Acceptance, as such, does nothing to staunch any of the expectations that will inevitably be thrown at his being. Furthermore, acceptance seems like overcoming; however, he is still recognized as black and beholden to the order of rank established by the White, colonial powers. This means that he is still in a reactionary position, and in fact, Fanon does react. Fanon states: "I was prepared to forget everything, provided the world integrate men … Whereas I had every reason to vent my hatred and loathing, they were rejecting me? Whereas I was the one they should have begged and implored, I was denied the slightest recognition? I made up my mind, since it was impossible to rid myself of an *innate complex*, to assert myself as a BLACK MAN. Since the Other was reluctant to recognize me, there was only one answer: to make myself known."[152]

What is beginning to come to light in the unfolding script, is that Fanon is subject to *ressentiment*, a re-feeling or re-experiencing of this drama. What is of note here is that this type of *ressentiment* is distinguished from slave morality and the progressive development of the priestly *ressentiment*. Fanon finds a third type that is engendered by colonialism. Slave morality *ressentiment* has the characteristic moral valuation of evil/good that starts with deeming that what is outside is evil. Likewise, these types need external stimulus to act. Colonial *ressentiment*, however, features a similar valuation but is different in the sense that what is evil is what is outside for the colonizers, and inside for the colonized. In other words, what is evil is already defined as is what is good; the colonized are evil in relation to the good colonizer. The

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151. Ibid.
152. Ibid., 94-95.

colonized do not begin from the position of believing that life is hostile to their existence, but rather live in a world that *is* hostile to their perceived being. The colonized, additionally, internalize this order of rank and thus begin to feel responsibility for their "evil" being. So while Nietzsche's notion begins with types in the context of the human condition, Fanon reveals that *ressentiment* can be engendered by colonization. The imposition and internalization of the colonial order of rank leaves the colonized believing that life is hostile in the sense that one does not choose to be born with what is considered a representation and indication of evil. And finally, distinct from the progressive priestly *ressentiment* that stemmed from a relationship, the imposed colonial morality created a relationship.

As the drama continues, Fanon begins to elaborate how the notion of blackness is intimately tied with the appearance of the body. Fanon states: "I am overdetermined from the outside, I am a slave not to the 'idea' others have of me, but to my appearance."[153] It is his appearance to the Other that is inhibiting the possibility of overcoming this problem. For Fanon this creates a desire to be anonymous. Fanon exclaims: "Look, I'll agree to everything, on condition that I go unnoticed!"[154] However, like the child pointing out a *nègre*, his appearance is a focal point of understanding and communication between Fanon and the Other. This creates an ambiguity around his appearance. Is it really important or not? Fanon states: "When they like me, they tell me my color has nothing to do with it. When they hate me, they add that it's not because of my color. Either way, I am a prisoner of the vicious circle."[155] And while in the embrace of his appearance and its imposed meaning, Fanon decides to seek out "Negroes like myself" but finds otherwise; they have not reacted in the same manner as he. "To my horror,"

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153. Ibid., 95.
154. Ibid., 96.
155. Ibid.

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Fanon observes, "they reject me."[156] Even for those like him, his appearance still continues to be a point of contention, which only further confirms the importance of his skin tone. For Fanon, there was nothing he could do or know that could allow him to be recognized.

Fanon begins to learn that color prejudice is irrational and at that point latches onto the universality of reason as a means to overcome this problem. At the same time, his appeal to reason is limited by a standard set by the colonial order of rank. In presenting the irrationality to the white world, he would be doing it on their terms. Fanon notes: "Reason was assured of victory on every level. I reintegrated the brotherhood of man. But I was soon disillusioned."[157] Fanon realized that reason couldn't provide grounds for the Other to overcome their color prejudice because this prejudice is based on irrational grounds and impervious to the intervention of reason. Regarding this Fanon notes, "I was not mistaken. It was hatred; I was hated, detested and despised, not by my next-door neighbor or a close cousin, but by an entire race. I was up against something irrational … I personally would say for a man of reason, there is nothing more neurotic than contact with the irrational."[158] No amount of logic and reason can overcome the irrationality of such a belief, and this engenders the possibility of Fanon questioning his sanity.

Fanon also encounters the positive emancipation of people of color as a chance to emphasize that they arrived late to history. Fanon states: "Too late. Everything had been predicted, discovered, proved and exploited. My shaky hands grasped at nothing; the resources had been exhausted. Too late! But there again I want to know why."[159] So while Fanon may come with incisive reason, his thought and consideration are nothing original. He is just repeating what has already been found to be groundbreaking, important, or the truth. Fanon

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156. Ibid.
157. Ibid., 99.
158. Ibid., 97-98.
159. Ibid., 100.

questions why this is the case and postulates a possible response from a white man: "You have

come too late, much too late. There will always be a world—a white world—between you and

us: that impossibility on either side to obliterate the past once and for all."[160] The English

translation of the thought after the colon is a bit misleading because it clarifies what may be

better left as an ambiguity. The original French is: "*cette impossibilité pour l'autre de liquider

une fois pour toutes le passé.*"[161] A literal translation is "that impossibility for the other to once

and for all liquidate the past." Translating *l'autre* with the clarification that one can be the other

diminishes the ambiguity of the situation. The question is who is the other?   Within the white

supremacist colonial order of rank, black cannot possibly be of equal standing to white and

therefore cannot provide recognition. While the world seems to be approaching the

diminishment of color prejudice, Fanon's blackness continues to be a point of contention. The

order of rank appropriated by all in the colonial world is the white world. Even if it is the case

that one is counter to the predominant order of rank, the counter move's point of reference is the

dominant morality it is reacting against. Fanon's counter-thought is also revealing because the

notion of memory is brought forth. The other, whoever it may be, cannot remove (*liquider*) from

memory the events of the past. The comment leads to a very important question that will be

addressed in the following chapter: Why can the other not forget? Now, however, the drama

provides context to Fanon's claims that traditional Western ontology can, at best, provide

vacuous explanations, while also demonstrating the difficulties in ever achieving resolution of

this problem of recognition.

This lack of resolution sets the stage for another reaction by Fanon: "Understandably,

confronted with the affective ankylosis of the white man, I finally made up my mind to shout my

160. Ibid., 101.
161. Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*, 98.

blackness."[162] So while the notion of the other is ambiguous, Fanon points out that it is the white

man who is hardened in his irrational feelings toward the black man. Fanon had already tried to

forget, but he was continually reminded of his appearance. Instead of just accepting his

blackness, he now shouts it. This is Fanon's discovery of Negritude. Fanon states: "I had

rationalized the world, and the world had rejected me in the name of color prejudice. Since there

was no way we could agree on the basis of reason, I resorted to irrationality."[163] In this case,

Fanon seems to embrace a form of slave morality that levels all of their notions of good.

However, in the case of Negritude, it is a reaction to white supremacy that takes what is

stereotypical about the white's understanding of blackness and raises it to the *same* level of

importance as stereotypical whiteness. From the dominant perspective this looks to be a

bringing down, but from the colonized viewpoint, it seems to be coming up. However, the

consequence is that both forms of morality are reduced to the same importance. Still, with

Negritude, what is raised up to the level of equal importance to white is now good and essential.

So while black was evil, in the dominant white supremacist order of rank, within the context of

Negritude, black is a necessary good in the world. So a further upshot is that in revaluing black,

Fanon's body is revalued and given new importance.

Again, the leveling quality of Negritude creates a new order of rank for what is already

understood in the white supremacist morality as evil. This is an interesting twist on the

movement from good/bad to evil/good that is indicative of the development of the priestly-

aristocratic *ressentiment*. With Negritude what was evil is now good. As will be developed in

the next chapter, colonial *ressentiment* is a reaction to slave morality *ressentiment*. But this

movement cashes out to elevating a base stereotype to a level of social importance. Negritude

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162. Fanon, *BSWM*, 101.
163. Ibid., 102.

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can be encapsulated in Leopold Senghor's maxim that ""Emotion is Negro, as reason is Hellenic"[164] While white people are responsible for developing the abstract disconnected endeavors of science and reason, the Negro has a connection to the earth through their predominant emotional quality. This quality, coupled with the embrace of common stereotypes about African peoples leads Fanon to note: "Black magic, primitive mentality, animism, and animal eroticism—all this surges toward me. All this typifies people who have not kept pace with the evolution of humanity. Or, if you prefer, they constitute third-rate humanity."[165] To Fanon, this choice of accepting Negritude seemed to be forced by the situation that gave rise to such an embrace.[166] Still, by espousing Negritude's revaluation he is offered a revaluation of his appearance that placed him in direct relation with the world. Fanon exclaims: "Yes, we niggers are backward, naïve, and free. For us the body is not in opposition to what you call the soul. We are in the world."[167] Now Fanon's appearance is no longer a representation of blight on the world, but a representation of the world. Fanon states: "The white man wants the world; he wants it for himself. He discovers he is the predestined master of the world. He enslaves it. His relationship with the world is one of appropriation. But there are values that can be served only with my sauce. As a magician I stole from the white man a 'certain world,' lost to him and his kind. When that happened the white man must have felt an aftershock he was unable to identify, being unused to such reactions. The reason was that above the objective world of plantations and banana and rubber trees, I had subtly established the real world. The essence of the world was my property. Between the world and me there was a relation of coexistence. I had

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164. Leopold Senghor, *Liberté I, Négritude et Humanism*, (Paris: Seuil, 1964), 288.
165. Fanon, *BSWM*, 105.
166. Ibid., 105-106.
167. Ibid., 106.

rediscovered the primordial One."[168] It is the connection that black has with earth and existence that grants a special status to these types of people. While white folks were attempting to take the earth and make it their dominion and property, black people had what white folks desired to accumulate. So despite being backward and primitive in essence, that sort of being, revalued as such, gave a positive unique meaning to their existence. Whites could not be part of this unique and particular form of existence. This seems to be instantiating Hegel's master/slave dialectic whereby the slave consciousness is the one that knows how to cultivate the earth. However, this is not the case and Fanon is rebuffed again.   It is explained to him that black people represent an already surpassed evolutionary stage of humanity's progress. About this Fanon states: "the white man explained to me that genetically I represented a phase. 'Your distinctive qualities have been exhausted by us. We have had our back-to-nature mystics such as you will never have. Take a closer look at history and you'll understand how far this fusion has gone.' I then had the feeling that things were repeating themselves. My originality has been snatched from me."[169] Fanon realizes that his move to Negritude was, like his other reactions, met with white people putting him back in his place, the place of an inferior black entity. What is more, he could not even be uniquely inferior in his black primitiveness, as the white man reveals to him that his white primitive culture far surpassed that of black people's.

The final move in the drama of this repeating reactionary model is how Negritude is intellectually put in its place. Fanon claims that it is with Sartre's "intellectualization of *black* existence."[170] Through this intellectualization Sartre places Negritude in the world-historical context, which, as a consequence, ascribes teleological significance to the movement. This situates black existence and Negritude in a light that allows other white people to understand

168. Ibid., 107.
169. Ibid., 108.
170. Ibid., 113.

black existence, i.e. in terms of the dominant white supremacist order of rank. In this case it is Sartre's move to put Negritude in its proper place as a negative moment in the grand synthesis that would eventually lead to the development of class-consciousness. Reiterating this repetitive process of seeking recognition in light of the racial fictions that mediate the relationship between people of color and whites, Fanon states:

> So they were countering my irrationality with rationality, my rationality with the 'true rationality. I couldn't hope to win. I tested my heredity. I did a complete check of my sickness. I wanted to be typically black—that was out of the question. I wanted to be white—that was a joke. And when I tried to claim my negritude intellectually as a concept, they snatched it away from me. They proved to me that my reasoning was nothing but a phase in the dialectic.[171]

Either way Fanon attempted to react, he was reminded of the expectations the other had of his appearance. This even occurred on the philosophical plane with his friend Sartre. Sartre's placement of Negritude in the meta-narrative of the necessary development of class-consciousness, may give Negritude world-historical significance but it did, at the same time, devalue race.

