A Radical Journal of Geography
ANTIPODE

Fanon's Mobilities: Race, Space, Recognition

William Conroy

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA, william.conroy.93@gmail.com

Abstract: This article engages with Frantz Fanon's writing on both geographical and dialectical movement. It suggests that in particular historical-geographical contexts—such as those described by Fanon himself—geographical patterns of mobility and confinement operate as the presupposition and result of "race"; while also functionally enabling capitalism's necessary and enduring dialectic of appropriation and capitalisation, and reproducing the Fanonian "zone of nonbeing". More simply, this article suggests that in certain conjunctures the tight articulation of race, mobility, and capital accumulation inhibits the reciprocal recognition of equals. In those contexts, a spatialised "counter-ontological" politics is the only means of establishing intersubjective symmetry and the preconditions for Fanon's "new humanism". This article concretises these arguments in relation to historical work on antebellum "carceral landscapes". It concludes by drawing explicitly on Stuart Hall's reflections on articulation and "lines of tendential force" in order to think through the relevance of Fanonian theorisation today.

Keywords: Frantz Fanon, world-ecology, mobility, immobility, dialectics, Stuart Hall

Frantz Fanon—the psychiatrist, philosopher, and anti-colonial revolutionary—was, perhaps above all, a theorist of movement. Take "Concerning Violence", Fanon's most (in)famous chapter from 1961's indomitable *The Wretched of the Earth*. The language of movement abounds in that text. The colonial world appears as a "world of statues" (Fanon 1963:51); a world "divided into compartments" (Fanon 1963:39); a "motionless, Manicheistic world" (Fanon 1963:51); and as a world of two opposing "zones"—of coloniser and colonised—whose opposition is "not in the service of a higher unity" (Fanon 1963:38). Put otherwise, the colony is a world in which, as Fanon famously put it, the "economic *infrastructure* is also a superstructure"—albeit in a much more literal sense than even Fanon himself intended.[1] Movement is rendered as constitutive of colonial society, and as radically circumscribed in highly racialised ways. And the undoing of colonialism similarly appears as an engagement with the problematic of motion. As Fanon writes in the same chapter, the "immobility to which the native is condemned can only be called in question if the native decides to put an end to the history of colonization—the history of pillage" (Fanon 1963:51; see also Fanon 1965: Chapter 1). And, as he puts it elsewhere, "[t]here will be an authentic disalienation only to the degree to which things, in the most materialistic meaning of the word, will have been restored to their proper places" (Fanon 1986:13–14).

More precisely, we might say that Fanon pursued the theme of movement in two, albeit only tenuously connected, registers. Across his oeuvre, the problematic of movement and mobility is presented in both geographical *and* dialectical terms. When understood in geographical terms, the language of movement is primarily used in order to describe the "logic of enclosure" that attends to colonisation and racialisation, as gestured to above. For Fanon, colonisation clearly involves "dividing and organizing a multiplicity, … fixing and distributing it according to a hierarchy, [and] allocating it to more or less impermeable spaces" (cf. Mbembe 2017:35). Colonisation is thus an attempt to fix the ways in which particular subjects can circulate, among (many) other things. Colonisation does not, to be clear, simply ensure physical immobilisation for the colonised and mobility for the coloniser—even if that bifurcation was Fanon's overwhelming geographical concern. It more broadly enforces, in his work, a highly uneven relation of mobility and immobility—of spatial "compartmentalisation" and forced movement—both within the colonial city and the erstwhile "countryside" (Kipfer 2007:709). And such spatialisations and spatialities are not only integral to the colonial economy. It is, rather, through these spatial contours that "the white man is *sealed* in his whiteness and the black man in his blackness" (Fanon 1986:11, quoted in Kipfer 2007:708). Indeed, if we follow Fanon closely, we come to see patterns of mobility and confinement as colonial *techniques of racialisation*—they are both the presupposition and result of "race" itself. It is in and through the Manichean spatialities described above that the racialised subject is imprisoned "as the eternal victim of his own essence, of an *appearance* for which he is not responsible" (Fanon 1986:35).[2]

Movement also appears, as noted above, in a second sense throughout Fanon's work: as *dialectical movement*—or, in relation to the possibility for anti-colonial negation, the transformation of history, and the establishment of (conditions for) mutual recognition within a post-colonial world. In this register, Fanon is quite careful to suggest that the asymmetrical relation that attends to the colonial situation does not entirely prohibit the possibility of mutual recognition, nor the emergence of anti-colonial historical movement. It does, however, pose a significant set of limitations. For one, the "muscular tension" that arises in the colonised—her drive toward a struggle for recognition—is often violently redirected away from the coloniser and projected inward, stunting the possibility for radical historical change (Fanon 1963:54). And, in a more philosophical register, a struggle over recognition à la Hegel cannot emerge without a prior, ruptural event in Fanon's work, precisely because such a struggle is dependent upon the coloniser's desire for recognition from an equal "self-consciousness" (Wortham 2013:163)—a condition that is inhibited by the institutionalised violence of the colonial conjuncture. Put otherwise, in the midst of this condition of "*congealed opposition*" (Ciccariello-Maher 2017:8, emphasis added)—in which the racialised subject maintains "no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man" (Fanon 1986:110)—an anti-colonial historical movement must be inaugurated, according to Fanon. The racialised subject, overdetermined from without, must first *make herself known* in order to establish the preconditions for mutual recognition—to overturn this condition of historical stasis, and to enable the emergence

of a new kind of history and a new kind of humanity (or, a "new humanism") (Fanon 1986). Indeed, as Geo Maher (2022:66) has recently put it, "[b]y condemning the racialized to subterranean nonexistence … colonialism blocks all access to reciprocity and thus *demands* an eruption as the only possible path toward liberation".[3]

There is, by now, quite a vast literature on Fanon—and on the two, distinctive, mobilities sketched above. Within social and political theory, much has been said about Fanon's approach to dialectical motion and the movement of anti-colonial history. Linking the Fanon of *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*, George Ciccariello-Maher teases out several of the ideas outlined above. As he notes, "for Fanon, Black subjects lack … 'ontological resistance' in the eyes of the Whites, and therefore even the most basic reciprocity required for Hegel's dialectic to function" (Ciccariello-Maher 2014:6). Racial hatred and oppression reduce "racialized and colonized subjects to the shadowy realm of non-Being, of less-than-Being"—to a so-called "sub-ontological zone of nonbeing"—institutionalising that ontological caesura as a "concrete reality", and thereby demanding a counter-ontological force in order to establish the basis for a struggle "toward mutual self-consciousness" (Ciccariello-Maher 2014:5). This counter-ontological force is, in the words of Ciccariello-Maher (2014:7), the "pre-dialectical" moment in Fanon's work, which establishes the conditions for "intersubjective symmetry". And of course, Ciccariello-Maher is not alone in attending to this problematic. Vinay Gidwani similarly notes that for Fanon the colonial context presents an "institutionalized asymmetry of race" which confounds Hegel's "original conceit of two 'equal consciousnesses'" (Gidwani 2008:2585). And Glen Coulthard, for his part, takes up these insights in the context of contemporary multi-cultural (settler colonial) society. He follows Fanon's own critique of formal emancipation, reworking it in the Canadian context to suggest that the "strategic 'domestication' of the terms of recognition" leaves "the foundation of the colonial relationship relatively undisturbed"; it functionally enables the forms of ongoing accumulation by dispossession that form the basis of the settler state (Coulthard 2014:40). (And here we would do well to recall that for Fanon formal emancipation, in which "freedom" is *granted* by the master, is "not accompanied by a concomitant shift in the *substantive* ontological status of the former slave" or colonised subject [Ciccariello-Maher 2014:7].)

