



'And the Last Shall Be First'

The Master-Slave Dialectic in Hegel, Nietzsche and Fanon

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Abstract: This article compares the ideas of Hegel, Nietzsche and Fanon on the dynamics and outcome of relationships of domination and subordination. By examining these authors' views on various aspects of these relationships—for example, the significance of the Other, the roles of *ressentiment* and of labor, and the importance of aggression—the article identifies differences and commonalities in their discussions. This comparison leads to the conclusion that, despite fundamental differences in their emphases, analyses, and even their political perspectives, the three writers concur on the eventual liberation of the subordinated.

The theme of the triumphant 'colonized man' or 'slave' or 'bondsmen' is one which appears repeatedly in the writings of influential social thinkers. The explanation of the dynamic which transforms the relationship and liberates the subordinated varies immensely from writer to writer; but there exists a surprising consistency in their conclusions about the outcome of the dynamic. It is surprising because of the extraordinary differences of *Weltanschauung*, of political stance and of approach of the thinkers who have addressed this issue. Frantz Fanon, the most contemporary of the writers I will examine, applauds the concept of the self-liberating colonized person; Friedrich Nietzsche, writing in the late 19th century, dreads the impending tri-

umph of those he considers weak and inferior; and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel—with more apparent emotional distance between himself and his subject—simply explains the inevitability of the transformation.

How could such diverse thinkers, of such diverse backgrounds and attitudes, come so close on this issue? What are some of the common elements perceived by all three as characteristic of the master-slave relationship? What does each identify as the element(s) critical in generating the transformation of that relationship? And precisely by what process do the enslaved gain their freedom, triumph over their enslavement, while the masters lose their more powerful position?

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Before addressing these questions, however, two issues of language need to be discussed. The first issue is my use of the terms 'master' and 'slave.' All three writers are discussing issues of domination. Their observations and my comments are not meant to be applicable to only situations of legalized slavery. Hegel, writing during Europe's transition from feudalism to capitalism, speaks of 'lords,' 'bondsmen' and 'servants,' evoking the relationship between the feudal manor lords and their serfs. Nietzsche often applies the terms 'masters' and 'slaves' to nationalities and classes, using differential political power and particular value systems (to be discussed in the section on *Ressentiment*) as the criteria for conferring each status. And Fanon, writing at the end of European colonialism, most often employs the words 'colonizers' and 'colonized.' The reader, then, is cautioned against taking the use of the terms 'master' and 'slave' in this discussion too narrowly. To do so would be to inadequately appreciate the broad applications of these writers' insights.

Necessary, too, is a comment about the sexist language that all three of these writers use. While every effort is made to avoid adopting their use (except, of course, in direct quotes), in some cases it is questionable whether it should be avoided. Nietzsche, in particular—the writer, I would argue, with the most gender consciousness and the most antipathy toward women—is often speaking of only males in a class, group or society; his use of 'men' and 'he' is consciously not meant to include women. Fanon, on the other hand, while in a few discussions appearing to be referring to only males (e.g., on aggressive dreams), more often seems to use 'colonized man' to refer to both men and women. However, it could certainly be argued that Fanon, like Hegel, is simply not taking women into account at all. (And Fanon's efforts to explore the effects of colonization for women have justifiably received attention from feminist

scholars. See, for example, Bergner, 1995; Sharpley-Whiting, 1997; and Gibson, 1999: Section III.) Thus, this remains problematic throughout this paper: how to avoid sexist language without misrepresenting their thinking. My solution has been to take into account their *meanings* when making the choice to avoid apparently sexist language or to remain consistent with their use of masculine nouns and pronouns. However, this way of addressing the problem is, admittedly, not entirely satisfactory because of both the subjectivity involved in the decision-making process and the inconsistency in the language of the final product.

Two concepts appear in the work of all three writers: the slave as object and the significance of the Other. Therefore, following the brief summaries of the lives of the three men, I begin this discussion with a comparison of their observations on these concepts. I then focus on what I consider to be the salient issues in their discussions: *ressentiment*, aggression, the role of labor, and the goals of the dominated. (Where two or more address the same issue, comparison of their ideas will be made; where one writer alone addresses an issue, I show and explain its significance.) It is hoped that a discussion of these topics will lead to an understanding of how the common conclusion of the triumphant slave—or bondsmen or colonized man—was reached by thinkers as diverse as Hegel, Nietzsche and Fanon.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

G. W. F. Hegel was born in 1770 in Stuttgart, in the duchy of Wurttemberg, where feudal estates still existed.¹¹ Hegel's father was a civil servant who had studied law and who worked at the court of the duke,

¹ This biographical summary is based on Terry Pinkard's excellent *Hegel: A Biography* (2000).

Karl Eugen. Hegel's mother, an unusually well-educated woman (whose father had also been a lawyer, at the High Court of Justice of Wurttemberg) had taught her first-born Latin even before he entered Latin School at age five. Education and culture were emphasized in the Hegel home; and, at an early age, Hegel took on his mother's ambition for him to become a theologian. Both sides of Hegel's family were Lutherans; on his mother's side, there was a 'long line of prominent Protestant reformers' (Pinkard, 2000:7).