Race is devalued in the sense that Sartre's claims about the essence of Negritude overlook living with the other's expectations about the appearance of blackness. Concerning the significance of the meaning of the dialectical movement, Fanon states: "And there you have it; I did not create meaning for myself: the meaning was already there."[172] Through uncovering the true meaning of Negritude, Sartre has demonstrated that no further meaning beyond where the movement sits within in the context of dialectical materialism is available. Moreover, what is

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171. Ibid., 111.
172. Ibid., 113.

implicit is a form of determinism. Although individual agents may be able to do otherwise, the grand movement of all agents is towards the purpose of the development of class-consciousness. Regarding this Fanon states: "The dialectic that introduces necessity as a support for my freedom expels me from myself. It shatters my impulsive position."[173] This proposition leads to the inhibition of the freedom associated with spontaneity. This, furthermore, communicates what seems to be a homogenous black existence that again restrains the already limited freedom and disregards the particular experiences of particular agents. As Fanon points out: "the black experience is ambiguous, for there is not one Negro—there are many black men."[174] Black experience classified in world-historical terms overlooks the varied experiences that Fanon struggles to illuminate.

Wrapping up his thoughts about black existence, Fanon states: "Between the white man and me there is irremediably a relationship of transcendence."[175] Fanon is reiterating the fact that the relationship between people of color and white are the racial fictions. Furthermore, these racial fictions place and justify white supremacy. The whites are humans while others must measure up to their ever changing expectations. About this situation Fanon notes: "The black man is a toy in the hands of the white man. So in order to break the vicious circle, he explodes."[176] However, the explosions don't seem to resolve the situation. The world has not changed, only the individual agents' way of reacting to it. Relating these concepts Fanon states: "From time to time you feel like giving up. Expressing the real is an arduous job. But when you take into your head to express existence, you will very likely encounter nothing but the

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173. Ibid., 114.
174. Ibid., 115.
175. Ibid., 117.
176. Ibid., 119.

nonexistent."[177] Fanon may share Sartre's desire to arrive at truth, but with race continuing to be the imposed intermediary between people in a colonized world, Fanon continues to find that he is responding to a structure with deeply rooted beliefs and expectation related to racial appearance. This is found even when Fanon encounters what seem to be moments of sympathy from others. He relates a story of a war amputee telling a person of color to "'[g]et used to your color the way I got used to my stump. We are both casualties.'"[178] Although this translation is in keeping with the wartime theme of the sentence, "casualities" misses what seems to be point Fanon is making. The original text is "*nous sommes tous deux des accidentés*,"[179] which can be translated literally as "we are both *victims*." The Philcox translation makes the connection between a lost limb and skin color seem like some casualty of war. However, there is a great difference in that the veteran went to war and while he was at war, lost one part of his body: what is amputated from persons of color in a racist world is their existence on the human level. Fanon was thrown into an already colonized world that valued black inferior to white, and he might easily heed the admonition of the veteran. But still, Fanon is correct to resist such advice because through resistance he maintains the possibility of recognition. And in this way, he can direct his resistance and take back his humanity. Against this and finishing up the reflection on blackness Fanon states: "Yet, with all my being, I refused to accept this amputation . . . I was made to give and they prescribe for me the humility of the cripple. When I opened my eyes yesterday I saw the sky in total revulsion. I tried to get up but the eviscerated silence surged toward me with paralyzed wings. Not responsible for my acts, at the crossroads between Nothing and Infinity, I began to weep."[180]

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177. Ibid., 116.
178. Ibid., 119.
179. Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*, 113.
180. Fanon, *BSWM*, 119.

Fanon does not accept such a construal of his form of existence. Although there are elements of cutting off, what is cut off is the possibility of mutual recognition. Considered as such, the cutting off is a psycho-existential drama rather than an operation that may actually help to allow a person to continue to live and be recognized. The ultimate consequence is that because this process has reached this point, Fanon is disgusted with life and finds himself confronted with visceral silence that seemed to contain the possibility of fleeing, but he could not. He was now stuck, stuck between the racial fictions that amount to nothing, and recognition that amounts to everything.

IV: Final Considerations

What this reflection on Fanon's thought in relation to Nietzsche's notion of *ressentiment* has attempted to illuminate is a third type of *ressentiment* that is found to have a social genesis. When *Black Skin, White Masks* is read with the knowledge that the overriding concern is overcoming reactionary colonial existence, what is found is that it is an extended discussion of colonial *ressentiment*. When this is considered in the context of relating the experience of being black in a white supremacist order of rank, it is clear that chapter seven, "The Black Man and Recognition," particularly the second part, "the Black and Hegel," is a philosophical clarification and critique of Hegel's notion of recognition. There is no resolution between white and black subjects, just continued misrecognition. What the "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" provides is a detailed testimony and account of experiencing the lack of recognition. It reveals that the experiences of attempting to overcome the white supremacist racial vision of the world are reactionary whichever way you attempt to respond. Within the context of colonialism, the white supremacist order of rank is hostile toward black. This, as such, reveals that the white supremacist imposition of their order of rank engenders a reality in which people who are

perceived to appear a particular way have certain expectations about their behavior, and that these people about whom the morality is concerned have no say about the expectations. They have no choice but to react. This reaction, though, is not a product of their genetic make-up but rather, from what Fanon posits and discusses, can only be understood in the context of a lived life of shared values and expectations. Thus, Fanon conceptualizes colonial *ressentiment* by using his socio-diagnostic. To understand the reactions of the particular individual psychology means knowing the social conditions that shaped the psychology and reactions. For the colonized, then, *ressentiment* is a product of their existential circumstance, their native ways being denigrated, and having the white supremacist order of rank imposed upon them to replace their old values. *Ressentiment*, accordingly, is revealed to be a prevalent feature of colonialism. When values are laid down, parameters of reaction are set. Once reaction to imposition happens, this begins the process of psychological colonization. Continued resistance or eventual acquiescence reveals the inculcation and persistence of the imposed order. As such, r*essentiment* is revealed to be a vehicle that helps perpetuate the colonial white supremacist order.

The continued repetition of the same drama, the attempt to assert oneself to gain recognition, leads to one final consequence. In neither "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" nor "The Black and Hegel" is there any resolution to the repeated drama. Fanon cries at the end of "*L'expérience vécue du Noir*" and notes that the goal is to be actional at the end of the "The Black and Hegel." There is an *aporia* that accompanies the colonial drama. So long as one is trapped in the colonial drama one seems doomed to repeat the same process of assertion and rebuffing. Fanon does seem hopeful that there is a possibility of stopping this vicious cycle of colonial *ressentiment*. It is later in Fanon's life that he seems to find a possible resolution to this problem, which is violence. This resolution is discussed in Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* and

suggests that the means of overcoming could be revolutionary violence because of the cathartic possibilities as well as the active agency associated with such violence. Thus violence is conceived as being a means to overcoming colonial *ressentiment*. Furthermore, and pertinent to this project is that Fanon's writings about violence coincide with Nietzsche's conceptual understanding of morality. In the colonial context violence already exists when the order of rank is imposed on a people who now no longer begin to understand themselves from a particular perspective of one's lived life, but from imposed value hierarchies. Nietzsche, Fanon, violence, morality and the possibility of overcoming the colonial order of rank will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

ON VIOLENCE AND MORALITY

I: Introduction

In this chapter I will be examining the thought of Nietzsche and Fanon around the topic of violence and morality and the development of what Nietzsche calls "bad conscience." What I will be demonstrating is that both thinkers share the similar underlying belief that morality is created, wrought, perpetuated, and overcome through violence. While this will be fairly straightforward to show, what is of further interest and importance is how each thinker provides some illumination of the other philosopher's thought. It is here that I will reveal that what Nietzsche offers in support of Fanon's concerns are the content and form of the morality that is exported to the European colonies: the slave morality of bad conscience. What Fanon offers on Nietzsche's thought is an example of how colonialism transforms the exported morality: bad conscience is re-externalized for the colonist and internalized by the colonized.

In what follows, I will delineate Nietzsche's understanding of the development of morality working from his most general considerations to his explication of the morality of bad conscience that he claims to be the dominant morality of European cultures. What I intend to demonstrate is that a significant feature of Nietzsche's conceptualization of the development of morality is violence, and that the inculcation of a morality is predicated on violence. After this, I will attend to Fanon and violence and show that he believes that a core feature of both colonization and decolonization is violence. In the final section, I will address how each thinker

illuminates the discussion of the other, arguing that Nietzsche offers the form and content of the morality that is exported to the European colonies while Fanon describes the colonial transformation of said morality.

II: Nietzsche, Morality and Violence

In the Second Essay of *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche provides a narrative about the development of bad conscience. The narrative begins with general considerations about the development of morality and works to arrive at what Nietzsche finds to be the interesting and peculiar morality of modern Western cultures, that of bad conscience. Bad conscience is a type of slave morality that has come to represent the predominant moral configuration of the contemporary world. It is the morality of bad conscience, which Nietzsche thinks of as a sickness and particular to the masses of Europeans, that the priestly caste revalued as noble. Towards the end of the essay Nietzsche reflects upon Europe's moral heritage of bad conscience. He writes: "We modern men are the heirs of the conscience-vivisection and self-torture of a millennia."[181] Nietzsche and his contemporaries live in the shadow of this bad conscience, which is characterized as a painful split. Moreover, this split comes with the added feature that the pain is inflicted upon the subject of the split. Bad conscience's hierarchy of values assumes that the ground for life and values, their body and existence, are evil. In developing the narrative of bad conscience, Nietzsche is providing its form of valuation (i.e., slave morality) and the particular order of rank (i.e., content) that characterizes European cultures.

The essay begins with a general set of questions about the origin of promise-making. Nietzsche asks: "To breed an animal *with the right to make promises*—is not this the paradoxical task that nature has set itself in the case of man? is it not the real problem regarding man?" These questions set the tone for the essay and get at the heart of the problem that Nietzsche

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181. Nietzsche, *GM*, II: 24.

wants to address about what it takes for a human to consider oneself and others capable of making and keeping promises. What makes this problem more vexing and paradoxical for Nietzsche is the fact of forgetfulness. For humans, there is a tremendous capacity to forget the vast majority of sensory data that comes within the purview of our awareness. Regarding this aspect of the human condition Nietzsche notes: "Forgetting…is rather an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression, that is responsible for the fact that what we experience and absorb enters our consciousness as little while we are digesting it (one might call the process 'inpsychation') as does the thousandfold process, involved in physical nourishment– so called incorporation." Forgetting allows humans to filter out a great many of our experiences, allowing for psychological steadiness as well as the possibility of joy, calm and hope in the face of the harshness and difficulty of existence. Humans, however, have the capacity to remember "with the aid of which forgetfulness is abrogated in certain cases—namely in cases where promises are made." For Nietzsche, memory works when it overcomes the extremely powerful force of forgetfulness. Yet, promise making is more than just remembering a commitment, but involves a myriad of assumptions and practices that are now taken for granted including knowing the meaning of making a promise and considering future possible contingencies. Continuing this line of thought Nietzsche states: "Man himself must first of all have become *calculable, regular, necessary,* even in his own image of himself, if he is to be able to stand security for *his own future.*" Nietzsche's initial considerations about the problems around the human condition and the human ability to promise reveal that by considering memory to be the weaker faculty in comparison to the propensity to forget, time and circumstances are needed to develop the ability to make promises. As such, the ability to promise is a product of a process of overcoming our dominant proclivity to forget. [182]

182. Ibid., II: 1.

For Nietzsche, contemporary humans are at the end of the long process that allows us to take for granted our ability to make and keep promises. This process represents the development of responsibility.[183] According to Nietzsche, the period that made humans calculable and capable of making and keeping promises is called the era of the morality of mores. This is the historical era when "one calls individual actions good or bad quite irrespective of their motives but solely on account of their useful or harmful consequences."[184] While Clark notes that Nietzsche is generally referring to "the system of laws and customary practice found in ancient communities," the particular community is of little importance.[185] Nietzsche states: "how the tradition has arisen is here a matter of indifference, and has, in any event, nothing to do with good and evil or with any kind of imminent categorical imperative; it is above all directed at the preservation of the *community*, a people."[186] What is important is the survival of the community and the good that is apparent in the world seems to be reflected in the continued thriving of the group, of the herd. Interestingly, there seems to be little remembrance of the morality of the mores period in human history. Nietzsche notes that man eventually "forgets the origin of these designations and believes that the qualities of 'good' and 'evil' are inherent in the actions themselves, irrespective of their consequences."[187] The period is forgotten; however, the result of the period, the ability to make promises, lives on to this very day.