And yet, what is perhaps most important (and surprising) in the present context, is the simple fact that this literature on Fanon's theorisation of reciprocal recognition and dialectical movement has remained relatively cordoned off from work on Fanon's writing on *geographical* mobility and immobility. Fanonian scholars might imply a relationship between those two themes, but they typically fail to explicate the nature of this relation in precise terms, much as Fanon himself failed to do. In fact, the literature on Fanon's spatiality (and on what might be called Fanonian geographical mobilities) largely exists in parallel to the more philosophical literature sketched above, and tends to follow one of three paths: (i) to present Fanon as a theorist of necropolitics, *avant la lettre*, using his corpus to demonstrate the capacity of the (neo)colonial state to define *and spatialise* "who matters and who does not, who is *disposable* and who is not" (Mbembe 2003:27);

(ii) to embrace Fanon as a *nondialectical (or antidialectical) and spatial* thinker, and thus to use his work—as was particularly common in the 1990s—in order to "open up [a] deconstructive third space" between signifiers and the "fixities of Black and White" (Kipfer 2007:707; see, for context, Bhabha 1999; Gates 1999); or (iii) to situate Fanon in relation to other socio-spatial theorists, like Antonio Gramsci and Henri Lefebvre, in order to think through conjuncturally specific patterns of racialisation, accumulation by dispossession, and the "slippages, openings, contradictions, and possibilities" that these conjunctures provide (Hart 2008:697; see also Kipfer 2007; Kipfer and Goonewardena 2007). Indeed, even the highly generative emergent literature on "black geographies" that has taken up the work of Fanon (see, for context, Hawthorne 2019; Noxolo 2022) has largely failed to attend, in clear and explicit ways, to the precise relationship between these two mobilities, typically finding its footing in relation to the first category outlined above. Put otherwise, in spite of its many productive advances, this literature has largely deployed Fanon and Fanonian thought so as to highlight the state-backed spatialisation and racialisation of nonbeing, as well as the "subaltern or alternative geographic patterns that work alongside and beyond traditional geographies and site a terrain of struggle" (McKittrick 2006:7). Katherine McKittrick's remarks on Fanon are both fundamental and representative of this fact, as is the earlier work of Steve Pile, which she critically engages (see McKittrick 2006, 2016; Pile 2000).

In fact, the political theorist and geographer Stefan Kipfer is in rarefied air among scholars of Fanon insofar as he has, rather uniquely, attended to *both* Fanon's anticolonial dialectical imaginary and the problematic of colonial spatiality (see also Gibson 2012). In the words of Kipfer, for Fanon:

> colonial time/space had a profound impact on the imaginary worlds and bodily experiences of the colonized. It normalized racial divides to the point of tempting the colonized to "racialize their claims" (Fanon 1963:214), or plan to escape by "jumping, swimming, running, climbing" (1963:51–52). As Fanon indicated in his critique of Négritude and "the misadventures of national consciousness", such racialist or assimilationist reactions to colonial time/space were difficult to avoid but could block genuine decolonization and a quest for a future beyond race. (Kipfer 2011:98)

And Kipfer has gone further still, forcefully demonstrating that a close reading of Fanon suggests that such genuine decolonisation "rested [for him] on a threefold multiscalar transformation of colonial space: the colonial city, national geographies of colonial administration, and imperial geopolitics" (Kipfer 2011:101). As he productively puts it:

> Fanon analyzed everyday racism as an alienating spatial relation, treated colonization as spatial organization, and viewed decolonization in part as a form of reappropriating and transforming spatial relations in the colonial city and through the construction of nationwide sociospatial alliances. (Kipfer 2007:703)

Nevertheless, even Kipfer leaves key questions unaddressed regarding the relationship between Fanon's two mobilities, which we would do well to take up. For one, the problem of recognition—and the relation between recognition and anti-

colonial dialectical movement—remains largely absent from his work ("recognition" does not appear at all in Kipfer [2007], and only in passing in Kipfer [2022]). And, further still, it also remains unclear how precisely the racialisation of (colonial) mobility and Fanon's sub-ontological zone of nonbeing should be theorised together—*and in relation to the reproduction of capital, and the abstract-level laws of motion in capitalist society*. Put otherwise, even if Kipfer teases out how spatial processes relate to and structure Fanon's understanding of decolonisation—moving beyond the largely bifurcated literature on Fanon's dialectics and Fanonian geographies—he does not attempt to weave together a theorisation of the relationship between, and reproduction of, racialised patterns of confinement and mobility, the sub-ontological zone of nonbeing, and the expanded reproduction of capital itself. That is, simply put, not within the ambit of Kipfer's otherwise highly generative writing on Fanon.

It is in relation to precisely these conceptual lacunae—and this more general theoretical bifurcation—that this article departs. It asks: (i) How should we think *together* the geographical patterns of mobility and immobility described by Fanon, and Fanon's own conceptualisation of dialectical movement? And (ii) how, if at all, should the expanded reproduction of capital be theorised in that context—in relation, that is, to the production of the zone of nonbeing and the reproduction of uneven (and highly racialised) patterns of spatial mobility? Or, to put these two questions differently, I am here concerned to probe (i) how entrenched geographical patterns of mobility and immobility facilitate the (re)production of the racialised zone of nonbeing described by Fanon—and thus prevent or inhibit the movement of anti-colonial history. And to engage (ii) how, if at all, those precise spatial dynamics and patterns of racialisation contribute to the expanded reproduction of capital.

To answer these tightly linked questions, this article develops an approach that is highly sympathetic to the recent work of Coulthard (2014) and Kipfer (2007), among others, but which moves in a different theoretical direction, reading Fanon in and through other literatures. And it does so in three parts. First, this article reads Fanon's understanding of colonial mobility and confinement through Jason W. Moore's recent work on capitalist world-ecology, suggesting that in particular historical-geographical contexts—such as those described by Fanon himself—geographical patterns of mobility and confinement operate as the presupposition and result of "race" itself; while also functionally enabling capitalism's necessary and enduring dialectic of appropriation and capitalisation, and reproducing the Fanonian zone of nonbeing. Following a brief historical concretisation of this theorisation in the context of antebellum "carceral landscapes" in the US South (see Johnson 2013), this article will then attempt to identify the relationship between racialised and spatialised patterns of (im)mobility, reciprocal recognition, and the movement of anti-colonial history. It will argue that, in contexts like those described by Fanon—in which racialised patterns of (im)mobility, capital accumulation, and the zone of nonbeing are tightly articulated—a spatialised "counter-ontological" politics is the only means of establishing intersubjective symmetry and the preconditions for a "new humanism". Finally, this article will close by briefly reflecting on the merits of reading Fanon—and of pursuing a Fanonian

theorisation—in a post-civil rights context in which formal equality is ostensibly guaranteed to all, such as the contemporary United States. Here, I will draw explicitly on Stuart Hall's writing on articulation and "lines of tendential force", underscoring that previous rounds of uneven geographical development have sedimented and solidified the tight articulation of race, mobility, and capital accumulation across a range of contexts—effectively rendering Fanon's notion of the zone of nonbeing applicable in the present.

Race, Mobility, and Capitalist World-Ecology

Jason W. Moore's recent work on capitalist world-ecology may appear an odd place to begin our theorisation—not least given the fact that Fanon predates Moore by roughly half a century. Nevertheless, Moore's work provides a useful starting point in the present context, if only insofar as it helps to establish an abstract-level theorisation of capitalism through which we might consider Fanon's more meso-level and concrete-complex concerns regarding coloniality, differentiated mobilities, and the politics of recognition (see, on these theoretical distinctions, Brenner 2004). Indeed, while there are many moving parts to Moore's project, at its core is a value-theoretical argument—and, thus, a set of claims regarding capitalism's *necessary* features, at the highest level of abstraction (see Conroy 2022a). In *Capitalism in the Web of Life* and elsewhere, Moore (2015:54) insists that capitalist reproduction is contingent upon the "historical and logical *non-identity* between the value-form and its necessarily more expansive value-relations". He argues that the value form under capitalism remains abstract social labour, as it was for Marx (see also Lefebvre 1991:307); and that the substance of value remains constituted in the act of exchange as the social aggregate of geographically disparate (and differentially priced) processes of *exploitation within the wage nexus*. However, the value form also requires for its existence, Moore maintains, a *necessarily* more expansive set of non-commodified socio-ecological value relations. It requires socio-ecological inputs channelled from outside of the wage nexus and the commodity system. And historically, this has meant the reproductive work of "women, nature, and colonies" (see Mies 1986; Moore 2015).

Departing from the inherited language of Marxist geopolitical economy, Moore extends these insights, identifying (what he refers to as) capital's enduring and endemic dialectic of "appropriation" and "capitalisation". Appropriation names the extra-economic processes described above, through which capital works to "identify, secure, and channel unpaid work [from] outside the commodity system into the circuit of capital" (Moore 2015:17). (Other scholars more typically refer to this kind of work as "expropriated" [e.g. Fraser and Jaeggi 2018].) Capitalisation, on the other hand, refers not only to the exploitation of labour power within the wage nexus, but also to the intensive investment in technology and fixed capital inputs that capitalists undertake to raise the productivity of labour, increase the "material throughput of an average hour of work", and hasten the turnover time of capital (Moore 2015:102; see also Ekers and Prudham 2018:22). Crucially, the distinction between what Moore identifies as a the "zone of appropriation" and the "zone of capitalisation" is not set in stone. Certain kinds of work are not

inherently "appropriable" but made so; they emerge through a process of institutionally supported, ethico-political cheapening (see Mies 1986). Further still, the relationship between the zone of appropriation and the zone of capitalisation is one that is perpetually being redrawn, precisely in relation to the crisis tendencies of capital.