Hegel studied at Stuttgart Gymnasium Illustre from 1784 to 1788, which broadened and modernized his thinking with its mixture of both Enlightenment thought and Renaissance humanism. His subsequent years at the University of Turbingen were significant for the friendships he formed with Friedrich Holderlin and Friedrich Willhelm Joseph Schelling and, partially as a result of those friendships, for advancing his revolutionary thinking to the point where, in order to allow for the most unfettered development and dissemination of his ideas, his ambition changed from a career as a theologian to that of an academic philosopher. While Hegel was at Turbingen, also, the French Revolution took place. Hegel and his friends enthusiastically welcomed it, seeing it as another step forward—like the Protestant Reformation—toward creating a more ethical society, and seeing now both England and France as progressing in a way Germany was not. Hegel received his Master's degree from Turbingen in 1793.

After seven years as a private tutor in the homes of wealthy families, Hegel became an unsalaried lecturer at the University of Jena, a newspaper editor, the headmaster of a preparatory school and, finally, at the age of 46, a university professor, first at Heidelberg (1816-1818), then at the University of Berlin, where he taught until his death in 1831.

Hegel's apparent emotional distance in

his writing belie his passionate concern about improving society to better the opportunities for people to develop fully. And Hegel did not abhor violence to bring this about. A particularly telling event in his life happened when he was an unpaid lecturer in Jena and completing his first book, *The Phenomenology of Mind*. Napoleon's army engaged and defeated the Prussian army on the outskirts of the city, then proceeded to plunder many homes, take money and entire libraries from people (including some professors Hegel knew), and even ransacked Hegel's apartment, preventing him from submitting his manuscript on time. Nevertheless, Hegel supported what was considered by some an invasion by a foreign army, saw it as having the potential of bringing positive changes to Germany, and wrote about the admiration he felt for Napoleon as he'd watched Napoleon victoriously ride through Jena.² Clearly, Hegel's concerns and passions ran deep; his cool and abstract writing, while illustrating his respect for Enlightenment reason, hides somewhat his equally powerful respect for 'the human heart' (Pinkard, 2000: 41).

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born in a parsonage in the countryside near Lutzon in October of 1844, the first child of a Lutheran pastor (who descended from seven generations of Lutheran pastors) and his young wife (herself, the daughter of a Lutheran pastor).³ When Nietzsche was four, his beloved father died; six months later, his younger brother died; and a year after that, his mother, forced to vacate the parsonage, moved Nietzsche and his sister

² Hegel wrote to a friend: "I saw the Emperor—the world soul—riding out of the city on reconnaissance. It was indeed a wonderful sensation to see such an individual, who, concentrated here at a single point, astride a horse, reaches out over the world and masters it... this extraordinary man, whom it is impossible not to admire (Quoted in Pinkard, 2000: 228).

³ This summary of Nietzsche's life is based on R. J. Hollingdale's *Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy* (1999).

to the small, walled town of Naumberg. Nietzsche did so well in the local schools (including a private preparatory school with a heavy emphasis on Greek and Latin classics) that, at 14, he won a free position at the prestigious Pforta boarding school. His six years at Pforta were important in a number of ways: it was his first experience living away from small-town, Christian family life; the school expanded his grounding in Greek and Roman classics; and it was here that Nietzsche became disillusioned with Christianity and began recommending instead 'the condition of uncertainty' (Hollingdale, 1999: 26). Here, too, Nietzsche's interest in poetry and music found expression: he wrote verses regularly, and composed and played music, as a pianist.

Subsequently, Nietzsche spent a year at the University of Bonn (where he decided not to study theology as his mother wanted), then transferred to the University of Leipzig and studied philology. In four years, he obtained a doctorate in philology without an exam and, at 24, was recommended for and accepted a professorship at the University of Basel. While Nietzsche enjoyed teaching, chronic health problems forced him to resign in ten years. Thus, except for two brief periods of military service in the Prussian army (1867-68 and 1870), Nietzsche's life had been mainly in schools from age six to thirty four. This is considered 'the origin of the one real weakness in his composition: his lack of knowledge of how "ordinary" men and women actually live' (Hollingdale, 1999: 42).

While Nietzsche was at Basel, the German Empire was established in 1870. He observed its formation and the following era of Bismark with distance and skepticism. Although Nietzsche's writings express strong feelings about political forms—for example, he considers Western Europe's move toward democracy disastrous—he did not engage in political activism or try to directly influence political

events around him.

For the remainder of his active life, Nietzsche was an independent author, consistently productive but plagued by illnesses, an unsettled existence⁴ and, in his own words, being '[s]o alone, alone!' (Hollingdale, 1999: 116). However, his productivity was extraordinary: he published a book or a major section of a book each year from 1879 to 1887 and six books (one, a collection of poems) in 1888. In 1889, he suffered a breakdown from which he never recovered. Cared for by his mother, then his sister (who also took control of his literary estate), Nietzsche died in 1900.

Frantz Fanon was born twenty-five years later, on the other side of the world—both geographically and politically—on the island of Martinique, a French colony in the eastern Caribbean.⁵ His parents, descendants mainly of enslaved Africans brought to work in the sugar cane fields, had moved from being small property owners in the countryside to the urban lower middle class of Martinique's capital, Fort of France. Fanon's father was a civil servant in the customs office, and his mother owned and ran a profitable hardware and draperies shop.

Fanon did well in primary school,⁶ spent time reading on his own in the city's largest library (particularly, French philosophy and literature of the 17th and 18th centuries), and was sent to the private Lycee Schoelcher. In his later years there, he stud-

⁴ During this period, Nietzsche spent summers at Sils Maria (near St. Moritz, Switzerland) and spent winters in Genoa, Papallo, Turin (Italy) and Nice (France). See Hollingdale (1999).