What characterizes the morality of the mores period and the development of a conscience whereby the weak memory overcame the powerful forgetfulness of the human condition? Nietzsche states: "One can well believe that the answers and methods for solving this primeval

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183. Ibid., II: 2.
184. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human,* 39.
185. Maudemarie Clark, "Nietzsche's Immoralism and the Concept of Morality", in *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche's the Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Richard Schact (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 26.
186. Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, 96.
187. Ibid., 39.

problem were not precisely gentle; perhaps indeed there was nothing more fearful and uncanny

in the whole prehistory of man than his *mnemotechnics*. 'If something is to stay in the memory it

must be burned in: only that which never ceases to *hurt* stays in the memory'—this is a main

clause of the oldest (unhappily also the most enduring) psychology on earth."[188] Nietzsche's

ideas about the inculcation of responsibility, conscience and guilt can be reduced to a thesis

about the importance of pain and violence in this process. To ensure one remembers important

demands of the community, it must be seared into the memory through pain that overwhelms our

habit of forgetting. What Nietzsche is pointing out is not all that controversial; it is a form of

folk wisdom about what humans tend to remember out of all their experiences. One only has to

think about how traumatic and painful experiences tend to be difficult to forget. Nietzsche's

vision of our moral development as a species is quite stark and dark, as primitive life is

conceived of as being fraught with pain and violence. Pain considered in this context provides

the grounds for one to remember some important concepts and commandments.

For Nietzsche, the poorer the human memory functioned, the more horrific and ghastly

those people's way of life seems to appear.[189] That is because in order to exist, the people had to

remember particular things that would ensure the survival of the community, and to ensure no

transgression and encourage continued existence (i.e., to help a member remember), a very

severe, violent and painful way of behaving was demanded. In this context, a morality becomes

instilled into the members. About this Nietzsche notes: "a few ideas are to be rendered

inextinguishable, ever present, unforgettable, fixed, with the aim of hypnotizing the entire

nervous and intellectual system with these "fixed ideas"—and the ascetic procedures and modes

of life are means of freeing these ideas from the competition of all other ideas, so as to make

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188. Nietzsche, *GM*, II: 3.
189. Ibid.

them 'unforgettable.'"[190] The inculcation process has an ascetic feature in that by remembering,

one foregoes a myriad impulses and possible experiences in order to stay in line. This denial of

impetuous desire and impulse allows one to focus their concern on what is most important, the

concepts and demands of the community mores branded into their memory.

As an example Nietzsche considers what it took for Germany to become an intellectual

country. "These Germans," Nietzsche proclaims, "employed fearful means to acquire a

memory." He then lists an array of horrific punishments employed by the Germans throughout

their history that range from stoning or quartering to boiling or flaying alive. Nietzsche notes:

"with the aid of such images and procedures one finally remembers five or six 'I will not's,' in

regard to which one had given one's *promise* so as to participate in the advantages of society." It

is through experiencing first hand or witnessing the horrific, painful violent punishments that one

was able to overcome their forgetful tendencies and in doing so implicitly swore a promise in

exchange for life in the community. With time, the Germans finally came to be known to be a

nation of thinking people. About this process Nietzsche notes: "Ah, reason, seriousness, mastery

over the affects, the whole somber thing called reflection, all these prerogatives and showpieces

of man: how dearly they have been bought! how much blood and cruelty lie at the bottom of all

'good things'!" Considering the development of conscience in the context of the best

mnemotechnics to which human beings respond, one realizes that a conscience is wrought in and

through violence.[191]

For Nietzsche, the narrative of the development of making promises and thereby creating

a sense of responsibility is the story of conscience. Nietzsche states: "The proud awareness of

the extraordinary privilege of *responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power

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190. Ibid.
191. Ibid.

over oneself and over fate, has in his case penetrated to the profoundest depths and become

instinct, the dominating instinct. What will he call this dominating instinct, supposing he feels

the need to give it a name? The answer is beyond doubt: this sovereign man calls it his

conscience."[192] The awareness of the particular agent's capability of making and keeping

promises is characterized as conscience. Conscience is instantiated in a particular agent, but the

agents are part of the larger herd. The story of conscience, as such, is a narrative about the herd

acquiring this sense of joy in their freedom and responsibility. This conscience, furthermore, is

that from which bad conscience is differentiated. The term conscience suggests a moral

framework. With ancient conscience, the order of rank implicit is an archaic notion of justice

that assumes some equivalence between injury/loss and pain. For Nietzsche, this equivalence is

engendered by the archetypal relationship between the creditor and the debtor.[193]   This

relationship connotes the marketplace, the place where the masses gather and partake in

commerce. The herd's thinking, according to Nietzsche, is dominated by calculative thinking.

He notes that, "[s]etting prices, determining values, contriving equivalences, exchanging …

preoccupied the earliest thinking of man to so great an extent that in a certain sense they

constitute thinking as such."[194] The masses of humans are driven by an underlying logic that is

focused on determining exchange values. Out of this type of thinking arose the gross

generalization "that everything has its price; *all* things can be paid for."[195] This form of thinking

extends beyond objects of exchange to include the value of oneself in relation to another person.

So in the context of the creditor/debtor relationship Nietzsche observes that when herd members

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192. Ibid, II: 2.
193. Ibid, II: 4.
194. Ibid, II: 8.
195. Ibid.

"encountered another person, that one person first *measured himself* against another."[196] The

order of rank that is used to provide the right judgment about these measurements and

equivalences, Nietzsche calls justice. This presupposition provides the order of rank by which

these peoples' consciences hierarchically organize their life and commitments.

Nietzsche characterizes the primordial notion of justice as such: "Justice on this

elementary level is the good will among parties of approximately equal power to come to terms

with one another, to reach an 'understanding' by means of a settlement—and to *compel* parties of

a lesser power to reach a settlement among themselves."[197] For Nietzsche, justice has two pieces

and each piece refers to a different relationship and slightly differing orders of rank. The first

piece is between equal powers. This can be cast as simply the promise made between a debtor

and creditor. Describing commitment on the part of the debtor Nietzsche states: "To inspire

trust in his promise to repay, to provide guarantee of the seriousness and sanctity of his promise,

to impress repayment as a duty, an obligation upon his own conscience, the debtor made a

contract with the creditor and pledged that if he should fail to repay he would substitute

something else that he 'possessed,' something he had control over; for example, his body, his

wife, his freedom, or even his life."[198] In the simplest sense, the debtor promises to pay back

whatever s/he has asked for from the creditor. However, implicit in the agreement is that the

debtor is aware that recompense for injury to the creditor (i.e., failure to pay one's debt) is

retaining the debtor's objects including his/her own body. The painful reminder of the possible

consequences for failing one's obligation impresses upon the debtor subject the implicit self-

mastery. They implicitly claim to measure up to both the obligation, and the possible pain that

could be inflicted upon them in the case of failing to comply with said obligation. On the part of

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196. Ibid.
197. Ibid.
198. Ibid., II: 5.

these creditors, in the moment of a debtor's failure to meet the obligation, they are entitled to seek compensation equal to their loss.

While this may seem like a punishment that intends to teach the guilty debtor some lesson, seeking compensation has little concern with the state of the debtor's conscience. Instead, "throughout the greater part of human history punishment was *not* imposed *because* one held the wrongdoer responsible for his deed, thus *not* on the presupposition that only the guilty one should be punished: rather, as parents still punish their children, from anger at some harm or injury, vented on the one who caused it—but this anger is held in check and modified by the idea that every injury has its *equivalent* and can be paid back, even if only through the *pain* of the culprit."[199] The underlying logic is that there is some equivalence between meting out pain and the loss experienced. This calculation is what is supposed to provide limits to the pain inflicted upon the defaulting debtor. What the creditor ultimately gains though is joy in inflicting pain. Nietzsche notes: "an equivalence is provided by the creditor's receiving, in place of a literal compensation for an injury (thus in place of money, land, possessions of any kind), a recompense in the form of a kind of pleasure—the pleasure of being allowed to vent his power freely upon one who is powerless."[200] The willingness and ability to vent one's cruel desires indicates a power and mastery *over* another being that is not equal to the challenge of keeping promises. For the average herd member, this allows them to partake in what it feels like to be a genuine Master type. About this Nietzsche writes: "This enjoyment will be greater the lower the creditor stands in the social order, and can easily appear to him as a most delicious morsel, indeed as a foretaste of higher rank. In 'punishing' the debtor, the creditor participates in a *right of the masters*: at last he, too, may experience for once the exalted sensation of being allowed to

199. Ibid., II: 4.
200. Ibid., II: 5.

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despise and mistreat someone as 'beneath him.'"[201] As the basic creditor/debtor relationship

stands between individuals, the agreement assumes approximate equality among the parties to

the commitment. In this way, the creditor and debtor can come to an understanding of what each

party is entitled to.

The second piece of justice, that of the more powerful force compelling lesser forces to

agree, is best seen in how the relationship of the creditor/debtor repeats on the level of the

relationship between the whole community and individual members. Nietzsche remarks that

while "still retaining the criteria of prehistory (this prehistory is in any case present in all ages or

may always reappear): the community, too, stands to its members in that same vital basic

relation, that of the creditor to his debtor."[202] The community stands as a power over the

individual members and can compel particular members to come to terms. This aspect of justice

and its order of rank assume an asymmetry of power between the strong community and

individual members. What the community provides is the limits and laws that individual subjects

promise to obey in exchange for the benefits of living in the community. When one breaks the

law, s/he breaks their promise to the community whose power can be used against the

transgressor. Regarding this Nietzsche notes, "The lawbreaker is a debtor who has not merely

failed to make good the advantages and advance payments bestowed upon him but has actually

attacked his creditor: therefore he is not only deprived henceforth of all these advantages and

benefits, as is fair—he is also reminded *what these benefits are really worth*. The wrath of the

disappointed creditor, the community, throws him back into the savage and outlaw state against

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201. Ibid.
202. Ibid., II: 9.

which he has hitherto been protected: it thrusts him away—and now every kind of hostility may be vented upon him."[203]

The community's growth in strength leads to a transformation in how the community addresses lawbreakers. Nietzsche notes: "the whole from now on carefully defends the malefactor against this anger, especially those he has directly harmed, and takes him under its protection."[204] The community now offers the lawbreaker protection from the revenge of the particular agents who were injured, but also isolates the transgressor in order to avoid further bothering the community. In this way, the community is compelling the victim to come to terms and *not* seek revenge. Then arises a distinction between the doer of the deed and the deed itself. This distinction allows for the viability of justice's core assumption that "every crime [i]s in some sense *dischargeable*."[205] This is because the deed is valued as bad while the person is merely the entity that did the bad thing. In other words, the wrong doer is not inherently unredeemable, because the particular deed can be discharged through some form of equivalent punishment. Nietzsche believes that communities can become so powerful that peccadilloes against the law are settled not by recompense and punishment but by mercy. In this case, justice has transformed from equal exchange to the more powerful demonstrating the ability to compel through benevolence. About this development of justice Nietzsche notes: "it ends, as does every good thing on earth, by *overcoming itself*. This self-overcoming of justice: one knows the beautiful name it has given itself—mercy; it goes without saying that mercy remains the privilege of the most powerful men, or better, his—beyond the law."[206]

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203. Ibid.
204. Ibid., II: 10.
205. Ibid.
206. Ibid.