Following this final point, Moore suggests not only that capital requires the relative disequilibrium between appropriation and capitalisation, but that it is also driven to undermine that disequilibrium—in a dialectic of tendency and countertendency—and to face crises of overaccumulation as a result. In a somewhat overly schematic way, we can say that within capitalist economies the "zone of capitalisation" periodically and systemically *encroaches* upon the "zone of appropriation", bringing more and more of capital's "free gifts" under the sway of the commodity system, raising the value composition of capital to the point of crisis (see also Jakes and Shokr 2017). The principles animating this tendency toward encroachment are complex, and stem from a variety of tightly linked factors: the fact that the "reproduction time of capital and the reproduction times of the rest of nature" tend to enter into contradiction, forcing the "share of unpaid work/energy" to "fall relative to the mass of capital"; the tendency of "matter/energy [to] move from more useful to less useful forms within the prevailing configuration" of the web of life (also known as "the entropy problem"); and due to capital's tendency to simply become more wasteful over time due to the rise of "negative value"—or the growth in "historical natures that are increasingly hostile to capital accumulation, and which can be temporarily fixed (if at all) only through increasingly costly and toxic strategies" (Moore 2015:103–104; see O'Connor 1988 for an early use of "historical nature"). Nevertheless, what is clear enough is that these dynamics force—again to use Moore's particular lexicon—the "world-ecological surplus to fall"; they cause the price of production to rise and the rate of profit to decline.

In the short to medium term, these dynamics often incentivise capital to pursue *further and intensified capitalisation*, so as to rachet up the rate of metabolic throughput and increase the productivity of labour. But as we might expect, such intermediate efforts ultimately and necessarily prove contradictory and fruitless. They simply bring more of capital's "free gifts" into the circuit of capitalisation, further raising the value composition of capital. Indeed, while such moments of short to medium term capitalisation might provide some gains, the continuing decline of the ecological surplus is sure to follow. And, as Moore points out, this movement of appropriation and capitalisation structures both systemic cycles of accumulation and the geographical movement of capital. It is these abstract-level dynamics that propel and produce crises of overaccumulation—which is where all regimes of accumulation end up. In such moments capital pursues a process of geographical re-territorialisation and institutional reorganisation precisely to *regain* the disequilibrium between the value form and its necessarily more expansive, non-commodified value relations. These moments generally entail "commodity frontier" movements; they represent an effort by capital to reorganise production, and identify, secure, and appropriate new inputs, particularly in key "generative sectors" (cf. Bunker and Ciccantell 2003). And while this kind of re-

territorialisation has historically been particularly noticeable at the geographical *limits* or *peripheries* of the capitalist world-system, we should not conflate "frontier movements" with the so-called "global countryside" (cf. Beckert et al. 2021). Such moments involve the widening and deepening of capitalisation and the even greater widening and deepening of appropriation across capitalist space (Moore 2015:144).

Of course, these abstract-level lineaments maintain critical salience in relation to multiple literatures. They quite clearly help to transcend the static spatial presuppositions that undergird much scholarship on capitalist ecology and capitalism's "metabolic rift"; and this was, unsurprisingly, one of Moore's earliest targets in their formulation (see, for context, Burkett 1999; Foster 2000). And yet, more important for our purposes, is the fact that racialisation is at the centre of Moore's account—with critical implications for the Fanonian theorisation pursued here. As noted, Moore maintains that capital's *historical* strategy for guaranteeing its *necessary* "world-ecological surplus"—and thus of staving off crises of overaccumulation in the *longue durée*—has been the devaluation (and expropriation) of racialised, gendered, and ecological work (see Conroy 2022a, 2022b). Capital (with the backing of the state) has consistently worked to produce, codify, and police the bounds of race (and gender), *relegating much of the work done by women and non-white people to the zone of appropriation*, and outside of the wage nexus (Mies 1986; von Werlhof 1988). And Moore insists that this broad relation persists today (a theme that will be taken up in much more depth below). He puts it as follows:

> The paid work of (some) humans remains the economic pivot of capital—socially necessary labor-time. But its necessary conditions of reproduction are found in the *unpaid* work of "women, nature, and colonies" (Mies 1986:77). (Moore 2018:242)

Here we might only add that capital often finds its "fix" to crises of overaccumulation through practices of racist brutality and—when all else fails—through the instantiation of new forms of racialisation and imperialism. Another way of putting this is to say that racialised expropriation—which has been historically endemic even in "normal" periods of capitalist history—tends to work evermore violently in times of crisis through "projects to control, rationalise, and channel potentially unruly human and extra-human sources of unpaid work/energy, *without immediately capitalizing these sources*" (Moore 2015:101). It is typically only after established forms of racialised extraction *fail* to guarantee profitability that capitalist production is fully re-organised and re-spatialised (see also Fraser 2018:5).

It is precisely here that we can re-engage Fanon, and his writing on spatiality and colonial patterns of (im)mobility. Indeed, it is my contention that in reading Fanon alongside this broad architecture established by Moore, several key points come into view. At the most foundational level, Moore's insights help us to make sense of the colonial "history of pillage" described so vividly by Fanon himself; and to contextualise his claim that racialised work in the colonies "nourished" the European metropole and "European opulence" (Fanon 1963:96). As Fanon quite forcefully put it:

> The oppressor, ensconced in his sector, creates the spiral, the spiral of domination, exploitation and looting. In the other sector, the colonized subject lies coiled and robbed, and fuels as best he can the spiral which moves seamlessly from the shores of the colony to the palaces and docks of the metropolis … (Fanon 2004:14, quoted in Aguiar et al. 2021)

We are now able to suggest that this colonised subject—lying coiled and robbed, in his "sector"—was instrumental in maintaining the "*non-identity* between the value-form and its necessarily more expansive value-relations" in Fanon's historical context (see, again, Moore 2015:54). Indeed, while many scholars have obscured this point, it seems clear in the present context that the forms of racialised theft identified by Fanon—the forms of extraction, expropriation, and dispossession which ensured, in his words, that the colony functioned as "Europe's small farmers, who specialize[d] in unfinished products" (see Fanon 1963:152)—were the *phenomenal forms* of capital's *necessary* appropriation/capitalisation dialectic. Despite their historical specificity, they were the manifestation of an enduring and endemic principle, which operates across all capitalist conjunctures (Conroy 2022a, 2022c).

The theoretical architecture elaborated above also helps us to make sense of Fanon's reflections on the forms of spatial mobility and confinement that defined colonial society. As noted, Fanon suggests that differential mobilities were the presupposition and result of colonial racialisation itself, helping to produce the "native" as a "being hemmed in" (Fanon 1963:52). The "hegemony of colonialism" appears in Fanon as "predicated on" (and reproduced through) the "*spatial separation* that exist[s] as segregation in colonial cities and on forms of demarcating city and countryside through colonial administration" (Kipfer 2007:709). We can now suggest that those spatial dynamics supported the making and remaking of racial identity—as Fanon himself insisted in works ranging from *The Wretched of the Earth* to *A Dying Colonialism*; *and, further still*, that they were integral to the reproduction of colonial capitalism as well, effectively marking out and reproducing the relation between distinctive populations and the wage nexus. It seems more than fair to suggest, in the present context, that it was in and through relations of forced mobility and confinement that both racialisation and the appropriation/capitalisation dialectic were reproduced; and that these spatial relations, and their articulation to processes of capital accumulation, helped to make and remake the zone of nonbeing in the colonial context. After all, for Fanon the zone of nonbeing was a racialised category, but it was also (in turn) a straightforwardly economic one as well. In the contexts about which Fanon wrote, race was both, as he put it, "cause" and "consequence": "you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem" (Fanon 1963:40).