⁵ This biographical sketch is based on David Macey's fastidiously researched *Frantz Fanon: A Biography* (2000).

⁶ It should be noted that the education in the colonies was identical to that in the metropole. Thus, the language used was French (not the local creole); the history, art, literature etc. studied were only that of France. Students were taught that only that which was French had value and that they themselves were 'French' (Macey, 2000).

ied with Aimé Césaire, who had a tremendous impact on Fanon, introducing him to the idea that Afro-Caribbean culture had value and that the French were, in fact, alien exploiters.⁷ Césaire's ideas and the racist behavior of the Vichy-supporting French troops who were stationed on the island from 1940 to '43 politicized the young Fanon. At 17, he clandestinely went to Dominica to join the Free French forces. While this effort was aborted in a few weeks, at 18 he openly volunteered for the French army. During his two months of basic training in Morocco, his two months in Algeria, and thirteen months on the front in France (where he suffered a chest wound), Fanon was shaken by the racist practices in the colonies and within the army (toward the Arab, African and Caribbean troops). At 20, Fanon returned to Martinique, completed his Lycee exams and, while preparing to study in France, worked on Césaire's campaign for a seat in parliament.

In 1946, Fanon traveled to Paris, then Lyon and studied medicine, specializing in psychiatry. His first book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, was written in Lyon and demonstrates his interests in philosophy, literature and psychiatry. In 1953, Fanon returned to Algeria to work at the Blida-Joinville Psychiatric Hospital; it was here, while treating both the Algerian resisters to colonialism who were victims of torture and the French soldiers who were their torturers that he came to actively support, then join the resistance, the Front de Liberation Nationale

⁷ Fanon later wrote: 'For the first time, we saw a lycee teacher, and...an apparently respectable man, say to Antillean society that it is fine and good to be a *negre*' (quoted in Macey, 2000: 70). Aimé Césaire was to become the French Caribbean's best known poet and one of the founders—with Leopold Senghor and Leon Damas—of the negritude movement in literature. Also, after he was elected mayor of Fort of France and deputy to the French National Assembly in 1945 (with the active involvement of Fanon in the campaign), he remained in various offices until his retirement from electoral politics in 1993. See Gregson Davis's *Aimé Césaire* (1997).

(FLN). After resigning his hospital position and, subsequently, being expelled from Algeria, Fanon moved to Tunisia in 1957, was employed in the civil service as a *chef de service* at the Psychiatric Hospital at Monouba, and worked openly for the FLN.

The final four years of his life illustrate his unusual energy and commitment. He became part of the Ministry of Information when the FLN established the Provisional Government of Algeria; wrote regularly for a number of journals, including the FLN's *El Moudjahid*; and produced his second book, *A Dying Colonialism*, in 1959. Additionally, he regularly visited Algerian refugee camps in Morocco and Tunisia to treat physical and mental illnesses. It was at one of the camps on the Algerian-Morocco border that there was a car accident in which he was seriously hurt—a number of damaged vertebrae—and temporarily unable to walk.⁸ When he traveled to Rome for treatment, the car of the FLN member who was to meet his flight exploded. Days later, when Fanon was in the hospital, a gunman located the room to which he'd originally been assigned. Despite Fanon's knowledge that assassination was a real possibility, he never slowed his efforts. He represented the FLN at anti-colonial and Pan African conferences across Africa and, in 1960, was appointed Ambassador to Ghana. In that position, Fanon worked to recruit fighters and increase the movement of war materiel across the Sahara to Algeria.

In late 1960, Fanon was diagnosed with leukemia. Treatment in the USSR caused a remission, which he used to complete *Wretched of the Earth* in the summer of 1961. With a relapse in Tunis, however, he reluc-

⁸ Most writers contend that these wounds were a result of an assassination attempt. (See, for example, Cauté [1970]; Geismar [1971]; Gendzier [1973]; and Hansen [1977].) However, Macey relies on the description of the incident by the driver of the car, Mokhtar Bouizem, who states it was a single car accident caused by his skidding on gravel and losing control of the vehicle (2000: 393).

tantly agreed to seek treatment at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the USA. After arriving in Washington, D.C., in early October, Fanon was put into a hotel room for eight days, visited daily and questioned by a CIA agent, before being admitted to NIH. Fanon died on 6 December 1961.

THE SLAVE AS OBJECT AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OTHER

As previously stated, all three writers concur that the slave/bondsman/colonized person is an object, the existence of which is dependent on the Other, the master/lord/colonizer. Hegel's view is most penetrating: he sees the consciousness of the bondman as completely dependent upon the consciousness of the lord: '...its essence is life or existence for another' (Hegel, 1967: 234). Whereas the complete person is both subject and object, both (in Sartrean terms) being-for-itself and being-in-itself (Sartre, 1965), the bondsman is only object, only being-in-itself, for he relinquished the possibility of gaining true self-consciousness when he refused to risk himself in the necessary life-and-death struggle. The two consciousnesses 'must enter into this struggle, for they must bring their certainty of themselves, the certainty of being for themselves, to the level of objective truth...It is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained' (Hegel, 1967: 232-3). The bondsman has refused to enter the struggle; he has not gained the recognition necessary to give certainty to the truth of his being-for-itself. He is solely being-in-itself.