Thus far Nietzsche has developed a story of conscience and justice as the self-mastery of the herd. While the story is about the herd that notoriously bears the *ressentiment* of slave morality, Nietzsche contends that his ancient concept of justice is *not* rooted in *ressentiment*.[207] Rather, the law the community instantiates is an attempt to thwart reactionariness. "[L]aw represents on earth," Nietzsche writes, "…the struggle *against* reactive feelings, the war conducted against them on the part of the active and aggressive powers who employed some of their strength to impose measure and bounds upon the excesses of the reactive pathos and to compel it to come to terms. Wherever justice is practiced and maintained one sees a stronger power seeking a means of putting an end to the senseless raging of *ressentiment* among the weaker powers that stand under it."[208] With law and its concomitant notion of justice, the ever burgeoning *ressentiment* of slave morality can be hemmed-in and redirected. This occurs with the imposition of an order of rank by an active Master type. This refers to the second piece of justice as the active, powerful Master compels the slavish herd to come to terms with one another and with themselves. By doing this, the Masters establish a state and society for the masses, and most fundamentally an order of rank.

But as is the case with the creation of any morality, its inculcation is violent. About the development of the state Nietzsche notes that: "some pack of blonde beasts of prey, a conqueror a master race which, organized for war and with the ability to organize, unhesitatingly lays its terrible claws upon a populace perhaps tremendously superior in numbers but still formless and nomad. That is after all how the 'state' began on earth."[209] Master types come and violently lay down the moral order of rank. This violent process changes the mass of people, who are without form or direction but still full of their latent *ressentiment* of slave morality, to a people with an

207. Ibid., II: 11.
208. Ibid.
209. Ibid., II: 17.

ordered way of living. Noting the pervasiveness of the violence Nietzsche states: "the welding

of the hitherto unchecked and shapeless populace into a firm form was not only instituted by an

act of violence but also carried to its conclusion by nothing but acts of violence."[210] While the

end result is culture and civilization, this process began with violence and continued to be

violently instituted until a coherent people developed. However, it is in the context of society

and peace that the sickness of bad conscience developed. This is not to say that the imposition of

order by the Master types is the cause of bad conscience. Rather Nietzsche points out that the

imposed order was only a necessary condition for the growth of bad conscience. He notes: "It is

not in *them* [the Master types] that the 'bad conscience' developed, that goes without saying—

but it would not have developed *without them*."[211] The problem of bad conscience is with the

masses. It is *in* the masses (i.e., because of their characteristic *ressentiment* of slave morality) to

create bad conscience but, and this is consistent with the slavish types' need for external stimulus

to act, needed the impetus of stronger Master types to prompt the process.

The law and order that the Masters establish for the slavish masses sets the strictures and

parameters of the particular agent's behavior. In society one cannot go about discharging drives

and desires when and where one wants. One's spontaneity and freedom of will is impinged upon

to such a degree that humans are "reduced to thinking, inferring, reckoning, co-ordinating cause

and effect."[212] For Nietzsche, though, what is not discharged outwardly is inevitably discharged

inwardly. He notes: "All instincts that do not discharge themselves outwardly *turn inward*—this

is what I call the *internalization* of man."[213] What this violence did in laying down the morality

for the herd to follow was inhibit and impinge upon the will to power of the particular agents.

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210. Ibid.
211. Ibid.
212. Ibid., II: 16.
213. Ibid.

Instead of having the freedom to actualize their desires and drives, these are stifled and redirected back toward the subject. While this redirection could be problematic, what this internalization offers the reactive types is the feeling of self-mastery. "[F]undamentally it is the same active force that is at work on a grander scale in those artists of violence and organizers who build states, and that here, internally, on a smaller and pettier scale, directed backward."[214] The Master types ground the process of the development of the conscience of a herd. Yet, with Nietzsche's narrative, bad conscience is not a necessary outcome of the development of conscience. Bad conscience, for Nietzsche, is a moral configuration specific to Western cultures.

The development of bad conscience begins as a form of mimicking self-mastery, but eventually this process becomes moralized. In calling it bad conscience, Nietzsche is using the noble form of valuation of good/bad. In this form of valuation, what is bad is a poor copy of that which is affirming itself as good. As such, conscience with the archaic notion of justice as its order of rank stands as the model that bad conscience mimics poorly. However, what underlies the deficient copy is moralization. To moralize, for Nietzsche, is to use the value form evil/good. In the West, the moralization of the conscience (i.e., the development of bad conscience) coalesces around the Christian God. The grounds for a Christian-type god lie in the creditor/debtor relationship transcending community/individual dyad. This movement to the level of gods begins when the community develops a historical understanding of itself in relation to past generations. Nietzsche notes: "The conviction reigns that it is only through the sacrifices and accomplishments of the ancestors that the tribe *exists*—and that one has to *pay them back* with sacrifices and accomplishments: one thus recognizes a *debt* that constantly grows greater, since these forebears never cease, in their continued existence as powerful spirits, to accord the

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214. Ibid., II: 18.

tribe new advantages and new strength."[215] The past generations are creditors to current generations. What the current generation debtors owe is for the sacrifice of past generations who provided the foundation of the edifice of the current and future generation's way of life. Nietzsche continues: "If one imagines this rude kind of logic carried to its end, then the ancestors of the *most powerful* tribes are bound to eventually to grow to monstrous dimensions through the imagination of growing fear and to recede into the darkness of the divinely uncanny and unimaginable: in the end the ancestor must necessarily be transfigured into a *god*."[216] As great and powerful communities grow in duration and stature, particular great and powerful ancestors transform into gods. The debt is now transferred to the realm of divinities. The gods are now the creditors with the more powerful gods commanding more debt.

About the Christian god, Nietzsche notes that this universal, singular being's creation was "the maximum god attained so far, [and] was therefore accompanied by the maximum feeling of guilty indebtedness on earth."[217] With the Christian God, though, people have moralized the debt. Nietzsche notes: "The moralization of the concepts guilt and duty, their being pushed back into the *bad* conscience…the *aim* now is to preclude pessimistically, once and for all, the prospect of a final discharge; the *aim* now is to make the glance recoil disconsolately from an iron impossibility; the *aim* now is to run back the concepts 'guilt' and 'duty.'"[218] Its extreme assumptions reveal bad conscience to be a deficient copy of self-mastery. With healthy conscience, the assumption is that debts can be discharged and there is joy in being able to be a promising animal.   However with a bad conscience, the debt is made impossible to repay and the very conditions that provide the possibility for making such a judgment: life and the body,

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215. Ibid., II: 19.
216. Ibid.
217. Ibid., II: 20.
218. Ibid., II: 21.

are called evil. The Christian type god didn't necessitate this development of bad conscience,

but rather it was the Western herds' *ressentiment* of slave morality that "seized upon the

presupposition of religion so as to drive his self-torture to its most gruesome pitch of severity and

rigor."[219] Yet this response is in no way a necessary development. Nietzsche notes that the

Greeks responded to the debt by creating gods that interceded to prevent the possibility of bad

conscience developing. About this Nietzsche notes that the "Greeks use their gods precisely so

as to ward off the 'bad conscience,' so as to be able to rejoice in their freedom of soul."[220] For

the ancient Greeks, the gods were an apparatus that were used to justify and bring joy to human

existence. In this way, the Greeks made their gods bear the guilt that is engendered when one

breaks a promise. Nietzsche states: "the gods served in those days to justify man to a certain

extent even in his wickedness, they served as the originators of evil—in those days they took

upon themselves, not the punishment but, what is *nobler*, the guilt."[221] Although the agent takes

the punishment, the reason for transgression is rooted in the gods. By this arrangement, the

ancient Greek person never had to question and judge the seat of their joy, their bodies.

Nietzsche's comparison of bad conscience with ancient Greek conscience reveals that bad

conscience is a particular order of rank, not a teleological or causally necessary development.

In a final note, Nietzsche believes that a change in the dominant order of rank can only be

fulfilled through violent means. About this Nietzsche states: "If a temple is to be erected *a*

temple must be destroyed: that is the law—let anyone who can show me a case in which it is not

fulfilled!"[222] A moral order of rank exists as a strong holy entity like a temple. While it stands

erect, it represents the order of the universe. To found a new order, is to found a new temple.

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219. Ibid., II: 22.
220. Ibid., II: 23.
221. Ibid.
222. Ibid., II: 24.

However, this is not without a violent turn. For Nietzsche, all moralities represent a deep and long violent past that prepared the ground for humans to become what they are today: civilized. But to replace a form of civilization with another is tantamount to reordering our most basic fixed ideas about our promises to the community and their meaning. Undertaking this, like inculcating any other morality, would be a violent task.

III: Fanon, Violence and Morality

Fanon is very much in line with some of Nietzsche's thought about the inculcation of morality and its violent nature. This is seen in his in thoughts about colonialism and decolonization, particularly with his understanding of violence within these contexts. For Fanon, violence is a key feature of colonialism that permeates the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. From the moment the colonizers stake their claim to the territory of the colonized people, it is marked by violence. Regarding this Fanon states, "Their first confrontation was colored by violence and their cohabitation—or rather the exploitation of the colonized by the colonizer—continued at the point of the bayonet and under cannon fire."[223] Colonization begins as a violent encounter and the relationship between the colonized people and the colonizers remains violent throughout its duration. Fanon demonstrates that colonization is characterized as violent and the consequences of this process are apparent in the geography, values, and modes of being of the colonized people and the colonizers. The physical geography is repeated in the geography of the psyche.

Articulating the colonized world and its concomitant geography, Fanon states that it "is a compartmentalized world."[224] The world is divided between the section of the colonized people and the area of the colonizer, and each place is quite distinct. Fanon describes the colonizer's

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223. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. R. Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 2. (hereinafter *WE*).
224. Ibid., 3.

areas as such: "The colonist's sector is a sector built to last, all stone and steel. It's a sector of lights and paved roads, where the trash cans constantly overflow with strange and wonderful garbage, undreamed-of leftovers. The colonist's feet can never be glimpsed … They are protected by solid shoes in a sector where the streets are clean and smooth, without a pothole or stone. The colonist's sector is a sated, sluggish sector, its belly permanently full of good things. This colonist's sector is a white folks' sector, a sector of foreigners."[225] The area represents the modern industrialized European world and its amenities, like paved streets and electricity, transplanted to the colonies. This is a world of such continuing overabundance and opulence that it is revealed in its trash and waste. The people who inhabit this area are distinct in their opulence and order, but also in that they are not native inhabitants of the land upon which their affluent life has been erected. Rather, these are people from elsewhere and who have brought a replica of their way of life to the colony. This area is distinct and separate from the native sector of the land.

Describing these areas Fanon states: "The colonized's sector, or at least the 'native' quarters, the shanty town, the Medina, the reservation, is a disreputable place inhabited by disreputable people … It's a world with no space, people are piled one on top of the other, the shacks squeezed tightly together. The colonized's sector is a sector that crouches and cowers, a sector on its knees, a sector that is prostrate. It's a sector of niggers, a sector of towelheads."[226] The terms used to identify the areas of the indigenous have negative connotations and bring to mind the term "ghetto." These places have a bad reputation and have a geography that is cramped, ridden with filth, and in a state of disorder and disrepair. The native inhabitants live scared into submission by the dominance of the colonizer. From the perspective of the colonizer,

225. Ibid., 4.
226. Ibid., 5.

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these people are not even people but rather pejorative terms that conjure up further stereotypes and myths about the character of the indigenous population. As in the colonist's sector, the people who inhabit the area reflect the geography of the land. The colonist's places are orderly and clean, while the areas of the indigenous peoples are in chaos and dirty. With order and disorder being hallmarks of the distinct compartments of the colonial world, Fanon can conclude with the seemingly bombastic claim that each area "is inhabited by different species."[227]

The colonial world is a world divided in two compartments, that of the colonizer and the colonized, and these sections are set apart from one another by some form of boundary or edge. These demarcations, as well, are apparent in the geography. About this Fanon states: "The dividing line, the border, is represented by the barracks and the police stations."[228] Between one area and the other are borders that divide ways of life and races of people. To move beyond a checkpoint is to be transported to another world. However, it is important to remember that it is the colonizer who imposed these borders, i.e. they enforce the compartmentalized structure on the geography. In this context, specific borders are instances and reminders of the violence that pervades the structure of the colonial world. These are, furthermore, outgrowths of the initial violence of the beginning of colonial exploitation. Yet Fanon is not just describing these features of the colonial world in order to demonstrate how violence is reflected in the geography. Fanon states: "By penetrating its geographical configuration and classification we shall be able to delineate the backbone on which the decolonized society is reorganized."[229] The description will lay bare the basic foundations of the colonial world, which will provide an outline of the grounds on which the colonized will undertake the project of decolonization. By laying out the geography of colonialism, moreover, Fanon is providing a model by which to easily conceive of

227. Ibid., 5.
228. Ibid., 3.
229. Ibid.

other similar outgrowths and developments of colonialism. To conclude, the colonial endeavor literally rips territory into antipodal compartments. In this sense, the land is alienated from itself. The area is no longer one unity, but a region that is pitted against itself where there is good land and evil land. This literal cutting of the land is repeated in the values and psychology of the colonized subjects. As such, Fanon holds that his description of the process of decolonization will not only address the decolonization of indigenous territory but also their psychological decolonization.