Of course, to say as much is certainly not to suggest that the differential patterns of racialised mobility and immobility described by Fanon *necessarily* functioned to guarantee expropriation in the period of mid-20th century colonialism. Forms of hierarchised social ascription other than race could have obviously—in

theory—played the same functional role, vis-à-vis capital (Conroy 2022a). And, furthermore, we should not assume that differential racialised mobilities operated in the colonial contexts described by Fanon seamlessly in the interests of accumulation. Such patterns of uneven racialised mobility surely emerged through highly contested and politically negotiated socio-spatial struggles; they were never preordained nor predetermined. Indeed, capitalist geographies always emerge within and through politically mediated social spaces already forged by previous rounds of accumulation; these contested and uneven palimpsestic landscapes are "far more reminiscent"—as Henri Lefebvre famously pointed out—"of flaky *mille-feuille* [thousand-sheets] pastry than the homogenous and isotropic space of classical (Euclidean/Cartesian) mathematics" (Lefebvre 1991:86). Nevertheless, if we take seriously Moore's theorisation, and the reading of Fanon provided above, it is clear enough that the colonial context described by Fanon was the "*phenomenal form … in which global value relations assert[ed] themselves*" (Arboleda 2020:26, emphasis added). Capital's necessary dialectic of appropriation and capitalisation emerged in and through that distinctive socio-spatial conjuncture, with patterns of racialised mobility and immobility largely (if not exclusively) functioning in support of capital, and effectively (if not exclusively) operating as the presupposition and result of "race" and the Fanonian zone of nonbeing. As Fanon himself productively pointed out, colonialism took hold in and through the "the *petrification* of the country districts" (Fanon 1963:109, emphasis added), and the radical circumscription of movement in the "native city" (see Fanon 1965:52)—processes which enabled an extractive economy "marked by violence" and "carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons" (Fanon 1963:36).

Carceral Landscapes

In something of a brief historical-geographical intermezzo, we would do well to demonstrate both what the theorisation established above illuminates in a (more precisely defined) concrete conjuncture; and, to underscore how these dynamics —and the tight relationship between race, mobility, and accumulation—appear outside of the context of the mid-20th century colony, as described by Fanon. With that agenda in view, the literature on the antebellum South, and the recent work of historian Walter Johnson (2013) on capitalism, slavery, and territorial expansion in the Lower Mississippi Valley in particular, is highly instructive. While Johnson is not much interested in developing a theorisation of capitalism in that work—nor with the relationship between race, space, and recognition, per se—his account of the "carceral landscapes" of the antebellum South productively demonstrates how capitalism's appropriation/capitalisation dialectic comes to be articulated with, and reproduced through, racialised distinctions and racialised patterns of mobility and confinement.[4] Put otherwise, it is through his story of slave revolts, imperial dreams, and sexual violence that we might glean not simply an economic system teetering on the edge of collapse (what Johnson calls "slave racial capitalism")—but the imbrication of differentiated relations of racialised mobility and immobility in the making and remaking of that geohistorical formation.

Indeed, even if he does not put it in these terms, the crisis tendencies immanent to capitalist society are central to Johnson's account of the pre-Civil War Lower Mississippi Valley. As he recalls, by the mid-1840s the steamboat economy had "discovered its outer limit" (Johnson 2013:97–98). As surplus capital flowed into the region—along with slaves from the upper South—it became increasingly difficult to find profitable investment in the transport of cotton on the river. "[E]very inland backwater that had just enough water in the spring to carry a steamboat was being serviced. There were no more new routes to establish, no more hinterlands to draw into trade; the geographic limit of the frontier of accumulation had been reached" (Johnson 2013:98). And, further still, it was in this precise antebellum conjuncture that the plantation economy at large also experienced a falling ecological surplus—which Johnson presents through the language of "metabolic rift". As plantation capitalists turned toward the "radical simplification of nature" in this pre-war moment, and the monocropping of Petit Gulf (*Gossypium barbadense*)—a hybrid strain of cotton—they effectively stripped the land of the Lower Mississippi of its fertility (Johnson 2013:8). The regional "lords of the lash" were evermore subject to the "will and direction" of the "lords of the loom", pushing the region's ecology—and enslaved people—to the brink of exhaustion (and beyond) (Beckert 2014:122). And yet, in spite of these crisis dynamics, Johnson (2013:98) notes that capitalists did not halt their investment in steamships. Nor did slaveholding capitalists leave their land and slaves to be "devalued". Enslaved people—in particular—could not simply be left to rust or lie fallow, as other investments might. They posed a problem *as humans*: "[They] would starve. [They] would steal. [They] would revolt" (Johnson 2013:13). And thus, while steamboat capitalists worked to run boats faster and longer—attempting to "control time" and to rev up the circulation of capital—slaveholders attempted to cut costs in the process of cotton production, and to find new (and increasingly brutal) forms of socio-ecological organisation and control.

Unsurprisingly, this highly contradictory conjuncture produced all kinds of disastrous results in the form of steamboat accidents, lives lost, and ecologies denuded. What is perhaps most important in the present context, however, is that the shifting movement of appropriation and capitalisation identified above had starkly racialised, corporeal effects—particularly as the burdens of racialised expropriation and forced underconsumption were intensified in the face of crisis-ridden monocrop production, ecological degradation, and a falling ecological surplus. Indeed, one "resolution" to that dynamic was found in the physical metabolism of slaves themselves—through reductions in weekly rations, and a downward push upon their "subsistence level" (Johnson 2013:186). As Johnson points out, the "narratives of ex-slaves contain more information about food than any topic other than beatings and escapes"; these were people not only starved as a mode of labour control, but as a result of the fact that the "wealth of the land was being drained away by the false economy of to-the-hand monocropping" (Johnson 2013:178–181). Emblematically, the fugitive slave John Brown recalled "his body breaking out into running sores after his owner tried to vertically integrate his operations by feeding his slaves on cottonseed oil" (Johnson 2013:187). And, as historian Caitlin Rosenthal (2016:79) notes, slaveholders "debate[ed] slaves'

consumption in much the same way they considered the addition of marl or guano to southern soils".

Further, and most importantly in the present context, we also find the implementation of new modes of racialised, forced (im)mobility—and the hardening of entrenched patterns of spatial confinement (and "compartmentalisation")—in this crisis-ridden context, as slave capitalists grappled with the mounting contradictions of their preferred economic system, and attempted to maintain the disequilibrium between appropriation and capitalisation. Indeed, during this antebellum period, enslaved people increasingly became the victims of the "sight lines that defined the field of slaveholding power" (Johnson 2013:167). In this "carceral landscape", as Johnson names it, enslaved people were "supposed to be in certain places at certain times", and to be "elsewhere" was to provide proof "of a larger, hidden disorder", which was met with violent consequences (Johnson 2013:169). In Johnson's words (2013:219, emphasis added), "[t]he remaking of space as discipline" in this conjuncture "*began with the abrasion of bare feet on the road*. Runaway slaves often referred to the condition of their feet as an index of their vulnerability. Frederick Douglass remembered a time when the cracks in his feet had been broad enough to receive the pen with which he was writing his narrative. Andrew Jackson remembered that he had been slowed by having to stop to bathe his 'bruised and swollen feet', and then, shortly after, had been run down while 'bare-foot in an open field'".

And slave mobility was restricted in other ways as well: horses provided a key tool for slave owners precisely because they allowed "patrollers" to command movement across the landscape (Johnson 2013:222); specific forms of torture and interrogation were deployed, imposing "the geography of ownership upon apparently errant [or 'wrongly' mobile] slaves" (Johnson 2013:225); and swimming was forbidden, lest the "nerves, muscles, heart, and lungs" of enslaved people be "coordinated in a way that would allow them to slip crosswise through the grid-structured surveillance of the Cotton Kingdom" (Johnson 2013:219). In short, the forms of spatialised mobility and confinement that were both presupposition and result of the slave regime—a regime in which "'slavery', landscape, and human body" were "mutually [and radically] reformatted" (Johnson 2013:168)—took on a profound significance in this conjuncture, "reaching into the fabric" of enslaved corporeality itself (Johnson 2013:219; see also, for general reflections on these themes, Andueza et al. 2021). We find, in other words, a tight relation between racialisation, mobility, and the mediation of capitalism's appropriation/capitalisation dialectic in this context—much as we find in the context of Fanon's writing as well.