Fanon, too, sees the colonized person as a thing, but his explanation of the process of her/his becoming a thing is somewhat different from Hegel's. The colonized person was a thing in the eyes of the conqueror and, during the period of colonization, accepted, to some degree, the colonizer's view of him/herself. But Fanon

views such conceptualizations as would Marx: 'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force' (Marx, 1970: 64). And, for Fanon, the process of changing the 'ruling material force' can also be a process of changing one's self-concept: 'the "thing" colonized becomes man through the very process of liberation' (Fanon, 2004: 2). The decolonization process may be viewed as analogous to Hegel's life-and-death struggle; and the taking of power in one's own land may be seen as the taking of subjectivity, demanding recognition as such, demanding validation of self as being-for-itself.

In an early work (written during his psychiatric training in France), Fanon stated that the consciousness of the colonized person is a totally dependent consciousness. Speaking of Antilleans (residents of Martinique and other Caribbean islands), Fanon stated:

The Antilleans have no inherent values of their own, they are always contingent on the presence of The Other...Everything that an Antillean does is done for The Other... because it is The Other who corroborates him in his search for self-validation. (Fanon, 1967: 211-3)

It should be noted that Fanon is referring not only to the French colonizer as the Other but also to other Antilleans. He is actually describing a being similar to David Riesman's 'other-directed' person (Riesman et al., 1950). Later—perhaps because he'd been living in Algeria, among people with older, less interrupted traditions—Fanon recognized inner- and tradition-directedness in the colonized when among their own people. But he never changed his position that, in relation to the colonizers, the colonized maintain a constant awareness: 'The colonized subject is constantly

on his guard...[T]he colonized's affectivity is kept on the edge like a running sore flinching from a caustic agent' (Fanon, 2004: 16, 19). The Europeans run the colonized's lives, control their land, direct their future; these political realities force the Other to be highly significant to the colonized.

For Nietzsche, the existence of a more powerful Other is absolutely necessary for a slave ethic (worldview) to exist: '[S]lave morality always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, psychologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all—its action is fundamentally reaction' (Nietzsche, 1969: 37). Nietzsche does not use the terms 'subject' and 'object,' but they are implied when he describes the master as an initiating, creative actor and the slave as a passive reactor who is acted upon. '[S]lave morality from the outset says No to what is "outside," what is "different," what is "not itself"' (1969:36).

Nietzsche agrees with Hegel and Fanon that the slave consciousness is one dependent on the existence of the free, subjective consciousness of the master. And he agrees that, though dependent, the slave has a will not only to survive but to transcend his/her domination. In fact, for Nietzsche it is *because* of this will to survive the subordinate 'objects' develop an ethos that will undermine the power of the dominant Other.

Nietzsche is reminiscent of Hegel and Fanon, too, when he describes slaves as needing 'to direct [their] view outward instead of back to [themselves]' (Nietzsche, 1969: 36-7). But, like Hegel, Nietzsche's discussion of the other-directedness of slaves is limited to the slaves' thinking in relation to the masters. Only Fanon explores the slaves' thinking toward others enslaved like themselves and, in doing so, in examining how the enslaved perceive their reflections, Fanon adds another dimension to the discussion of the significance of the Other in relationships of domination.

RESSENTIMENT

In relation to the Other, for both Nietzsche and Fanon, the fundamental feeling is *ressentiment*. Nietzsche introduced this French word into German philosophy in *The Genealogy of Morals*. It is...

...an emotional reaction against someone or something...not an impulsive reaction because it is lived or felt before a practical reaction could or does come into effect. *Ressentiment* arises in persons having been emotionally hurt or injured, and it is prompted by a reactionary resistance to such injury or hurt. (Frings, 1965: 82)

Max Scheler's later dissection of *ressentiment* helps us to understand Nietzsche. According to Scheler, there are various feelings which, if allowed to become extreme, can eventuate into *ressentiment*; these include hatred, revenge, malice, enviousness and spite (Scheler, 2003: 25). Scheler's description is certainly applicable to Nietzsche's use of the word. Specifically, Nietzsche contends that the ancient Jews—'that priestly people'—harbored *ressentiment* against the more powerful Romans (Nietzsche, 1969: 33). The discrepancy in strength—the impotence of the Jews compared to the ostensible omnipotence of the Romans—and the sense of frustration caused by the knowledge of this discrepancy were the sources of the *ressentiment*. The ultimate revenge of these *ressentiment*-filled people was the inversion of the value system which best enhances 'man's' potential: the replacement of the traditional (and, for Nietzsche, superior) good/divine = noble/powerful equation by good/divine = low/weak. The corollary inversion was the replacement of the good/bad dichotomy with good/evil. Before this inversion of values, nobles had applied the term 'bad' to

their enemies and to commoners with 'much casualness,' for their feelings toward their enemies included love and respect, and their feelings toward commoners, 'pity, consideration and forbearance.' In contrast, the *ressentiment*-filled slaves called their enemies—the Romans and, later, the nobles—'evil,' a term reflecting their 'submerged hatred, the vengefulness of the impotent' and minds that know 'how to keep silent, how not to forget, how to wait, how to be provisionally self-deprecating and humble' (Nietzsche, 1969: 37-8).