When people are colonized, their way of life is permanently and irrevocably interrupted and transformed. Let us not forget for one moment that it is through violence and force that colonization occurs and progresses. Colonization, then, to appropriate Nietzsche's phraseology and concept, is the denigration, destruction, and replacement of the indigenous temples with the temples of colonizers. In the context of Western colonization, it is Western values that supplanted the indigenous culture and values of the conquered peoples. There is, additionally, an added valuation in the colonial context: the colonized is valued as the anti-thesis of the colonizer. "The colonial world," Fanon states, "is a Manichean world."[230] The world is conceived of as a battle between the darkness of evil and the light of good. The colonized represent "a kind of quintessence of evil."[231] The colonizer's view of the colonized peoples amounts to associating the colonized with an inherent lack of goodness. About the colonizers' understanding of the colonized, Fanon states: "The 'native' is declared impervious to ethics, representing not only the absence of values but also the negation of values."[232] In one fell swoop, the colonized are both the representatives of a type of life that lacks values, and also the antitheses of the Western colonizing power's own self concept; i.e. the West, as such, represents the source of values. This

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230. Ibid., 6.
231. Ibid.
232. Ibid.

bifurcated logic, as has been previously noted, is reflected in how the geography and social

structure of the colonial world appears. In one's lived experience one encounters this split.

About this Fanon states: "The 'native' sector is not complementary to the European sector. The

two confront each other, but not in the service of a higher unity. Governed by a purely

Aristotelian logic, they follow the dictates of mutual exclusion: There is no conciliation possible,

one of them is superfluous."[233] In the colonial world and inherent in its Manichaean reasoning,

there is no possibility of finding a resolution to the contradictory duality of the colonizer and the

colonized. In fact, the order of rank deems the colonized an inessential element. For Fanon,

Manichaean reasoning can arrive at the ultimate dehumanizing consequence: it calls on and

treats the colonized like animals. For Fanon, "when the colonist speaks of the colonized he uses

zoological terms."[234] This form of dehumanization reinforces the value of the inessentiality of

the colonized as well the impossibility of arriving at the resolution to the contradiction of the

colonizer and colonized subject, as the colonized are conceived of as lacking human qualities.

The world and values that colonialism erects are enforced and inculcated through

violence. These values, then, become some of the few "I shall not's" that the colonized people

remember. "The first thing," Fanon states, "the colonial subject learns is to remain in his place

and not overstep its limits."[235] For all the colonized, their literal free movement around what

once had been their land is contrary to the colonial morality.   Understanding this piece of

colonial knowledge means having an awareness of the colonial order of rank and one's station

within it. Once this is the case, the person or people are now locked into reacting to this imposed

valuation. Their way of being will now be fit into this mode of being and if one decides to

transgress the colonial order one will reap the violent consequences. Across the body of his

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233. Ibid., 4.
234. Ibid., 7.
235. Ibid.,15.

work, Fanon outlines the variety of morbid reactions that arise out of the social conditions of colonialism.[236] However, even if one is able to remain psychologically unscathed by colonialism, the ordering of one's life in response to the imposed values reveals the internalization of those values. The compartmentalized structure of the geography, its repetition at the level of values and the awareness and internalization of the colonial order of rank, leave the people confined physically and psychologically. And, the colonized subjects are themselves in the ambiguous situation of perpetually transgressing the colonial order of rank. Fanon states: "The colonized subject is constantly on his guard: Confused by the myriad signs of the colonial world he never knows whether he is out of line. Confronted with a world configured by the colonizer, the colonized subject is always presumed guilty."[237] Thus, the presumed guilt of the colonized leaves the subject in a constant state of tense ambivalence. Regarding this Fanon comments: "Confronted with the colonial order the colonized subject is in a permanent state of tension."[238] Their own existence stands against the colonial order of rank so for the colonized to live means to be violating said order.

The tense ambivalence does not mean, however, that the colonized people cease to require release from this tension nor do they lack the desire to strike back at the colonizer. Noting this Fanon states: "Hence the dreams of the colonial subject are muscular dreams, dreams of action, dreams of aggressive vitality."[239] The dreams focus on unencumbered movement and action, but these dreams are not enough to release all the tense aggression that colonialism engenders. Among other ways, Fanon notes that internal, colonized-on-colonized subject violence, adherence to myth and superstition, dance, and demonic possession all represent ways

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236. See Fanon, *BSWM*, Chapter. 6; Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism;* Fanon, *WE,* Chapter 5.
237. Fanon, *WE*, 16.
238. Ibid.
239. Ibid., 15.

of releasing the tension, as does converting to Christianity.[240] While the various methods

provide release, they lose sight of the perpetrator of the colonial situation, the colonizer.

Particularly with religion, Fanon notes: "Fatalism relieves the oppressor of all responsibility

since the cause of wrong-doing, poverty, and the inevitable can all be attributed to God."[241] In

the case of the colonized bourgeois intellectual, he directs the release of his aggression through

identifying with, assimilating to and preserving the morality of the colonial order. "The

colonized intellectual has invested his aggression in his barely veiled wish to be assimilated to

the colonizer's world. He has placed his aggression at the service of his own interests, his

interests as an individual."[242] The colonized intellectual represents the desire to be like the

colonizer attempting to adhere to and promote their system of values. Regardless of these modes

of release, the reason for the aggression is the violence of the colonizer. Yet these various means

of dealing with the tension either avoid the colonizer (intertribal violence and myth) or attempt to

overcome this through some form of identification with the imposed value structure (religion or

assimilation). Nevertheless, these ways of avoiding and not directly confronting the colonial

morality have given rise to the repetitive pattern of building up aggressive tension and then

releasing it. Moreover, these types of release provide post-hoc justification for the colonial

enterprise. Fanon states: "Such behavior represents a death wish in the danger, a suicidal conduct

which reinforces the colonist's existence and domination and reassures him that such men are not

rational."[243] While Fanon is directly addressing inter-colonized subject violence, the

considerations can also be applied to other behaviors as understood from the perspective of the

colonizer. So to put this differently, the violence, strange beliefs, customs, and behavior of the

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240. Ibid., 17-21.
241. Ibid., 18.
242. Ibid., 22.
243. Ibid., 18.

colonized only reaffirm the colonizer's belief that the colonized subjects lack values and need someone to shepherd them into the light of culture and civilization.

The colonial geography, values and its concomitant reactions from the colonized all give rise to an atmosphere of violence. About this atmosphere of violence, Fanons says it is the "violence rippling under the skin."[244] The atmospheric violence describes the tension sitting ready to be released in the colonized subject. In a world that is rife with hostility toward the colonized subject's being, it is no surprise that the sense of life is always in a state of volatility. The colonial subjectivities, structures, and values that deny the colonized person's human value and dignity surround the colonized individual. Colonialism, in this sense, can be seen as total violence. In all areas of life, colonialism leaves its mark through violence: it starts in violence, engenders violence, and persists through violence. This violence is palpable when situated within the colonial context. The colonizer can easily attribute the violence to the recalcitrance and inherent problems that characterize the colonized subject. This justifies the colonizer and seems to only help in the continuing persistence of colonialism. Moreover, Fanon seems to be insisting that some form of violent, aggressive behavior is inevitable in the colonial context. Fanon states: "We have seen that this violence throughout the colonial period, although constantly on edge, runs on empty. We have seen it channeled through the emotional release of dance or possession. We have seen it exhaust itself in fratricidal struggles."[245]

In the colonial context, the aggression will be released only to be pent-up and tensed up again. Instead of this cycle of repetition that the forms of release entail, Fanon hopes that the ever-pervading violence of colonialism can be the source of and key to overcoming the violence of colonialism. Regarding this, Fanon notes that "[t]he violence which governed the ordering of

244. Ibid., 31.
245. Ibid., 21.

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the colonial world, which tirelessly punctuated the destruction of the indigenous social fabric, and demolished unchecked the systems of reference of the country's economy, lifestyles, and modes of dress, this same violence will be vindicated and appropriated when, taking history into their own hands, the colonized swarm into the forbidden cities."[246] In the time after the release as tension builds Fanon states that "[t]he challenge now, is to seize this violence as it realigns itself."[247] This is the time to begin to sort out the memories and meanings. This process, however, is itself violent and sometimes recalling and remembering trauma is just as traumatic as the original experience. "In the colonial world," Fanon states, "the colonized's affectivity is kept on edge like a running sore flinching from a caustic agent."[248] The sore is like the constant memory of a malediction, in this case colonialism. But instead of continual caustic agents, Fanon begins laying the groundwork for healing the wound. For Fanon that means instead of continuing the repetitive cycle of tension and release that avoids confronting the underlying and all pervading problem of colonialism, one must directly challenge colonialism looking to destroy and replace it. In the process of decolonization, the tension and aggression are precisely directed at ending the violent cycles of colonialism.

Fanon describes decolonization as an "agenda for total disorder."[249] The disorder occurs around ceasing the cycle of the colonial drama whereby aggression is pent up and released through means that reinforce the colonial structure and values. "Decolonization," Fanon adds, "is always a violent event."[250] Decolonization is an attempt to replace and inculcate a new morality. The goal is to destroy the temple of the colonizer's values and replace it with a new temple of values. This violent overturning and replacement of a morality is realized when the

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246. Ibid., 5-6.
247. Ibid., 21.
248. Ibid., 19.
249. Ibid., 2.
250. Ibid., 1.

ones who were once last are now first. With regard to this notion Fanon states: "This determination to have the last move up to the front to have them clamber up (too quickly, say some) the famous echelons of an organized society, can only succeed by resorting to every means, including, of course, violence."[251] Violence is a major means by which decolonization will ultimately occur and for those colonized subjects who commit to a project of decolonization this is patently obvious. The process of decolonization fundamentally reorganizes the colonized subject's awareness and understanding of the colonial world. What the colonized subject realizes, according to Fanon, is "that his life, his breathing and his heartbeats are the same as the colonist's. He discovers that the skin of the colonist is not worth more than the 'native's.' In other words, his world receives a fundamental jolt."[252] In a sudden, violent shift in awareness and understanding of the world, what the colonized sees is that the colonizer only has fictions and distortions about the colonized people and that the truth of the matter is that the colonizer is no better, higher or more civilized than themselves.