The Geography of History

With this understanding of the relationship between race, mobility, and capital accumulation in mind, we can now (re)turn to Fanon's conceptualisation of *dialectical* movement, so as to address a key problematic sketched at the outset of this article: namely, the relationship between the differential patterns of racialised mobility and confinement described by Fanon, and Fanon's own

conceptualisation of radical, anti-colonial dialectical movement and the movement of history. In doing so, we should recall that in Fanon we find considerable scepticism regarding the prospects for uninitiated dialectical progress; and toward the notion that liberation—and the reciprocal recognition of equals—will emerge through "the mechanical development of material forces" (Fanon 1967:173). Indeed, Fanon's image of anti-colonial, dialectical negation differs quite fundamentally from many other accounts (see, for context, Biko 1978; Winant 2004), insofar as such negative movement must be *put into motion* from a condition of stasis or congealed opposition. Such movement must be *inaugurated*—precisely because racism structures the racialised subject "*outside of the dialectics of recognition*" (Gordon 2008:86, emphasis added)—through actions that undermine "the ontological hierarchy and inequality" upon which colonisation is based (Ciccariello-Maher 2017:62). Stuart Hall (2021:350) productively summarises the theorisation as follows:

> for Fanon, the blockage which detotalises the Hegelian "recognition" of the One by the Other in exchange for the *racialised* look, arises from the historically specific, specular structure of racism, not from the general mechanism of self-identification.

While this might all sound highly abstract, it does help to clarify several key points—points that can in fact be stated quite simply. Fanon's position suggests that the possibility of anti-colonial history is not guaranteed; there is no teleological promise of reciprocal recognition. This is not because the colonial world fails to produce contradictions and crises, but rather because in such contexts of congealed opposition—or, in those contexts in which some are racialised and reduced to a category that is below full personhood—"the master laughs at the consciousness of the slave"; "[w]hat he wants from the slave is not recognition but work" (Fanon 1986:220). Put another way, even as the racialised subject demands that the world be restructured, these demands go unheeded by the coloniser; "discursive opposition", after all, "has been barred to some people" (Gordon 2008:87). It is for these reasons that some form of *inaugural action* is required in Fanon's conceptualisation; an action that would work to break the "shattering objectification" that confines some to the position of sub-ontological status (Ciccariello-Maher 2017:56), and provide the basis for a dialogical relation among equals. And, moreover, according to Fanon it is in and through this moment of inaugural action that the racialised subject not only establishes the conditions for recognition—but produces a new kind of subjectivity as well, "remodel[ling] the consciousness that man has of himself, and of his former dominators" (see Fanon 1965:30). It is in and through this process of inaugural action—which establishes the basis for reciprocal recognition—that the racialised subject throws off the "mental sedimentation" that results from "years of oppression" (Fanon 1965:179).

And yet, what still must be established, for our purposes, is the *precise* relationship between spatialised and racialised (im)mobility and this conceptualisation of dialectical movement. Here again, we would do well to push Fanon further, and to suggest (i) that this kind of relationship between racialisation and (mis)recognition is not limited to the mid-20th century colony—as already intimated via our

reading of the carceral landscapes of the antebellum South; and (ii) that Fanon's "pre-dialectical moment"—which establishes the conditions for intersubjective symmetry—*must be spatialised* under particular conditions of racialised capitalism (which, again, extend beyond the colonial conjuncture). This latter, spatial argument is to a certain extent present in Fanon himself; his comments on geographical mobility are, as suggested above, tenuously connected to his comments on dialectical movement. As Kipfer (2007:708) points out:

> Fanon not only suggested that colonialism and racism must be understood in spatial (as well as historical) terms, he also indicated that the transformation of (weakly hegemonic) colonial space must be understood as a historico-geographical process and as a strategy of appropriating and transforming space *and* (linear–repetitive) time.

Still, it deserves a much finer theorisation, which we are now equipped to provide. Indeed, we can now insist that in conjunctures in which accumulation is, at least in part, contingent upon differential patterns of racialised mobility and immobility, such a spatial practice must entail the instantiation of a new geographical regime—and the deconstruction of the existing compartmentalised world upon which capital depends. This is precisely because, as already argued, the racialised zone of nonbeing—"*which prevents the dialectic from entering into motion to begin with*" (Ciccariello-Maher 2017:53, emphasis added)—is, in such contexts, both the presupposition and result of capital's expropriative dimension and reproduced through spatial patterns of mobility and immobility. To put an end to both the racialised zone of nonbeing and the condition of dialectical stasis it produces, it is imperative to deconstruct the spatial forms that are both its precondition and result. Spatial reorganisation emerges, in other words, as a necessary "counter-ontological violence" which can propel a new kind of history and open up the conditions of possibility for reciprocal recognition.[5] Following Lefebvre (2009:98), "[a]ny transformation of the world that remains caught in the pre-existent morphology"—and the pre-existent relations of mobility and immobility—"will do no more than reproduce the relations of domination in a more or less disguised form".

The implications of this claim are substantial. It suggests that, at least in certain racialised conjunctures, a radical dialectical movement is dependent upon a break with those relations of spatialised mobility and immobility that are constitutive of racialised capitalism and its enduring appropriation/capitalisation dialectic. This claim thereby circumvents the pitfalls of much of the literature on the possibility of radical anti-racist and "decolonial" action. That literature is highly diverse, but has a tendency to lean toward one of two extremes. On the one hand, it is fatalist: some see the racist episteme that pervades perception and discourse in certain contexts—"structuring what can and cannot appear"—as so suffocating that the episteme *always* renders the racialised other as guilty (see, for context, Butler 1993:16). On the other hand, it is romantic: it suggests the possibility of an "uncontaminated" decolonial epistemology and politics, one that exists in "the South" and/or is putatively outside of the hegemony of global racialised capitalism (see, for context, de Sousa Santos 2016a, 2016b). These scholars thus imagine an approach to decolonisation that focuses rather exclusively on the

celebration of epistemic diversity and on the "constitutive outside" of the capitalist socio-spatial totality (see also Conroy 2022d; Grosfoguel 2011). Against both of these imaginaries, the perspective outlined above suggests that emancipatory political action is a possibility, and that in certain conjunctures it must proceed through a break with—a negation of—the spatial relations constitutive of racialised capitalism. Again, I am here following Fanon himself, who insisted quite clearly that bourgeois society is a society "*rigidified in predetermined forms*, forbidding all evolution, all gains, all progress, all discovery"; and that "disalienation" will come to those who refuse to "let themselves be *sealed away in the materialized Tower of the Past*" (Fanon 1986:224, 226, emphasis added). I am simply pushing that conceptualisation further, underscoring that, in certain contexts, this break with the past will only be constituted through a break with the relations of mobility and immobility that function to both guarantee the expanded reproduction of capital and the zone of nonbeing itself.

Importantly, this conception of the relationship between spatial practice and reciprocal recognition also circumvents the pitfalls that have been ascribed to Fanon himself (rightly or wrongly). It avoids the critique that Fanonian positions valorise violence *qua* violence, confusing the abstract domination of capital with "the concrete". Moishe Postone (2006:107–108) has gestured toward this position, linking the work of Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto, and Fanon to the ostensibly failed forms of political radicalism that emerged in the 1960s. He writes:

> The turn to Sorelian violence was a … turn to the concrete. Violence, or the idea of violence, was seen as an expression of political will, of historical agency, countering structures of bureaucratisation and alienation. In the face of alienation and bureaucratic stasis, violence was deemed creative, and violent action per se became viewed as revolutionary.

The re-conceptualisation of Fanonian principles developed here neither valorises violence *qua* violence nor confuses the concrete and the abstract. Among other things, it recognises the specific productiveness of a "counter-ontological" spatial politics precisely because patterns of differentiated mobility are both the presupposition and result of the zone of nonbeing in particular contexts; and *constitutive* of racialised capitalism *as a highly abstract form of social domination*. Another way of putting this is to say that the understanding of dialectical movement sketched here adopts the position that particular spatial relations mediate capitalist valorisation, and must be transcended in order to pursue both transformational redistribution and recognition (see Fraser 1995; Lefebvre 2009). Such "concrete", spatialised political action is thus a first step—if only just that—in engaging with the abstract logics of capital, given that social space "links the phenomenology of everyday life to the macrological dimensions of the social order" (Kipfer 2007:718). To suggest otherwise would be to sever the abstractions of capital from the texture of everyday life (see Harvey 2019); or, to adopt a "problematical geographical imagination" in which the "couplets local/global and place/space" are understood to "map on to that of concrete/abstract", rather than understanding capital's abstractions as emerging in and through (and recurrently shaping) the spatial formations of everyday life (Massey 2005:184; see also Marx 1992: Chapter 4).