[The creation of the concept 'bad' is] an after-production, a side issue, a contrasting shade, [but the creation of the concept 'evil' is] the original thing, the beginning, the distinctive deed in the conception of a slave morality. (Nietzsche, 1969: 40)

Specifically, Nietzsche argued, the creation of Christianity (especially as interpreted by Paul) and the subsequent seduction of the noble classes and nations to accept Christian ethics (*slave ethics*) was the foundation of the undermining of the nobles or masters' power by the vengeful slaves.

The ancient Hebrews, then, typify for Nietzsche the *ressentiment*-filled slave.⁹ This conceptualization, too, concludes that the focus of the slave is the Other. The creativity of the slave is the acts that are reactions to the master. Nietzsche's slave says 'no!' and plots to destroy the power of the master.

So, too, does Fanon's 'colonized man.' Such a person also holds *ressentiment*; he, too, wants the destruction of the domination of the master, the colonizer. The main emotional elements of his *ressentiment* are envy and hatred: 'The gaze that the colonized subject casts at the colonist's sector is a look of lust, a look of envy. Dreams of possession. The colonized man is an envious

man' (Fanon, 2004: 5). But the destruction of Fanon's colonized person wishes for is

⁹ There is an inconsistency in Nietzsche that should be noted. At times, he appears to see the 'priestly class' and the 'slave class' as parts of a single non-noble, plebian class; at other times, he differentiates between the two. In his first reference to slave morality (Aphorism 45 in *Human All Too Human*, originally published in 1878), Nietzsche places the origins of the concepts of 'good,' 'bad,' and 'evil' in two classes. The powerful described themselves as 'good' and described the powerless, the slave as 'bad.' The powerless, on the other hand, also described themselves as 'good,' but described all others—whether powerful or not—as 'evil.' 'Evil is their epithet for man.' This conceptualization of slaves precludes community and leads to 'the downfall of individuals, clans and races' (Nietzsche, 1984: 47). It is in *Beyond Good and Evil* (originally published in 1886) that Nietzsche first places the origin of slave morality with the ancient Jews. In Aphorism 195, he succinctly states that it was their prophets who 'melted together "rich," "godless," and "evil"' and that 'the slave revolt in morality begins with the Jews' (Nietzsche, 2002: 94). In doing this, Nietzsche broadens his conceptualizing of slave groups beyond classes to nations.

However, in the *Genealogy of Morals* (originally published in 1887), Nietzsche's discussion becomes more complex by his introducing the 'priestly class,' a privileged but less powerful class which resented the power of the rulers. From them, 'the priestly mode of valuation can branch off from the knightly-aristocratic and then develop into its opposite' (Nietzsche, 1969: 33). Yet, even with this added dimension, Nietzsche still attributes slave morality to the ancient Jews: 'Jews, that priestly people...were ultimately satisfied with nothing less than a radical revaluation of their enemies' values...' (Nietzsche, 1969: 33-4).

And in his fullest discussion of slave morality (in *The Anti-Christ*, originally published in 1888), Nietzsche clearly distinguishes between the priests and the followers in both Judaism and Christianity. In doing so, he also introduces elements of manipulateness and opportunism into the character of the priestly classes of both: 'For the type of person who wields power inside Judaism and Christianity, a priestly type, decadence is only a means...' (Nietzsche, 2005: 21).

Nevertheless, despite these variations in his discussion, Nietzsche remains consistent in his contention that both religions—and both the priests and followers within those religions—promote a morality based on slave ethics. For the sake of accuracy, this inconsistency merited note. In the context of the discussion of this article, however, Nietzsche's priest and slave moralities are treated as synonymous.

much more literal than that of Nietzsche's slave. Indeed, the colonized person does want to overturn the colonizer's values ('In the period of colonization, the colonized masses thumb their noses at these very values, shower them with insults and vomit them up' [Fanon, 2004: 8]) and he wants to remove the colonizer's power but, further, he wishes for the complete physical removal of the colonizer.

Nietzsche's self-consciously impotent slave asserts his 'no!' indirectly, plotting the undermining of the power of the Other by changing the value system that is the foundation of the Other's strength. Nietzsche's slave has a patient hatred, a long memory and a desire for revenge. Fanon's powerless slave, more physically confined (in living quarters and in behavior), more psychologically assaulted (as colonizers actively suppress indigenous culture), has tension in his body, an edginess in his anger, and a desire for the elimination of the oppressor. Both Nietzsche and Fanon's slaves seethe with their belief in the injustice of their subordination. Both are filled with *ressentiment*.

AGGRESSION AND GUILT

While the 'lid is on,' however, neither is allowed to express that *ressentiment* spontaneously. The presence of a more powerful group—the master group—precludes any kind of free expression, much less aggression. What happens to those repressed expressions, especially that contained anger? Both Nietzsche and Fanon discuss the effects of the physical coercion that is a part of the creation, maintenance and eventual transformation of relationships of domination and include in their discussions an exploration of related affects, especially guilt. (Beyond his contention that the relationship of domination came into being because of the bondsman's unwillingness to enter into the life-and-death struggle, Hegel does not explore the issue of violence

nor does he explore the emotional components of such relationships.) Fanon discusses the manifestations of the colonized's aggression even before it's directed toward the powerful: the colonized have tense muscles; dream at night of highly aggressive activities ('...muscular dreams, dreams of action, dreams of aggressive vitality...jumping, running, and climbing' [Fanon, 2004: 15]); displace violence upon fellow colonized and themselves; and dissipate tensions in 'muscular [dance] org[ies] during which the most brutal aggressiveness and impulsive violence are channeled, transformed, and spirited away' (Fanon, 2004: 19).