The dehumanizing language of the colonizer about the colonized people is realized for what it is: a lie. As Fanon notes: "For they [the colonized subjects] know they are not animals. And at the very moment when they discover their humanity, they begin to sharpen their weapons to secure its victory."[253] The realization of the lies of the colonizer provides impetus to begin violent conflict and leads to further revelations about the world the colonizers created. The Christian evangelization of the colonies is no longer considered a positive or as a move toward the light. Rather the Church loses its luster and is revealed to be an accoutrement of the colonial order of rank. "The Church in the colonies," Fanon notes about this realization, "is a white man's Church, a foreigners' Church. It does not call the colonized to the ways of God, but the

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251. Ibid., 3.
252. Ibid.,10.
253. Ibid., 8.

ways of the white man, to the ways of the master, the ways of the oppressor."[254] Not only is the

Christian religion part of the colonial world, it is also an apparatus that inculcates and

perpetuates the colonial order of rank.[255]

The new awareness and subjectivity frees the colonized people of the valuations of the

colonized as they no longer provide a point of reference by which they desire to organize their

life. At this point, "[n]ot only does his presence [the colonizer's] no longer bother me, but I am

already preparing to waylay him in such a way that soon he will have no other solution but to

flee."[256] This is a conceptual move, however, so it does not free the colonized subject from the

empirical reality of the colonizer. Regardless, the colonized person now realizes that they must

directly react to the colonizer with the intent to destroy the colonizer. Yet at the level of

consciousness the jolt does not mean that it is totally restructured. Rather, in the process of the

decolonization, the Manichaean structure of the consciousness remains but is directed toward

decolonizing purposes. Fanon notes: "On the logical plane, the Manichaeanism of the colonists

produces the Manichaeanism of the colonized. The theory of the 'absolute evil of the colonist' is

in response to the theory of the 'absolute evil of the native.'"[257] This new consciousness is the

beginning of the struggle of decolonization, but the process begins with violence and is a

reactionary repetition of the Manichaeanism of the colonized against the colonizer.

Decolonization attempts to directly confront the colonizer in violent conflict with the goal of

replacing the colonizer colonialism. "The last can be first," Fanon exhorts, "only after a

murderous and decisive confrontation between the two protagonists."[258] Practically, this means

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254. Ibid., 7.
255. It is of note that Fanon died before the advent of the liberation theology movement. As such, Fanon did have to consider the revolutionary possibilities of Christianity as delineated by liberation theologians.
256. Fanon, *WE*, 10.
257. Ibid., 50.
258. Ibid., 3.

channeling the tension and aggression toward the colonizer instead of via the other methods

Fanon describes. What this violent process will ultimately produce is a resolution to the

Hegelian dialectical movement of mutual recognition and new human beings. "Decolonization,"

Fanon believes, "is the creation of new men … The 'thing' becomes a man through the very

process of liberation."[259] It is the thing that turned human that will replace the colonizer. The

human supersedes the mere colonist who desires the continued existence of the circular colonial

drama. Accordingly, Fanon can succinctly conceptualize the process of decolonization as "quite

simply the substitution of one 'species' of mankind by another."[260]

Decolonization means for the colonized both literally and figuratively moving from

objects within the drama of the colonizer to the privileged protagonists of the process of

decolonization. This process provides the particular subject a cathartic release of the tension that

the colonial context entails. "At the individual level," Fanon observes, "violence is a cleansing

force. It rids the colonized of their inferiority complex, of their passive and despairing attitude.

It emboldens them, and restores their self-confidence."[261] What are washed clean are the

mythologies about themselves that the colonizer imposed upon them. The violence that

decolonization entails, furthermore, promotes and highlights the subject's agency and ability to

change the world one inhabits. Fanon states: "The famous dictum which states that all men are

equal will find its illustration in the colonies only when the colonized subject *states* he is equal to

the colonist. Taking it a step further, he is *determined* to fight to be more than the colonist. In

fact, he has already *decided* to take his place."[262] The process of decolonization is not inherent in

history but must be realized through an active commitment by the colonized to decolonize, even

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259. Ibid., 2.
260. Ibid., 1.
261. Ibid.,51.
262. Ibid., 9 (Emphasis added).

by violent means. The colonized seeks to replace the colonial system of values with one that surpasses it. The new values surpass the colonist in that they will incorporate everyone into the fold as a human leaving no part of humanity relegated to the status of sub-human. As will be discussed, this project is of world-historic significance and implies the direct contestation of the colonizer's order of rank. "In the period of decolonization," Fanon notes, "the colonized masses thumb their noses at these values, shower them with insults, and vomit them up."[263] This does not come without reaction from the dominant power to this method of channeling their tension.

The violence of decolonization operates on the level of identification as well. That is, in being free from the valuations of the colonizer, the colonized subject no longer focuses her/his being around the colonial order of rank and the colonizer. The colonizer is no longer considered the origin and source of values. The violence allows the colonized subject to re-identify the point valuation with their being, by active participation in the creation of a new order of rank. Thus, the colonized subject works towards the creation and setting down of a new system of values. Fanon notes, "For the colonized, this violence represents the absolute praxis. The militant therefore is one who works…To work means to work towards the death of the colonist. Claiming the responsibility for the violence also allows those members of the group who have strayed or have been outlawed to come back, to retake their place and be reintegrated. Violence can thus be understood to be the perfect mediation. The colonized man liberates himself through violence. This praxis enlightens the militant because it shows him the means and the end."[264] Through violence the person lays down a commitment, and in doing so finds recognition and unity in the revolutionary decolonizing movement. The violence is not just of personal significance but is labor that carries world-historical significance.

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263. Ibid., 8.
264. Ibid., 44.

Fanon states: "Decolonization never goes unnoticed, for it focuses on and fundamentally alters being, and transforms the spectator crushed to a nonessential state into a privileged actor, captured in a virtually grandiose fashion by the spotlight of History."[265] With decolonization being put into the world-historical context of being the focal point and theme of the present historical period, the person and people gain a further sense of agency beyond the personal in that they are the primary, necessary movers and agitators of the present historical moment. The call is for the colonized to decolonize and it is a world-historical calling. However, this is done on the level of agency and commitment. "Decolonization, we know, is an historical process: In other words, it can only be understood, it can only find significance and become self coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it form and substance."[266] The labor that will give the substance and form to this historical process is through the channeling of the violence of colonialism into the project of changing the objective conditions of the world, i.e. decolonizing the land and people.

Again, decolonization is a practice that is of world-historical significance. Yet, its meaning is not hypothetical but rather corresponds to the actual state of affairs in the world: the worldwide domination of the West over the rest of the world. This being the case, colonialism was exported to places all across the world and not just to the places that fell within Fanon's purview and life experience, i.e. Martinique and Algeria. Although each particular colonial context has its unique features and problems, the colonized world that Fanon is describing is a model for all Western colonial circumstances. As such, French colonialism in Vietnam will be similar in structure and violence to their colonial enterprise in Algeria. This also includes the atmosphere of violence that is engendered by the geographic, moral and psychological

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265. Ibid., 2.
266. Ibid.

Manichaeanism. The atmospheric violence that is palpable in the immediate colonial context is reflected as a worldwide phenomenon. The level of agency involved turns from being a local endeavor to being an agent on the world stage that everyone is watching. According to Fanon, worldwide, the colonized subjects learn about one another's struggles. In particular, Fanon notes that colonized subjects "discover that violence is atmospheric, it breaks out sporadically, and here and there sweeps away a colonial regime."[267] The colonized subject recognizes that a similar atmosphere of violence pervades other colonized places, and that the violence is also released every so often, and sometimes, after the violence, the colonizer is gone. While the atmosphere of violence is tense and aggressive all over, in some places the tension is released in such a way that the colonizer is replaced and a new way of existing begins. Knowledge and awareness of this possibility provides inspiration and hope to others who are in the process of decolonization.

Although the privileged of the colonial regime, the colonizers, attempt to quell any decolonization, what is of interest is the social position and experience of the colonized bourgeoisie. They too react to the counterstance of the colonized masses, but their reaction illuminates the process of decolonization. These colonized subjects are unique in the sense that they straddle the compartmentalized, Manichaean colonial world. They are often educated within the colonizer's educational models, and are familiar with their ways of being as they interact with them in places of business and in colonial administrative bureaucracy. Fanon notes that the colonized bourgeoisie have often "adopted the abstract, universal values of the colonizer [and] is prepared to fight so that the colonist and colonized can live in peace in a new world."[268] The colonized bourgeois intellectual wants to have a world where he preserves the seemingly

267. Ibid., 30.
268. Ibid., 9.

universal values of the colonizers and reacts by wanting to defend the colonial order of rank. Fanon states that, "what he does not see, because precisely colonialism and all its modes of thought have seeped into him, is that the colonist is no longer interested in staying on and coexisting once the colonial context has disappeared."[269] The internalization of the colonizer's order of rank has blinded the colonized bourgeois to the actuality of the colonial situation. Some are blinded to the negative and dehumanizing valorization of the colonized that permeate Western values, while other colonized bourgeoisie believe these myths in lock step with the colonizer.

For the revolutionary, decolonizing individual, the affirmation of and advocacy for Western values represent a reiteration of the same values that they are attempting to replace. Regarding this change in perspective on the colonial values Fanon notes: "Those values which seemed to ennoble the soul prove worthless because they have nothing in common with the real-life struggle in which the people are engaged."[270] In the process of decolonization, these seemingly edifying values will need to be replaced, and this is done so through involvement in the liberation movement. Through the shared labor of the decolonization, the colonized bourgeois restructures their consciousness. "Involvement in the organization of the struggle," Fanon states, "will already introduce him to a different vocabulary. 'Brother,' 'sister,' 'comrade…'"[271] With the new words and ways of looking at the world the bourgeois colonized subjects cleanse themselves of the colonizer's order of rank. Fanon notes: "In a kind of auto-da-fé, the colonized intellectual witnesses the destruction of all his idols: egoism, arrogant recrimination, and the idiotic, childish need to have the last word."[272] The hallowed values of the

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269. Ibid.
270. Ibid., 11.
271. Ibid.
272. Ibid.

colonizer are now expelled and destroyed. With the destruction it is replaced with the new consciousness that represents a new way of life and concomitant values. As Fanon notes: "It infuses a new rhythm, specific to a new generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity."[273]

The colonial order of rank is abstract in a very strong sense. The values represent the distillation of the processes of the historical developments and trajectories of European countries. They arose out of the life of the Europeans and then were exported to the colonies. The colonizer comes to a territory and decides to appropriate the land and resources for their pecuniary gain. However, this is not without resistance from the local population, identified and exploited by the colonists as another resource, i.e. labor. So while the underlying motives are for capital gain and global creation and domination of markets, what is used to justify colonial endeavors, is their predominant morality. In the case of the West, in its colonial conquests, it would use the rhetoric of Enlightenment, civilization and the light of Christianity. The permutation of this morality is couched within the context of a burgeoning global capitalist economy. The exportation of the morality and capitalist form of commerce reflects where Europe was in their capitalist development. From a Marxist perspective economic expansion and development is reflected the epiphenomenal ideology. Fanon points out that in the colonies, this is not the case. Fanon notes: "In the colonies the economic infrastructure is also a superstructure. The cause is effect: You are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich."[274] The circular logic of this replaces and diverts from the actual facts and state of affairs that arose out the conquest of the colonizer. It is not the social conditions of colonization that provide substantive explanation of the colonized subject culture and ways of being, but rather the myths

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273. Ibid., 2.
274. Ibid., 5.

about the colonized, i.e. ideology, is what explains their level of development and civilization. Accordingly, the values that are imposed on the colonized are entirely disconnected from their lived experience and does not, *a fortiori*, bear any reflection of the level of development or the dominant means of production of the colonized peoples.

What is overcome through commitment is the singular context of colonialism. "Decolonization is the encounter between two congenitally antagonistic forces that in fact owe their singularity to the kind of reification secreted and nurtured by the colonial situation."[275] So while Fanon reduces decolonization to a battle between colonizer and colonized subject, there is a unique quality to it that gives colonialism a distinct morality. What this singularity refers to is the type of reification that occurs. Reification is the taking of abstract or fictional qualities and assuming that these ideas are real things. Values are reified, i.e. they seem like real things that one must adhere to. Most values arise out of the life of the people, but in the colonial context they are imposed. What is reified, what appear like real working values for colonized people, start as values, as abstract concepts that came out of the lived life of the colonizers. So while the colonized subject, particularly the colonized bourgeois, may believe in the reality of the colonizer's order of rank, the morality is displaced and in no way reflects the reality of their life either before, during or after colonialism. "The singularity of the colonial context," Fanon notes, "lies in the fact that economic reality, inequality, and enormous disparities in lifestyles never manage to mask the human reality."[276] Whatever the case may be in a particular colonial context, so long as it remains colonial, it can never obscure the facts of the people who live and experience the violent and destructive consequences of colonialism.