Lines of Tendential Force

Thus far, this article has worked to theorise two largely disconnected aspects of Fanon's oeuvre: his reflections on spatial patterns of mobility and immobility; and his reflections on dialectical movement—or the movement of anti-colonial history—and reciprocal recognition. In doing so, it has drawn attention not only to Fanon's historical-geographical comments, which were primarily formulated in reference to the mid-20th century Francophone colony, but to the US antebellum South as well, pointing out the tight historical relationship between forced (im)mobility, capitalism's appropriation/capitalisation dialectic, and the making and remaking of the sub-ontological zone of nonbeing in both of those contexts. And yet, with this narrative in view, a critical question remains, one that follows nearly all work on Fanon and Fanonian geographies: Is Fanon, and his language of the "zone of nonbeing", still relevant for those of us thinking from liberal democracies of the 21st century—such as the contemporary United States? Glen Coulthard ponders a similar question (in the Canadian context), pointing out that, "[a]fter all, Fanon is arguably best known for the articulation of colonialism he develops in *The Wretched of the Earth*, where colonial rule is posited, much like Marx posited it before him, as a structure of dominance maintained through unrelenting and punishing forms of violence" (Coulthard 2014:16). To what extent, then, does it make sense to adopt Fanon's language in an ostensibly "multiracial democracy", in which formal equality is supposed to be guaranteed to all, regardless of race? More plainly, to what extent should we presume that the theoretical relation between race, space, and recognition provided above applies today?

Of course, for the increasingly large contingent of scholars that draw on the lexicon of "racial liberalism", and other allied theoretical traditions, this is not a difficult question. Several of those theorists have forcefully suggested that formal, bourgeois rights not only obscure the fact that under capitalism workers remain "free" of any means of subsistence absent the sale of their labour power for a wage; but that such projections of bourgeois equality merely mask the forms of racialised injustice that persist today as integral to capitalism. In much of this work, liberalism itself is said to have at its core an "impulse to create" and—perhaps more importantly—maintain "divisions of humanity" (Ranganathan 2018:1398; see also, for context, Barrett 2014; Go 2017; Mills 2017; Ranganathan 2016, 2020). And, in more Fanonian language, this means that despite the appearance of formal equality, racialised (and particularly black) subjects still do not confront "their white counterparts on the universal Ground of the law as written" (Ciccariello-Maher 2012). The state continues to inhibit the conditions for intersubjective symmetry, they argue; and to codify and enforce the status distinctions that make racialised injustice possible, all while obscuring them through the bourgeois language of individual responsibility and the atomistic self. As Melamed and Reddy (2019) put it, capitalism today often "governs through administrative apparatuses that presume rights-bearing as an abstract universal, all the while using rights as a material force that generates both the systemic and haphazard violences necessary for … accumulation". And Fanon himself helps to support such a reading of contemporary liberal democracy, insofar as he was highly aware of the capacity for formal equality to enshrine the sub-ontological zone of

nonbeing, and to short-circuit the pre-dialectical establishment of equal personhood requisite for mutual recognition (see also Coulthard 2014).[6]

Still, other scholars have called for more historical-geographical nuance, complicating the transposition of Fanonian ideas in the present context. Stuart Hall, to provide just one prominent example among many, reminds us that the "subject to which Fanon addresses himself is historically specific" (Hall 2021:344; see also Hart 2008:698). And, indeed, in much of Hall's own writing there is a strong emphasis on the conjunctural—and on the logical non-necessity of specific political, ideological, and racist forms vis-à-vis capitalist reproduction (see, for context, Hall 2019a). In his work on articulation, Hall notes that processes of articulation "can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions"; but that this is a "linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute, and essential for all time". Upon reading Hall, we might therefore surmise that the articulation of race, capitalism, and differentiated mobility identified above has "*no necessary 'belongingness'*" (Hall 2019b:235, emphasis added); and that we must not take it for granted, nor assume that it persists in the present, under conditions of liberal democracy. Of course, in less abstract terms, other scholars have simply pointed out that we must take seriously recent political economic shifts within contexts like the United States, wherein we have witnessed a move "from a quasi-deterministic to a more pronouncedly probabilistic nexus of class and race" (Rossi and Táíwò 2020). As Rossi and Táíwò point out, the "professional-managerial and ruling classes are now both racially permeable by law and in practice" (ibid.). This would seem to suggest that the reading of race, mobility, and recognition provided above requires some qualification in the context of contemporary "progressive neoliberalism" within the United States (see Fraser 2017).

And yet, with that said, Hall also notes that particular articulations—even if they have no "necessary belongingness"—maintain relative durability across historical-geographical conjunctures, providing a way to thread the needle between the two seemingly opposed sets of claims identified above (Conroy 2022a). Indeed, in his classic work on race and "societies structured in dominance", Hall notes that "there is no 'necessary correspondence' between the development of a form of capitalism and the political forms of parliamentary democracy", but that this "does not prevent us from arguing that the advent of capitalism has frequently (tendentially) been accompanied by the formation of bourgeois parliamentary democratic regimes"—and in fact, that those regimes might constitute the best "political shell" for capitalist development (Hall 2019a:203). Further still, Hall helpfully points out that in such contexts—in which there is "no 'necessary correspondence' or expressive homology" between articulated phenomena (Hall 2019a:196–197)—*specific articulations can be "sedimented and solidified by real historical development over time*" (Hall 2019a:203, emphasis added). And on these precise themes, Hall elsewhere deploys and develops the notions of "lines of tendential force" and "magnetic lines of tendency" (see Hall 2019b). These "lines of force" allow him to say, against the likes of Laclau and Mouffe, that society is not a "totally open discursive field" (Hall 2019b:240); such lines are effectively historical path-dependencies, holding distinctive articulations together

over time, and/or circumscribing the kinds of articulations that are possible in the future. Writing about religion, Hall provides a sense of how this operates:

> [Religion] exists historically in a particular formation, anchored very directly in relation to a number of different forces. Nevertheless, it has no necessary, intrinsic, transhistorical belongingness. Its meaning—political and ideological—comes precisely from its position within a formation. It comes with what else it is articulated to. Since those articulations are not inevitable, not necessary, they can potentially be transformed, so that religion can be articulated in more than one way. I insist that, historically, it has been inserted into particular cultures in a particular way over a long period of time, and this constitutes *the magnetic lines of tendency which are very difficult to disrupt*. (Hall 2019b:236, emphasis added)

By way of conclusion, I would thus like to simply suggest that even in the context of putatively multiracial liberal democracy in the United States, key "lines of tendential force" quite clearly operate so as to ensure the enduring articulation of racialised confinement and mobility and capital's appropriation/capitalisation dialectic—effectively rendering Fanon's notion of the zone of nonbeing broadly applicable in the present context. While the relationship between race, mobility, and capital accumulation might be complicated and reformatted in particular scales and geographies—with critically important political implications (Conroy 2022c)—it remains broadly the case that the contemporary "political order" in the United States functions to reinscribe the distinction between "rights bearing individuals and citizens" and "subject peoples" in a way that corresponds to the "color line" (see Fraser 2016:169); and that this bifurcation is produced and reproduced in and through relations of differentiated mobility, all while enabling capital's necessary appropriation/capitalisation dialectic. Indeed, I would in fact go further still, and insist that the *materialisation and spatial sedimentation* of uneven geographical development *produced by previous rounds of capital accumulation* helps to reproduce these relations in the present. Put otherwise, while distinctive combinations and articulations remain possible (and visible) in specific settings, *entrenched* patterns of spatial development themselves operate as key "lines of tendential force", ensuring the tight articulation of mobility, capital accumulation, and the Fanonian zone of nonbeing across a range of contemporary contexts (Conroy 2022e).

Once again, Fanon himself gestured toward aspects of these dynamics. He described Algerian colonialism as constitutive of and constituted by the "tight meshes" of the army and the police, *as well as a host of built structures*—"port facilities", "airdromes", and so on—that rooted themselves in space, and which produced the impression of "indefinite oppression" (Fanon 1965:179–180). And, elsewhere, he underscored the ways in which previous patterns of geographical development—and previous rounds of accumulation—structured later ones. In the context of post-colonial independence, for example, he called attention to the fact that the "national bourgeoisie" takes up not only the economic role of the European coloniser, but their geography as well: it "steps into the shoes of the *former European settlement*" (Fanon 1963:152, emphasis added). In the lexicon of Doreen Massey, space is here conceived as the accumulation of layers,

with the "successive imposition" of "new rounds of investment, new forms of activity" taking shape in and through the existing components of the material world (Massey 1995:114).[7] And this reading of colonisation almost surely informed Fanon's contention that "[t]o break up the colonial world does not mean" simply the abolition of "frontiers"; but rather "no more and no less [than] the abolition of one zone, its burial in the depths of the earth or its expulsion from the country" (Fanon 1963:41).