However, not being allowed to express the anger toward a dominant group while being victimized by them feeds the *ressentiment* more. According to Freud, group living of any kind imposes limitations on a person's ability to express his/her sexuality and aggressiveness, and this imposition makes him/her resentful: 'If civilization imposes such great sacrifices not only on man's sexuality but on his aggressivity, we can understand better why it is hard for him to be happy in that civilization' (Freud, 1961: 62). But the hostility felt by average people toward the civilization which inhibits them is weak compared to that of the slaves, choiceless people in physical and/or psychological bondage. The 'civilization,' the world in which they exist is not of their making; their people did not generate its regulations; its values did not emanate from their history. Therefore, the limitations it imposes on their freedom are far more oppressive. And the mechanisms it uses to maintain its control are far more explicitly brutal to their psyches and their existence.¹⁰

¹⁰ While most societies use mainly ideology and, secondarily, coercion to maintain themselves, repressive societies (which includes all colonies and settler colonies) tend to rely more heavily on coercion, including state-supported violence.

The brute force of the colonizer, as described by Fanon, best exemplifies this: 'Their [the colonizer and the colonized's] first encounter was colored by violence and their cohabitation...continued at the point of a the bayonet and under cannon fire' (Fanon, 2004: 2). Nietzsche recognizes how this physical brutality of their 'cohabitation' feeds *ressentiment* and the wish to resist when he observes that '...punishment makes men hard and cold;...it sharpens the feeling of alienation, it strengthens the power of resistance...[causing] an extending of the memory, ...a will henceforth to go to work more cautiously, mistrustfully, secretly...' (Nietzsche, 1969: 81,83).

Fanon and Nietzsche share similar views, then, on the presence of repression in relationships of domination, on the emotional reaction to that repression, and on the inevitable efforts to resist that domination. Only Fanon, however, explores the issue of *violent* resistance fully.¹¹ In *Wretched of the Earth*, he expands his earlier reluctant acceptance of violence as a possible necessity to a full exploration of its role in transforming the domination of the colonial situation. Because violence has always been so much a part of the colonial arrangement, Fanon postulates that the violence of the resistance may have to be in direct proportion to the colonizer's violence. However, this violent response to domination, once directed toward the colonizer, may

¹¹ As early as the writing of *Black Skin, White Masks* (i.e., while still a student in France), Fanon brought up violent resistance to domination briefly. In his 'Conclusion' and with allusions to Hegel, he wrote that 'human reality in-itself-for-itself can be achieved only through conflict and through the risk that conflict implies...In a savage struggle, I am willing to accept convulsions to death, invincible dissolution, but also the possibility of the impossible' (1967: 218). Later, in a 1958 speech given at the All-African People's Congress in Ghana, he 'told the delegates that the struggle for liberation could never rule out recourse to violence' (Macey, 2000: 368). However, it is his discussion 'On Violence' in *Wretched of the Earth* that is most fully developed and best known.

have positive aspects for the colonized beyond the physical removal of the oppressor. First, it unifies the people. 'This violent praxis' brings them together 'in the almighty body of violence rearing up in reaction to the primary violence of the colonizer.' Second, on the level of the individual, '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.' And, third, after having used violence to free themselves, they will be 'jealous of their achievements,' demanding of any new government, intolerant of political opportunists or demagogues of their own nationality (2005: 50-1).

For Nietzsche, the more brutal the oppression, the greater the *ressentiment*, and the stronger and more secretive the resolve to resist. For Fanon, however, not only does more brutality lead to greater *ressentiment* and resolve to resist, but it also increases the probability that the resistance will be violent and that that violence will have benefits for the resisters' community and psyches during and after the period of violence.

Freud also suggests that repressed aggressiveness contributes to a sense of guilt and depth of conscience:

...aggressiveness is introjected, internalized...directed towards his own ego. There it is taken over by a portion of the ego, which sets itself over against the rest of the ego as super-ego, and which by now, in the form of 'conscience,' is ready to put into action against the ego the same harsh aggressiveness that the ego would have liked to satisfy upon other, extraneous individuals. The tension...is called...the sense of guilt; it expresses itself as a need for punishment. (Freud, 1961: 70)

If this were true the slave/bondsman/colonized person would have a more developed sense of guilt, a greater conscience than the master/lord/colonizer. (Freud explicitly states that this is true of the 'people of Israel.')

Nietzsche to some degree concurs. It is in his discussion of the *origins* of guilt and 'bad conscience' that Nietzsche comes closest to Freud, except that Nietzsche, not surprisingly, differentiates the psychology of the 'nobles' from that of the 'herd.' As humans began to live socially, according to Nietzsche, the majority, who were being organized into social units, were forced to repress the instincts of their 'animal past.' Those instincts that 'do not discharge themselves outwardly turn inward,...the internalization' which caused the development of bad conscience (Nietzsche, 1969: 84). However, the few, who controlled the polity, did not develop guilt or bad conscience. '[T]hese born organizers...[did] not know...guilt, responsibility, or consideration' (Nietzsche, 1969: 87). Nevertheless, through the development and proselytizing of Judeo-Christian theology—a theology, recall, of the slaves/dominated—even the leaders (nobles) of 18th-19th century Europe have been seduced into guilt and bad conscience. For Nietzsche, then, the contemporary pervasiveness of guilt and conscience is caused not by current domination, but by the powerful influence of Judeo-Christian theology, specifically, the qualities Christians attribute to their god and the kind of relationship they have with 'him.'¹²

Hegel, as stated earlier, neglects such descriptions of emotions. And Fanon explicitly rejects Freud's theory, at least to the degree the guilt is externally imposed: 'The colonized does not accept his guilt...deep down the colonized subject acknowledged no authority [of the colonizer]' (Fanon, 2004: 16).