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275. Ibid., 2.
276. Ibid., 5.

IV: Analysis

The interconnections between Nietzsche's and Fanon's thoughts on violence and its association with morality are quite apparent. What has thus far been revealed is that Fanon and Nietzsche are talking about the same problem but from different perspectives. While Nietzsche focuses on the history and phenomenology of the inculcation of a morality and hopes for a possible radical revaluation of values in the future, Fanon illuminates and describes the conditions that will allow for destruction and suppression of the Western order of rank by a new table of values. They both have in common a calling for a revaluation of all values with the implicit assumption that the process is violent, and that the conditions that call for this process are rooted in violence. The maxim, "there is no morality without violence," seems to appropriately capture their thoughts on violence and morality. However, this more general claim does not settle questions about the degrees, kinds, and domains of violence. Still their consonance around violence and morality lends to an analysis of one thinker from the other's possible perspective. In this way, Nietzsche may offer insight into Fanon's thoughts on colonialism, while in a similar manner Fanon may help illuminate Nietzsche's thoughts on morality.

With regard to what Nietzsche offers Fanon's project, he provides the form and content of the morality that Fanon's project for decolonization is attempting to overcome. Colonial morality is not created *ex nihilo*, but is instead a variation of the dominant morality of the colonizers. Colonial morality, as an extension of it, implicates the dominant morality of the colonizers. Western European powers, accordingly, exported their morality to the colonies. The morality that is exported to the colonies is a slave morality of *ressentiment* and its particular configuration is that of bad conscience. That slave morality is the general form of the morality

exported to the colonies means to say that slave morality was imposed upon the colonized

subjects. Likewise, being that *ressentiment* is the hallmark of slave morality, the morality

imported to the colonies is reactionary. Bad conscience, accordingly, provides the particular

content of the morality and offers the means of discharging the *ressentiment* of slave morality.

The form of morality that was exported, while founded in *ressentiment*, is not a primitive form of

morality that Nietzsche discusses regarding the morality of the mores period. The Judeo-

Christian Platonic morality, and its hatred of life and the body, is a "ripe fruit" of the

development over millennia.[277] The Judeo-Christian Platonic morality, moreover, comes with a

patina of genteelness, level-headedness, and civility that covers over the pain and violence that

wrought the conscience and continues to plague the self-lacerating bad conscience. Considering

how the Church and Christian evangelization featured and still features prominently in the

colonial enterprise, bad conscience is part and parcel of the order of rank exported to the

colonies. So the order of rank that is brought to the colonies is not just a morality of the

ressentiment of slave morality, this morality is infected with the Western sickness called bad

conscience.

From a crude perspective, however, Nietzsche's thought could seem to be instantiated in

the colonization of the European colonies. In other words, a Master people has come to the

colonies and imposed order on the formless herd of colonized peoples. This is a re-instantiation

of a previous time prior to the herd's self-mastery. This notion, however, overlooks two issues.

The first is that the peoples of Africa and other colonies, prior to European colonization, were,

and some continue to be, a people with their own values and ways of being. They were in no

way lacking civilization and culture let alone order and law. Second, the morality exported to

the colonies is bad conscience, a slave morality. Although Nietzsche grants the creative property

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277. Nietzsche, *GM*, II: 3.

generally associated with *ressentiment*, he would still be critical of the life-denying values of bad conscience that are rooted in reactive feelings. But a form and particular configuration of morality is taken to the colonies, though it does not mean that the morality remains a perfect replica. Colonialism irrevocably changes the cultures that it encounters. This includes the colonizer's ways of life as well as the colonized. As such, the exported morality is transformed in two ways: how it is manifested and experienced for the colonizer and how it is acquired and experienced by the colonized. So as the colonized world is bifurcated, so is its bad conscience.

On the part of the colonizer, the bad conscience that is internalized in the social context of Europe is re-externalized in the colonies. In Europe, the drives that are pushed inward can now be expressed outwardly toward objects that are not one's self. It remains bad conscience, furthermore, in that it is a poor, moralized copy of the mastery that conscience implies. However, it is toward the outside world and not toward one's self that the bad conscience is directed.

With Fanon's description of the Manichaean structure of the colonial world, he reveals a repetition of the slavish valuation of evil/good in the colonies. The world that the colonizer is attempting to subdue and civilize is valued as evil, while its opposite, the colonizer, is good. The colonial drama from the colonizer's perspective is that the good is coming to vanquish the evil colonized subject and bring light to darkness. By this justification, an imaginary debt is created. It seems that the colonized are indebted to the colonizer for the civilization that is brought to them. This debt then appears to be for being given culture and values by the colonizer creditor. In this way, the colonizer emerges divine because the colonized seem to owe the colonizers a debt that can in no way be repaid as it is for the most basic values and order. Like bad conscience in the European context, accordingly, the debt of the colonial bad conscience cannot

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possibly be redeemed, not even through mercy. As a consequence, there is an inconsistency between the value imposed upon the colonized and the supposed motivation for dominating the colonized. While the colonizer claims to be imparting light and civilization upon the colonized, within this Manichaean order of rank, the colonized are thought of as impervious and antithetical to the values that the colonizers instantiate and are attempting to instill. In this way, the blame that is associated with bad conscience is repeated in the colonial context. In Europe, bad conscience finds the seat of blame for the impossibility of ever redeeming the debt in the very conditions of values: life and the body. In the colonial context, qualities associated with life and the body are projected onto and made essential to the character of the colonized. The colonizer seems to be able to justify the violence against the colonized as they lash out at the conditions giving rise to the hostility that seeks to destroy culture and civilization.

The colonizer has the privilege of having his bad conscience externalized. They can lash out at the worlds they are colonizing without the consequence of punishment. Their debts and commitments refer to either who they consider their equals, or to the powers that compelled them to come to terms. Those equals or compelling powers remain other Europeans. What the Manichaean valuation reveals is that while the colonized may take on the debt, the colonizer does not reciprocate the debt and promises. The colonizer does not promise or owe anything to the colonized. Thus the feeling of guilt for violently violating the humanity of the colonized subjects does not arise because of the asymmetrical relationship between colonizer and colonized.

For the colonized, taking this privilege of externalizing their bad conscience, creates a whole different perspective. With the colonized subject they are forced to internalize the bad conscience the European colonizers are imposing. So it was through colonialism that the

sickness of bad conscience was contracted and spread. Yet, when the colonized have this sickness, they are aware of themselves and others like them as to blame for their condition. They believe the imposed projection that they are irredeemably and inherently evil. To take revenge for this problem is to take out what is hostile to existence, which effectively means themselves and others like them. This means that lashing out could mean destroying others or oneself. While this seems like hyperbole, Fanon's description of violence lends credence to this assessment. What Fanon illuminates about bad conscience is that this internalized form of self-laceration is made into objective social reality for the colonizer while it is both internal and external for the colonized. Colonial bad conscience, as the privilege of the colonizer, only produces debt and guilt for the colonized. That is to say, in the colonial context, the colonizer has a clearly divided world, half of which upon he can vent his vengeful desires of bad conscience. There is no guilt but instead only the punishment of the evil outside colonial subjects and territory. The colonized, unfortunately, bear the brunt of both the guilt and the punishment of colonial bad conscience. Their station indicates their guilt and it is they and others like them who must be punished.

The imposition of the bad conscience upon the colonial subjects also has the leveling quality that Nietzsche associates with slave morality. In this case, what is leveled is the existence of all the colonized. They are all evil. So for the colonizer to lash out at the colonized is to take revenge on what is *not like* them. This is consistent with slave morality's valuation of that which is outside and different as hostile to the existence of the herd. In the case of the colonized subjects, to wreak vengeance means inflicting violence upon others *like* oneself. They are similar in that they share the same valuation in the Manichaean colonial order of rank, that of being ranked as evil. While Fanon seems to assume that all humanity is in some way equal, he is

critical of this particularly Western perspective. He does not desire to be equal to the European. Rather, he is striving for a new humanity. In this way, Nietzsche and Fanon share the similar project of revaluing all values, which is to gain ways of being beyond the current state of affairs.

What Fanon's description does, finally, for Nietzsche's analysis is to give a real-life account of the process of laying-down and overcoming a morality. So while the violent process of Western colonialism in no way reflects the morality of the mores period Nietzsche hypothesizes, it does provide real instantiations and examples of his broader generalization about the integral importance of pain and violence to the inculcation and overcoming of a morality. Fanon's analysis, furthermore, demonstrates the difficulties associated with overcoming. Extinguishing the old morality is a matter of total violence, as is establishing the new morality. The difficulty is that the violence always has the possibility of repeating the form of the morality that it attempts to overcome because the violence experienced can reinforce rather than cleanse it. This is a constant danger as the creation of new values implies ways of being that completely transcend the morality to be overcome. Arriving at the cathartic use of violence and pain is difficult, in part, as it requires forgetting an established order of rank and remembering a distinctly different and new one. Because of the brutality experienced—directly as victim and oppressor or indirectly as witness—by all within the colonial context, everyone involved has had this etched into their consciousness. The colonial-racial consciousness is part of the Western awareness and values of all parties in the prolonged drama. Thus colonialism, violence and morality are totalizing, and in overcoming it a different totalizing violent morality must replace it.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

I: Review

This dissertation has been about attempting to read the work of Nietzsche and Fanon together. Preston suggests that it may be of little value to attempt to read and apply Nietzsche to the concerns of the black existential philosopher. As he points out and relates to Fanon by extension: the work and spirit of Nietzsche and Fanon are contradictory. While this is the *prima facie* case, I have attempted to demonstrate otherwise by showing that their work can be read together and can serve to develop interesting insight about their thought and the world.

This project is not without its inherent problems. The tension in the work of both Fanon and Nietzsche tends to lead to several pitfalls if one is not careful with how one reads these thinkers. These problems include reactionariness, dichotomous thinking, and the conflation of their thought. To avoid these problems and achieve the end of a joint reading, I developed and applied what I call Methodological *Mestizaje*. This method works with problems that are borderlands, i.e., problems that are contradictory or ridden with tension. The problem of reading Fanon and Nietzsche together represents such a borderland. This borderland is the space within which to begin working with their thought.

It is of note that the work of reading Nietzsche and Fanon jointly contributes to what Gooding-Williams notes is the theorization of Nietzsche with an eye for the concerns of Africana Studies. This joint reading of Nietzsche does not specifically assume that Nietzsche has concerns or is interested in the problems that typify Africana Studies. What this means is that

Nietzsche does not seem to have a serious stake or concern about black people, blackness or the social and political conditions in which many black people are situated. At the same time, reading Nietzsche jointly with Fanon does place them in the same space, which allows for the work of Nietzsche to be bridged to the concerns related to the experiences, thoughts and concerns of philosophers and thinkers in the area of Africana Studies. This work, accordingly, is a contribution to the area of Africana Studies.

II: Methodological *Mestizaje* and Non-Ideal Theory

Methodological *Mestizaje* addresses borderlands and calls for reading each thinker in the spirit of an inventory which does not leave aside anything that may be contradictory about their respective thought. This means that Methodological *Mestizaje* looks to address the work of each thinker honestly and directly as they each present their work. In this sense, it is important to note that the practice of Methodological *Mestizaje* is a contribution to the work in the tradition of non-ideal theory.