But of course, in order to properly glean how entrenched patterns of uneven geographical development—and entrenched dynamics of forced mobility and confinement—continue to structure the reproduction of Fanon's zone of nonbeing in the contemporary United States, we have to turn elsewhere: to the more recent work of scholars like Loïc Wacquant, who traces how the deadly symbiosis of "hyper-ghettoization" and mass incarceration *emerged from* the so-called "demise of the Black Belt as a viable [socio-spatial] instrument of caste containment in the urban industrial setting", reproducing norms of "ethnoracial division" anew (Wacquant 2001:115–116), while also bringing with it a host of new forms of racialised predation and expropriation (see Wang 2018); or to Sylvia Wynter's contention that "our global and nation-state socio-systemic hierarchies" continue to mete out "eugenic 'worth' between human groups at the level of *race, culture, religion, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and sex*"—even if the civil rights movement instantiated a "new variant of the eugenic/dysgenic status organizing principle", now organised "primarily by the growing life style differential between the suburban middle classes (who are metonymically White), and the inner city category of Post-Industrial Jobless (who are metonymically young Black males)" (Wynter 1994:53–54). Indeed, what all of this work, and much more, effectively demonstrates is that in spite of the vast political economic and socio-spatial transformations seen in the United States over the past several decades, enduring patterns of differentiated mobility continue to enable the tight articulation of race, social respect and esteem, and capitalist reproduction; historical patterns of uneven geographical development operate as key "lines of tendential force" circumscribing the kinds of articulations that are "available" in the present. The fixities of space, we might say, partly help to ensure and explain history's "changing same" (see Gilmore 2022).

While we should be careful with this kind of historical generalisation, it seems to provide good reason to insist that under present conditions we continue to require both Fanonian analysis and an "ontologically resistant" politics of spatial reorganisation. Put otherwise, we can now return to our original thesis and suggest that geographical patterns of mobility and confinement *continue* to operate as the presupposition and result of "race" in particular contexts; while also functionally enabling capitalism's necessary and enduring dialectic of appropriation and capitalisation, and reproducing the Fanonian zone of nonbeing. It remains the case, that is, that in certain conjunctures the tight articulation of race, mobility, and capital accumulation inhibits the reciprocal recognition of equals and guarantees the reproduction of capital—with the materialisation and sedimentation of uneven geographical development (produced by previous rounds of accumulation) ensuring the endurance of that dynamic. And as such, we can also say

that we continue to require, at least across a range of contexts, an "ontologically resistant" politics of spatial reorganisation. Indeed, in those contexts, it is only through such a spatial practice—through the production of a new kind of social space, and the deconstruction of existing racialised patterns of mobility—that we can hope to bring down the "ontological walls" that continue to divide and organise humanity (see Fanon 1986:219; Lefebvre 1991:54). As Fanon (1986:82) once put it: "another solution is possible". It simply "implies a restructuring of the world".

Acknowledgements

The development of this paper benefited substantially from dialogue with friends, teachers, and mentors. Thanks are due, in particular, to Salma Abouelhossein, Neil Brenner, Swarnabh Ghosh, and Walter Johnson for formative discussions; to conference participants at "POLLEN2020: Contested Natures" for providing feedback on an earlier version of this argument; to Alex Loftus for his editorial labour; and to three anonymous reviewers. All errors are my own.

Endnotes

[1] Of course, when Fanon uses "infrastructure" here he has the Marxist concept of "base" in mind; in some translations, "infrastructure" is thus rendered as "substructure". The original French reads: "*Aux colonies, l'infrastructure économique est également une superstructure. La cause est consequence: on est riche parce que blanc, on est blanc parce que riche*". Still, for the purposes of this essay, "infrastructure" provides an evocative translation.

[2] For a more general accounting of Fanon's engagement with space, see Sekyi-Otu (1996:72–87).

[3] In staging this argument, Maher again reminds us that Fanon's "zone of nonbeing" does not preclude the possibility of radical political action. He productively points out that, for Fanon, it is "precisely from the sterility and aridity of nonbeing—from all that survives, subsists, and *per*sists within that zone—that something truly and radically new might indeed emerge. In this and so many other ways, Fanon was [therefore] no pessimist" (Maher 2022:20; see also Fanon 1986).

[4] Johnson's ambitions are arguably best understood as historiographical. He is interested in telling a history that does not project the "territorial units secession created—Union in the North and Confederacy in the South—backward in time" (Johnson 2013:16). He wants to ask: Where was "the South" *seceding to*?

[5] It bears noting that "violence" is being used here in an expanded sense. And indeed, some scholars go further still. For Gordon (2007:11) the existence and persistence of the racialised zone of nonbeing renders "appearance" itself as violent, insofar as the appearance of a racialised Other—under such circumstances—is "illegitimate". "Violence, in this sense, need not be a physical imposition".

[6] Here we might recall that Fanon did in fact extend his analysis of the dialectic of recognition into the post-colonial period, albeit in a way that drew significant distinctions between national contexts. In *Black Skin, White Masks* he asserted that the dialectic of recognition remains blocked in those contexts in which "the white master recognized *without a struggle* the black slave" (Fanon 1986:191, emphasis added).

[7] A fascinating strand of theorisation has probed these themes of articulation and recombination in the South African context, demonstrating that it is from the contours of the existing material world that new worldviews, new subjectivities, new ideologies, *and new geographies* are formed (and reformed). While space prohibits an engagement with that literature here, Levenson (2022) provides a strong genealogy, with a focus on Gillian Hart's place in that cannon (see also Conroy 2022e).

References

Aguiar J, Chowdhury A, Falk M, Hinds-Heuglin L, Kapoor A, Lee Y, McKittrick K, Njoroge M, Oyeniran C, Rambold N and Valliere V (2021) Impermanence: On Frantz Fanon's geographies. *AntipodeOnline* 18 August https://antipodeonline.org/2021/08/18/frantz-fanons-geographies/ (last accessed 7 December 2022)

Andueza L, Davis A, Loftus A and Schling H (2021) The body as infrastructure. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4(3):799–817

Arboleda M (2020) *Planetary Mine: Territories of Extraction Under Late Capitalism*. New York: Verso

Barrett L (2014) *Racial Blackness and the Discontinuity of Western Modernity*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press

Beckert S (2014) *Empire of Cotton: A Global History*. New York: Vintage Books

Beckert S, Bosma U, Schneider M and Vanhaute E (2021) Commodity frontiers and the transformation of the global countryside: A research agenda. *Journal of Global History* 16 (3):435–450

Bhabha H (1999) Remembering Fanon: Self, psyche, and the colonial condition. In N Gibson (ed) *Rethinking Fanon: The Continuing Dialogue* (pp. 179–196). Amherst: Humanity Books

Biko S (1978) *Steve Biko: I Write What I Like* (ed A Stubbs). San Francisco: Harper & Row

Brenner N (2004) *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Bunker S and Ciccantell P (2003) Generative sectors and the new historical materialism: Economic ascent and the cumulatively sequential restructuring of the world economy. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 37:3–30

Burkett P (1999) *Marx and Nature: A Red and Green Perspective*. New York: St. Martin's Press

Butler J (1993) Endangered/endangering: Schematic racism and white paranoia. In R Gooding-Williams (ed) *Reading Rodney King / Reading Urban Uprising* (pp. 15–22). New York: Routledge

Ciccariello-Maher G (2012) The dialectics of standing one's ground. *Theory & Event* 15(3) https://muse.jhu.edu/article/484431 (last accessed 13 December 2022)

Ciccariello-Maher G (2014) Decolonial realism: Ethics, politics, and dialectics in Fanon and Dussel. *Contemporary Political Theory* 13(1):2–22

Ciccariello-Maher G (2017) *Decolonizing Dialectics*. Durham: Duke University Press

Conroy W (2022a) Race, capitalism, and the necessity/contingency debate. *Theory, Culture & Society* forthcoming

Conroy W (2022b) Background check: Spatiality and relationality in Nancy Fraser's expanded conception of capitalism. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* forthcoming

Conroy W (2022c) Uneven and combined: Some reflections on the "racial capitalism" debate. *Society+Space* 2 May https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/uneven-and-combined-some-reflections-on-the-racial-capitalism-debate (last accessed 7 December 2022)

Conroy W (2022d) Constitutive Outsides or Hidden Abodes? Totality, Dialectics, and Spatial Ideology in Critical Urban Theory. Unpublished manuscript

Conroy W (2022e) Presupposition/medium/result: Reading Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago's *Against the Commons*. *The Avery Review* forthcoming

Coulthard G (2014) *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

de Sousa Santos B (2016a) Epistemologies of the South and the future. *From the European South* 1:17–29

de Sousa Santos B (2016b) Para uma nova visão da Europa: Aprender com o Sul. *Sociologias* 18(43):24–56