Nietzsche and Fanon, while sharing similar views on the presence of *ressenti-*

ment in slaves/colonized people, differ on the importance of guilt in the psyches of the subordinated. They differ, too, on the methods the subordinated use to liberate themselves. Nietzsche's slave uses cunning to slowly change the values of the dominant to weaken their powers. Fanon's slave confronts the Other physically, entering into the life-and-death struggle Hegel described. (For Hegel, however, recall that this struggle explains how enslavement comes about; it does not explain, as it does for Fanon, how the liberation of the slave takes place. See "The Role of Labor" below.) Fanon's unique emphasis on a violent response is undoubtedly connected to his descriptions of the violence integral to the maintenance of the situations of dominance he'd seen. As Edward Said has observed:

The violence of decolonization is no more than an explicit fulfillment of the violence that lurks within colonialism and, instead of the natives being the object of colonial force, they wield it back *against* colonialism...(1999:211)

But Nietzsche and Fanon concur that slaves respond to their subordination. There is no acquiescence or acceptance of their inferior status, even when there appears to be. If the masters think they see acceptance, they are actually witnessing the

¹² Another dimension to this attribution of the pervasiveness of guilt to Christianity is found in Nietzsche's discussion of early humans' creation of the concepts of god(s). He traces that development to the debtor-creditor relationship early humans had to their ancestors. To address that debt, he contends, early 'repayment' forms included shrines, rituals and obedience. As tribes became more powerful, fear of the ancestors' power increased, with ancestors eventually becoming so 'fearful to the imagination,' they became gods. And, the later 'advent of the Christian God, as the maximum god attained so far was therefore accompanied by the maximum feeling of guilty indebtedness on earth' (Nietzsche, 1969: 90; See Second Essay).

period of growing *ressentiment*, of waiting, of seething, of creating. It is the period preceding resistance.

THE ROLE OF LABOR

Hegel alone sees significance in the labor of the 'bondsmen.' He believes it to be the key element in the liberation of the bondsmen, an element that will always be present in a situation of subordination, that will lead to the undermining of the master's powers and the strengthening of the bondsmen's sense of self and, thus, will inevitably bring about the liberation of the slave.

A relationship of domination-subordination (or 'lordship and bondage') comes into existence, for Hegel, from the confrontation between two consciousnesses. Because each 'self consciousness exists...only by being acknowledged or "recognized"' by another consciousness (1967: 229), there must be a mutuality of recognition for both to exist fully, i.e., as consciousnesses for themselves and for the other.¹³ As previously stated, for Hegel, the bondsmen or servant becomes subordinate when he refuses to enter into the necessary life-and-death struggle, refuses to put his 'self conception' before his personal security. In not risking his life, he becomes the servant, the dependent consciousness which exists for another, for the master.

Thereafter, the master controls the life and work of the servant, and uses that power to fulfill his own desires. The servant executes the master's wishes, does whatever work the master demands, produces what the master wishes for. Thus, the master desires and consumes; the servant

works and produces. In that process, however, the master's satisfactions are provided by things disconnected from himself and are fleeting; the servants' skills and productions are refined, a part of himself and permanent. The fear the bondsmen had of the lord 'is the beginning of wisdom,' and 'through work and labour...[the] consciousness of the bondsmen comes to itself' (Hegel, 1967: 238). While the lord becomes dependent on the work of the bondsmen, that very work leads the bondsmen to conceptualizing of himself as independent. 'Precisely in labour where there seemed to be merely some outsider's mind and ideas involved, the bondsmen becomes aware, through this re-discovery of himself by himself, of having and being "a mind of his own"' (Hegel, 1967: 239).

Simultaneously, the master, weakening because of his non-productive thus dependent desire-and-consume existence, comes to recognize that he has not really attained the truth of an independent consciousness because recognition by a dependent consciousness cannot yield him this truth. A reversal is, thus, underway: '[J]ust as lordship showed its essential nature to be the reverse of what it wants to be, so, too, bondage will...pass into the opposite of what it immediately is: ...it will change round into real and true independence' (Hegel, 1967: 237). In this way, through this change in self-perceptions (and, consequently, perceptions of the Other), the relationship between the master and servant is transformed.

It is noteworthy that Hegel's discussion of how the dominant-subordinate relationship is established and is transformed focuses on the encounter of only two individuals, two 'consciousnesses.' While elsewhere in the *Phenomenology of the Mind* Hegel does discuss social institutions and entire societies, in the section on 'Lordship and Bondage,' he does not. Unlike Nietzsche and Fanon, he neglects the impor-

¹³ Hegel accounts for their existence before such a confrontation has taken place in this way: 'The individual who has not staked his life may, no doubt, be recognized as a Person; but he has not attained the truth of this recognition as an independent self-consciousness' (Hegel, 1967: 233).

tant and obvious issue of differential group power, *viz.*, the role greater material resources (especially weapons) play in bringing about and maintaining domination. Nevertheless, Hegel's contention that what contributes most to the transformation of relationships of domination are the effects of that domination on the *minds* of both the dominated and the masters has much in common with the core arguments of both Nietzsche and Fanon.