In determining the value and usefulness of any theory or methodology, it is useful to ask, "from where does the theory or methodology begin?" Theories or methodologies are models of or assume models in order to study what they intend to examine. These models are ideas that represent phenomena, hence the cognized phenomena are idealized versions of their actual existence. Charles W. Mills points out that the theory has two types of ideals. "One kind of representation purports to be descriptive of P's crucial aspects (its essential nature) and how it actually works (its basic model). Call this descriptive modeling sense: ideal-as-descriptive-model… But for certain P (not all), it will also be possible to produce an idealized model, an exemplar, of what an ideal P should be like. Call this idealized model ideal-as-idealized-

model."[278] The key difference between these two types of theories or methodologies is that the ideal-as-descriptive-model begins from how the phenomenon actually exists. It is derived from an examination of actual phenomenon and thus begins with the extrapolation of what is most important to its existence. The ideal-as-idealized-model, however, begins with an idea of how the individual phenomenon ought to be arranged. It begins with an extrapolated version of the object and then goes back to examine real life with such a model.

While Mills does not deny the usefulness of the ideal-as-idealized-model of theorizing – exemplars, among other things, provide models to aspire to or to be like – he finds that theorizing from this position has traditionally moved away from the reality that it intended to model. Mills notes: "What distinguishes ideal theory is the reliance on idealization to the exclusion, or at least the marginalization of the actual… But the ideal theory either tacitly represents the actual as a simple deviation from the ideal, not worth theorizing in its own right, or claims that starting from the ideal is at least the best way of realizing the ideal."[279] The creation of an ideal-as-idealized-model claims to represent the most important features of whatever is idealized. However, many things that may seem important to people's experience and existence are abstracted away as inessential or unimportant as to the way in which the model represents the way reality ought to be. To put this more bluntly, ideal theory has abstracted away or found incidental many of the problems that give rise to feelings of anger and hatred, namely things like: discrimination, sexism, racism, classism, etc. These are all things that are part of the lives and experiences of many theorists. In contrast, Methodological *Mestizaje* begins with the thinkers as they present their thought in their work, but it does so honestly and without

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278. Charles W. Mills, "'Ideal Theory' as Ideology", *Hypatia*, 20 no. 3, (2005), 166-167.
279. Ibid, 168.

abstracting away components of their thought in order to create consonance when it may not be the case.

The methodology herein begins with the non-ideal, the texts of the thinkers, in order to develop an ideal-as-descriptive model of their respective thoughts. This methodology does not move to develop an ideal-as-idealized model, but rather juxtaposes the descriptive models and in doing so reveals another model or perspective that transcends each of the models. These particular results point to a perspective that moves beyond the thought of Fanon and Nietzsche about morality. This result is the *mestizaje* of the investigation. I will now offer an inspection of the *mestizaje* of the investigation, and after this will address some final considerations and contributions of this project.

III: *Mestizaje,* A Colonial Narrative

Mestizaje represents the process as well as the result of jointly reading Nietzsche and Fanon. This has necessitated balancing their work in the mode of *nepantla* in order to avoid the pitfalls of borderlands. *Nepantla* is the process of middling the work of Nietzsche and Fanon and is intended to stress the need to balance their work while at the same time addressing it honestly. By this careful process, what has been found is that Nietzsche and Fanon share intellectual themes, particularly around the topics of *ressentiment*, morality, and violence.

Around the theme of *ressentiment* what has been revealed is that Nietzsche generally conceives of *ressentiment* as a reactionary form of valuation that has the characteristics of being outward oriented, repetitive, creative, and vengeful. Additionally, Nietzsche develops two manifestations of it: the *ressentiment* of slave morality and priestly *ressentiment* against the active, self-affirming Master moralities. In this way, Nietzsche demonstrates differing orders and types of moral valuations with the focus on what the impact of *ressentiment* is on the

moralities of the Western Europe. With Nietzsche, *ressentiment* is seen as a symptom of the declining culture of the West and is central to understanding the state and condition of European morality and culture. In other words, the state of European affairs can only be understood in the context of the impact of moral valuations undergirded by *ressentiment*. For Nietzsche, to understand the West is to understand the type of valuation that is indicative of its major moral configurations.

Fanon's works distinguish a third type of *ressentiment* – colonial *ressentiment*. This form of *ressentiment* satisfies Nietzsche's conceptualization and includes the aforementioned characteristics. However, this type of *ressentiment* is distinct in that it is not derived from the being of the colonized nor is it developed through an intimate relationship, but rather it is a result of colonization. In this way, what Fanon reveals are structural social conditions that can engender this reactionary form of valuation. Furthermore, Fanon's development of colonial *ressentiment* points to a deeper overlap regarding their respective intellectual perspectives, that occurring at the nexus of morality and violence.

As discussed, Nietzsche and Fanon share an interest in morality, but from different ends of the problem. That is, Nietzsche focuses on the establishment and development of a morality, while Fanon focuses on overcoming an established morality. Despite differing perspectives, they share the view that violence is a key factor in its inception, development, continuation, and in its being overcome. Nietzsche focuses his narrative on the examination of the development and then-current state of affairs regarding European morality. In doing this, he elucidates the mechanisms and events that led to Europe's current cultural state. What Fanon offers is a narrative of Western morality that incorporates colonialism into its concomitant racial consciousness. Fanon's development of this narrative has illuminated the confluence of Western

morality and its colonial endeavors.

For his narrative Nietzsche presents the origin and forms of European morality that were exported to the colonies. The origin of morality in general is broadly rooted in violence mediating the ability to remember and make promises, as presented earlier. Yet, Nietzsche finds Western morality to be a form of the *ressentiment* of the slave morality that has won the day through the actions of the priestly aristocratic class's *ressentiment* that was directed toward its knightly aristocratic brothers. What Nietzsche accordingly offers, is the form and specific type of morality that is exported to the colonies. The morality is a reactionary form of slave valuation, while its specific configuration is bad conscience.

Fanon supplements the development of the morality of bad conscience by focusing on the transformed significance of this morality in the context of colonialism. When the morality is exported and imposed on the native populations, a transformation occurs with both the colonized and colonizer. Bad conscience connotes the notion that one is a constant threat to the moral order because one can possibly transgress it. The people of bad conscience are aware that they need to stay in line and direct their *ressentiment* and revenge toward their own body and self. In other words, their focus is directed inward and toward the drives that can lead to transgression of the established morality. With the natives having the morality imposed, the bad conscience changes for both the colonizer and colonized. The colonizer, in the colonial context, can externalize those drives that in Europe needed to be redirected or suppressed because such activity would violate the established morality. Violence that was directed toward the suppression of the agent's drives is now directed toward the external colonial world and its native inhabitants. In this way, the colonizer re-externalizes that which had been sublimated in the continent of Europe. With the colonized, however, the bad conscience is internalized and the

colonized become aware that they are the embodiment and a manifestation of evil in the eye of the morality of the colonizers.

Considering the particulars of what has been found thus far, this balanced approach has now arrived at its *mestizaje*. To put this differently, while Nietzsche and Fanon offer specific insight into the problems discussed, their thoughts taken together creates a third product that transcends their particular perspectives. This product is the narrative of colonial development and overcoming. With the work of Nietzsche and Fanon read together, what is gained is a broad and thorough perspective on the origins, development, form, and possible overcoming of colonial morality.

When violence and colonialism are considered in the context of its totalizing nature, Nietzsche's analysis reveals that the possibility of mutual recognition in the colonial context boils down to one of Fanon's counter-questions that he experiences in the colonial drama: "You have come late, much too late. There will always be a world—a white world—between you and us: that impossibility on either side to obliterate the past once and for all."[280] This is the distillation of the problem of colonialism, but from the perspective of the white man. However, the impossibility by no means precludes any form of desire for said impossibility. What the colonizer knew and still knows is that this new morality will mean he and his world will be replaced. If the colonial world is destroyed and a new morality of mutual recognition replaces it, the colonizer ceases to be the colonizer. In this way, the colonizer stands to lose not only the at-hand meaning of the world, but also his position, status, privilege. In other words, his identity stands to be fundamentally changed. Mutual recognition that the new morality demands is viewed to be a threat to his existence, leaving the colonizer in the position of appearing to lose everything. A world of reciprocal recognitions thus may seem to be a world suited best for the

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280. Fanon, *BSWM*, 101.

dignity and respect of all, but the logic and consequences of this process give rise to the real fear of those who continue to possess the dominant position, that its underlying foundation will be removed. They would lose that position, as its foundation would be replaced with a new dramatically different model, a model unseating them from the dominant position. While it is easy to reason through the unreason of racial prejudice and hatred, this does not stop or assuage the expectation and actuality of this unreason continuing to operate in the world.

Inculcated morality is recalcitrant, and, as Fanon points out in his analysis, is going to take a countervailing violent force to overcome it. It should be no surprise then that despite reason, racism remains a virulent problem in Western cultures, colonies and former colonies. Moreover, Nietzsche's thought helps to explain why colonialism has maintained such an enduring quality. Violence is foundational to the creation of a morality as well as to sustaining the order of rank. In this way, the violence used to inculcate the morality is the catalyst that lodges the order or rank into the memory and actions of the agents. To put this slightly differently, the violence founds the morality, and only a countervailing violent force has the capacity to dislodge it and allow for the inception and development of a new morality. In such a light, the morality of colonialism is seen as recalcitrant and difficult to overcome and replace.

IV: Final Considerations

I would like to return to the initial problem that I laid out at the very beginning of the project. This dissertation's base focus has been on how to make sense of the work of Nietzsche and Fanon when they have seemingly contradictory politics and spirit. While Methodological *Mestizaje* demands that nothing be thrown out or ignored because of tension or contradiction, I may be accused of conveniently overlooking the very issue that brought about the problems with reading Fanon and Nietzsche together. What brings this into relief is Nietzsche's few thoughts

about black people, in particular his statements in the Second Essay of *On the Genealogy of Morals*. Nietzsche's words from my introduction to this dissertation bear repeating in part at this juncture. "[L]et me declare expressly that in the day when mankind was not yet ashamed of its cruelty, life on earth was more cheerful than it is now that pessimists exist….Perhaps in those days—the delicate might be comforted by this thought—pain did not hurt as much as it does now; at least that is the conclusion a doctor may arrive at who has treated Negroes (taken as the representatives of prehistoric man—) for severe internal inflammations that would drive even the best constituted European to distraction—in the case of the Negroes they do not do so. The curve of human susceptibility to pain seems in fact to take an extraordinary and almost sudden drop as soon as one has passed the upper ten thousand or ten million of the top human stratum of culture; and for my part, I have no doubt that the combined suffering of all the animals ever subjected to the knife for scientific ends is utterly negligible compared with one painful night of a single hysterical bluestocking)."[281]

Here Nietzsche employs the black body to make a claim about culture and pain sensitivity. The development of European culture has created people who are highly susceptible to pain and suffering. To put this in present day terms, what creates pain and suffering in the European cultures can be things that would not cause a stir for the types of people who lack Western culture. In order to provide an example for his case, Nietzsche uses black people even juxtaposing them with animals that have been used in scientific experimentation. With both, Nietzsche claims that doctors and scientists can confirm that black people have an extremely high pain threshold, and for this reason human beings *without* culture can endure that which would drive human beings *with* culture to madness and despair.

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281. Nietzsche, *GM*: II: 7.

While Nietzsche contributes to understanding the relationship between violence and the establishment and development of a morality, his comments about black people illunate an irony about Nietzsche's position. He can only make these comments in light of there already being a colonial context. His beliefs that black people are primitive human beings and therefore more impervious to pain, represent the biological racism that Fanon discusses.[282] However, what Nietzsche's comment also implies is that colonizing black people is difficult because their pain threshold is higher. To properly inculcate the people with the dominant morality, it will take levels of brutality that civilized people would likely find absolutely horrific if the same were inflicted upon themselves. While this claim of black people possessing a natural higher threshold for pain is patently false, Fanon has pointed out that the colonial world is a world of pervasive and constant violence for the colonized. So while Nietzsche is clearly far removed from the actual colonial world, the colonial mentality, the Manichaeanism of the coloniality, the colonizer, is reflected in his zoological, pseudo-scientific thoughts about black people.

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282. See Frantz Fanon, "Racism and Culture", in *Towards the African Revolution*, trans. H. Chevalier. (New York: Oak Grove Press, 1967).

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