Ekers M and Prudham S (2018) The socioecological fix: Fixed capital, metabolism, and hegemony. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 108(1):17–34

Fanon F (1963) *The Wretched of the Earth* (trans C Farrington). New York: Grove Press

Fanon F (1965) *A Dying Colonialism* (trans H Chevalier). New York: Grove Press
Fanon F (1967) *Toward the African Revolution* (trans H Chevalier). New York: Grove Press
Fanon F (1986) *Black Skin, White Masks* (trans C L Markmann). London: Pluto.
Fanon F (2004) *The Wretched of the Earth* (trans R Philcox). New York. Grove Press
Foster J B (2000) *Marx's Ecology: Materialism and Nature*. New York: Monthly Review Press
Fraser N (1995) From redistribution to recognition? Dilemmas of justice in a "post-socialist" age. *New Left Review* 212:68–93
Fraser N (2016) Expropriation and exploitation in racialized capitalism: A reply to Michael Dawson. *Critical Historical Studies* 3(1):163–178
Fraser N (2017) From progressive neoliberalism to Trump—and beyond. *American Affairs* 1 (4) https://americanaffairsjournal.org/2017/11/progressive-neoliberalism-trump-beyond (last accessed 7 December 2022)
Fraser N (2018) From exploitation to expropriation: Historic geographies of racialized capitalism. *Economic Geography* 94(1):1–17
Fraser N and Jaeggi R (2018) *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory*. Cambridge: Polity
Gates H L (1999) Critical Fanonism. In N Gibson (ed) *Rethinking Fanon: The Continuing Dialogue* (pp. 251–268). Amherst: Humanity Books
Gibson N (2012) What happened to the "promised land"? A Fanonian perspective on post-apartheid South Africa. *Antipode* 44(1):51–73
Gidwani V (2008) The subaltern moment in Hegel's dialectic. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 40(11):2578–2587
Gilmore R W (2022) *Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation*. New York: Verso
Go J (2017) Myths of nation and empire: The logic of America's liberal empire-state. *Thesis Eleven* 139(1):69–83
Gordon L (2007) Through the hellish zone of nonbeing: Thinking through Fanon, disaster, and the damned of the earth. *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 5:5–12
Gordon L (2008) A phenomenology of Biko's black consciousness. In A Mngxitama, A Alexander and N Gibson (eds) *Biko Lives! Contesting the Legacies of Steve Biko* (pp. 83–93). New York: Palgrave Macmillan
Grosfoguel R (2011) La descolonización del conocimiento: Diálogo crítico entre la visión descolonial de Frantz Fanon y la sociología descolonial de Boaventura de Sousa Santos. In CIDOB (eds) *Formas-Otras: Saber, Nombrar, Narrar, Hacer* (pp. 97–108). Barcelona: CIDOB edicions
Hall S (2019a [1980]) Race, articulation, and societies structured in dominance. In D Morley (ed) *Stuart Hall: Essential Essays, Volume 1* (pp. 172–221). Durham: Duke University Press
Hall S (2019b [1986]) On postmodernism and articulation: An interview with Stuart Hall by Larry Grossberg and others. In D Morley (ed) *Stuart Hall: Essential Essays, Volume 1* (pp. 222–246). Durham: Duke University Press
Hall S (2021 [1996]) Why Fanon? In P Gilroy and R W Gilmore (eds) *Stuart Hall: Selected Writings on Race and Difference* (pp. 339–358). Durham: Duke University Press
Hart G (2008) The provocations of neoliberalism: Contesting the nation and liberation after apartheid. *Antipode* 40(4):678–705
Harvey D (2019) *Spaces of Global Capitalism: A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*. New York: Verso
Hawthorne C (2019) Black matters are spatial matters: Black geographies for the twenty-first century. *Geography Compass* 13(11) https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12468
Jakes A and Shokr A (2017) Finding value in *Empire of Cotton*. *Critical Historical Studies* 4 (1):107–136
Johnson W (2013) *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
Kipfer S (2007) Fanon and space: Colonization, urbanization, and liberation from the colonial to the global city. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25(4):701–726

Kipfer S (2011) The times and spaces of (de-)colonization: Fanon's countercolonialism, then and now. In N Gibson (ed) *Living Fanon: Global Perspectives* (pp. 93–104). New York: Palgrave Macmillan
Kipfer S (2022) Comparison and political strategy: Internationalism, colonial rule, and urban research after Fanon. *Urban Studies* 59(8):1636–1654
Kipfer S and Goonewardena K (2007) Colonization and the new imperialism: On the meaning of urbicide today. *Theory & Event* 10(2) https://muse.jhu.edu/article/218089 (last accessed 13 December 2022)
Lefebvre H (1991) *The Production of Space* (trans D Nicholson-Smith). Oxford: Blackwell
Lefebvre H (2009) *State, Space, World: Selected Essays* (eds N Brenner and S Elden; trans G Moore, N Brenner and S Elden). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
Levenson Z (2022) Make "articulation" Gramscian again. In S Chari, M Hunter and M Samson (eds) *Ethnographies of Power: Radical Concepts with Gillian Hart* (pp. 187–215). Johannesburg: Wits University Press
Maher G (2022) *Anticolonial Eruptions: Racial Hubris and the Cunning of Resistance*. Berkeley: University of California Press
Marx K (1992) *Capital, Volume II* (trans D Fernbach). London: Penguin
Massey D (1995) *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. London: Palgrave Macmillan
Massey D (2005) *For Space*. London: Sage
Mbembe A (2003) Necropolitics (trans L Meintjes). *Public Culture* 15(1):11–40
Mbembe A (2017) *Critique of Black Reason* (trans L Dubois). Durham: Duke University Press
McKittrick K (2006) *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
McKittrick K (2016) Diachronic loops/deadweight tonnage/bad made measure. *Cultural Geographies* 23(1):3–18
Melamed J and Reddy C (2019) Using liberal rights to enforce racial capitalism. *Items* 30 July https://items.ssrc.org/race-capitalism/using-liberal-rights-to-enforce-racial-capitalism/ (last accessed 7 December 2022)
Mies M (1986) *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*. London: Zed Books
Mills C (2017) *Black Rights / White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
Moore J W (2015) *Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital*. New York: Verso
Moore J W (2018) The Capitalocene, part II: Accumulation by appropriation and the centrality of unpaid work/energy. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 45(2):237–279
Noxolo P (2022) Geographies of race and ethnicity 1: Black geographies. *Progress in Human Geography* 46(5):1232–1240
O'Connor J (1988) Capitalism, nature, socialism: A theoretical introduction. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 1(1):11–38
Pile S (2000) The troubled spaces of Frantz Fanon. In M Crang and N Thrift (eds) *Thinking Space* (pp. 260–277). London: Routledge
Postone M (2006) History and helplessness: Mass mobilization and contemporary forms of anticapitalism. *Public Culture* 18(1):93–110
Ranganathan M (2016) Thinking with Flint: Racial liberalism and the roots of an American water tragedy. *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 27(3):17–33
Ranganathan M (2018) Rule by difference: Empire, liberalism, and the legacies of urban "improvement". *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 50(7):1386–1406
Ranganathan M (2020) Empire's infrastructures: Racial finance capitalism and liberal necropolitics. *Urban Geography* 41(4):492–496
Rosenthal C (2016) Slavery's scientific management: Masters and managers. In S Beckert and S Rockman (eds) *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (pp. 62–86). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press
Rossi E and Táíwò O O (2020) What's new about woke racial capitalism (and what isn't): "Wokewashing" and the limits of representation. *Spectre* 18 December

https://spectrejournal.com/whats-new-about-woke-racial-capitalism-and-what-isnt/ (last accessed 7 December 2022)
Sekyi-Otu A (1996) *Fanon's Dialectic of Experience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
von Werlhof C (1988) On the concept of nature and society in capitalism. In M Mies (ed) *Women: The Last Colony* (pp. 96–112). London: Zed Books
Wacquant L (2001) Deadly symbiosis: When ghetto and prison meet and mesh. *Punishment and Society* 3(1):95–133
Wang J (2018) *Carceral Capitalism*. Cambridge: Semiotext(e)
Winant H (2004) *The New Politics of Race: Globalism, Difference, Justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press
Wortham S M (2013) Afterword: Impossible division. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 112(1):163–170
Wynter S (1994) No humans involved: An open letter to my colleagues. *Forum N.H.I.* 1(1):42–73