The fact that, in Hegel's conceptualization, the slave becomes liberated without either a deliberate effort to change the value system of the master (like Nietzsche's slave) or direct confrontation with the master (like Fanon's slave) clearly implies that, regardless of resources available to the master, domination cannot be sustained. Hegel, Nietzsche and Fanon agree, then, that the enslaved will achieve their liberation; they don't, however, agree on the kind of society the enslaved envision which will afford them that liberation.

THE GOALS OF THE DOMINATED

If, indeed, the dominated push toward change because of their *ressentiment* (as Nietzsche and Fanon contend) or if they 'naturally' move out of their dependent status because of their relationship to their labor (as do Hegel's bondsmen), we must ask 'to what end?' How do these writers see the goals of the dominated? Do they want to change the hierarchical systems in which they live? Or do they want to retain the structure but with themselves, their group, in the superior position?

When discussing the emotional state of the colonized, Fanon is explicit: 'We have seen how the colonized always dream of taking the colonist's place. Not of becoming the colonist but of replacing him' (Fanon, 2004: 16). His slave, at least on an emotional level (I think Fanon's word 'dream' is carefully chosen), wants to put himself on top;

he simply wants to remove and replace the master, to regain power in his land. However, the colonized recognize the limitations of this immediate goal. Returning to the pre-colonial past is unrealistic and not entirely desirable. Something new must be created—neither a resuscitation of their historical culture nor an imitation of the colonizer's culture—'if [the colonized] want humanity to take one step forward...to another level than the one where Europe has placed it' (Fanon, 2004: 239). Thus, the immediate goal of Fanon's slave is the removal of the master and the master's culture, and the creation of new society. While Fanon does not explain what that new society might entail, his attack on the opportunism and exploitativeness of the national bourgeoisie in former colonies suggests an ultimate goal of a more ethical and egalitarian social arrangement.

For Nietzsche, the unquestionable goal of the slaves is to undermine the power of the masters. Slaves, of course, *claim* they have other goals. The Christians around him articulate the goal of achieving eternal life. But even that articulation reveals a wish for more power for themselves, which necessitates less for the Others. Nietzsche writes: 'These weak people some day or other *they* too intend to be strong, there is no doubt of that, some day *their* 'kingdom' too shall come—they term it 'the kingdom of God,' of course... (1969:48). The democrats and communists who also espouse 'slave morality' claim their goal is a society with minimal or no hierarchy, in which each individual has a voice. But does Nietzsche attribute the same disingenuousness he sees in the originators of slave morality and suggests is still in the Christianity of his day to its political proponents also? Or does his dread of their program indicate he sees democrats and communists as sincere? Either way—whether the 'slaves' bring the entire society to their level or if they assume the superior position—the power of the nobility of humanity will

be erased, and humankind will be the worse for it.

For Hegel, the slave's goal is autonomy, as is the goal of every consciousness. While, as stated, Hegel does not include a discussion of social structures in his essay on the lordship-bondage dynamic, his contention that in order for humans to thrive, there is a need for independent, mutually validating consciousnesses precludes structures of domination. His emphasis on reason and love, his life-long admiration for ancient Greece's (supposed) democracy, the Protestant Reformation, and the democratic thrust of the French Revolution are also indicative of his ideal of a societal form in which independent consciousnesses are universal and work freely in service to their shared community, not in service to a master (Butler, 1977: Chapter 1; Hegel, 1967: Chapter VI). However, this is not the initial conscious goal of the bondsman/slave. His initial goal as a bondsman is survival; to do that, he must satisfy the master with his productivity. That productivity transforms his sense of self and, consequently, his goals. Over time, Hegel's bondsman comes to seek autonomy and independence. Hegel might have written these words of Fanon: 'Independence is...an indispensable condition for men and women to exist in true liberation' (Fanon, 2004: 233).¹⁴

Only Fanon includes a conscious goal of slaves to change *themselves*. Because part of the colonizers' agenda was the destruction of the colonized's culture, (which included disparaging their history, art, religion, language, appearance etc.), Fanon's slave recognizes the need for a 'decolonization of the mind' to take place, also. This process would facilitate the elimination of the colonizer's values and structures as well as the colonizers themselves. For

¹⁴ Note that Fanon is explicitly discussing both individuals and societies, while Hegel's discussion is limited to individuals. Given his ethos, however, Hegel would unquestionably oppose the domination of one nation by another.

Fanon's slave, 'total liberation involves every facet of the personality' (Fanon, 2004: 233).

To sum up, Hegel's slaves carve their independence out of the external world; the mechanism of their liberation is their own labor. Nietzsche's slaves generate reactive creativity out of a vengeful *ressentiment*; they transcend their impotent status by seducing the powerful away from the very value system which gives them their power. And Fanon's slaves confront directly and assertively; it is the total removal of the oppressor that affords them their psychological and physical liberation.

The slaves/bondsmen/colonized represent force and contained energy; they exist always in relation to more powerful beings. This force expressed, this energy released necessitates a diminution in the Other's power. Hegel and Fanon see the process as inevitable (perhaps, because both men wished it so); Nietzsche hopes that this process he is observing will be averted. But all three, in very different ways, sound the triumph of the slave.

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