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The Idea of Slavery: Abstraction, Analogy, and Anti-Blackness

DISSERTATION

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by

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DEDICATION

To my pack: N Baŋ Ba, Simon, Baxter, and John

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

"The Idea of Slavery: Abstraction, Analogy, and Anti-Blackness"

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in Culture & Theory

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"The Idea of Slavery: Abstraction, Analogy, and Anti-Blackness" retheorizes the history of the idea of slavery by illuminating the interplay between the three poles that make up my subtitle. Instead of conceiving of slavery as "timeless," or as historically particular, I highlight the effects of the historical abstraction of slavery (from the contingency of social status to the necessity of ontology) and trace the origins of this abstraction in the materialization of anti-blackness and the increasing analogizing of slaveness. In my survey of "the timeless slave," from Aristotle to Arendt and Agamben, I argue that Aristotelian philosophy only elaborated anti-blackness as a "virtual" problem. Blackness, both inside and outside the modern vortex, comes to function less as the negation of sovereignty or subjectivity than as an absent form whose "figurative capacities" sustain the state, the commodity form, and the institutions of civil society. By mobilizing Marx's concept "real abstraction," I provide a window into the centrality of slavery for the consolidation of the modern episteme, and because this window prefigures our interpretative frameworks, I shift the totality from capitalism to anti-blackness. The black slave toggles the abstraction of slavery, registering the modern materialization of metaphor and bearing what appear to be constitutive aporias.

My first chapter, "The Natural Slave," thus marks attempts to return to the Greek concept of the political as gestures immanent to the problem and development of anti-blackness, rather than solutions to it. Subsequent chapters take up an intellectual field (political theory and political economy, respectively), situate racial slavery at that field's conditions of emergence, and trace figural distortions to slavery, refracting attendant methodological, political, and philosophical questions through contemporary debates on the status of race and the potential of republicanism in the Atlantic world. These key discursive fields offer up theoretical objects—the "political slavery" of tyranny and the "wage slavery" of capitalism—whose symptomatic orbit around blackness generates modern man, fashions his racial variants, and comes to mediate the formal complexities of time, space, being, representation, and death.

INTRODUCTION:
The Timeless Slave

> *[A]s concretely material as the 'institution' was, as a natural historical sequence and as a scene of pulverization and murder, 'slavery,' for all that, remains one of the most textualized and discursive fields of practice that we could posit as a structure for attention.*[1]
>
> *Much of the scholarly work on slavery is, indeed, a search for metaphor.*[2]

Among its many critical tasks, black studies interminably re-orients "racial slavery" at the *genesis* of modernity, as "the foundation stone not only of the Southern social structure, but of Northern manufacture and commerce, of the English factory system, of European commerce, of buying and selling on a world-wide scale; new cities were built on the results of black labor, and a new labor problem, involving all white labor, arose both in Europe and America,"[i] "the historical and enabling point of 'dis/integration' for the paradigms of Western modernity,"[ii] "the interpellative event of modernity in general."[iii] The task is seemingly interminable, Sisyphean even, because of its radical implications for thought: racial slavery circulates in every proposition—critical or otherwise. It is a nexus more than the sum of its parts. The trans-Atlantic trade is not simply an ad hoc orchestration of financial interests, although this dimension, and its economic boon for capitalism, itself has staggering purchase.[iv] Rather, racial slavery requires a fundamental expansion of our very sense of interest, intention, and economy, taking us deeper than even those cutting-edge Marxists now attempting to reconcile the demands of materialist production, narrowly conceived, with post-structuralist problems of subjectivity and desire.[v] Neither does racial slavery emerge from a purely ideal organization of consciousness, as the Hegelian dialectic might have it.

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[1] Hortense Spillers, "Changing the Letter: The Yokes, the Jokes of Discourse, or, Mrs. Stowe, Mr. Reed," in *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 176–202; 179.

[2] Jennifer Morgan, "Gender and Family Life," in *The Routledge History of Slavery,* eds. Gad Heuman and Trevor Burnard (London: Routledge, 2011), 138-152; 143.

This claim is more complicated than it might first appear—something like a master-slave dialectic does become idealized into an antagonism transformative of consciousness. The truth of this abstraction, however, will not be clarified by historical contextualization alone, nor by historical materialism for that matter.[vi] Racial slavery complicates history: it was not an event in the past with causal implications for the future. It persists, indeed perfects itself, beyond its abolition.[vii] Its "afterlife"[viii] saturates the present so thoroughly that its tense is, as this dissertation will elaborate, called into question. History fails to make sense of such violence—is itself complicit. More than historical recognition, more than financial reparations, more than political reform, reckoning with the "immeasurable contours and incalculable duration" of the middle passage requires reckoning with the very coordinates that yield life and meaning.[ix] Racial slavery's tandem configurations—beyond economic enterprise, historical event, or perennial problem of power—cannot be synthesized with any known version of the world, not without breaking the world itself. Its abolition, Jared Sexton clarifies, follows "the rule of inverse proportion": "how radical a reconstruction you seek relates to how fully you regard the absoluteness of power…In short, slavery must be theorized maximally if its abolition is to reach the proper level."[x]

In conversation with black studies, my dissertation aims to contribute to the project of theorizing racial slavery maximally, or to a limit whose shortcomings can themselves be grist for the interminable mill. To do so, I complicate the methods developed and employed by social scientists and historians of slavery by retheorizing abstraction and analogy as not merely problems for thought but as problems of an anti-black materiality. For standard scholarship, the maximal theorization of slavery most often means either 1) mapping slavery in its broadest scope by employing a series of typologies ("slave societies," for instance, or "socieities with slaves") in a dialectic with (conflicting) determinations of its essence; or 2) excavating its most granular details,

such that an empirical gathering of lived experience might concurrently reveal slaves as subjects and expose the inhumanity lurking beneath the slave status.[xi] These debates are generally framed as *examples* of broader methodological trajectories in social theory. As such, slavery might be considered a case study that intersects with perennial philosophical questions of method and analysis. Are the origins of slavery material or metaphysical? Is slavery past or present? "Timeless" or historical? Distinct or derivative? Should we approach its reality as an objective structure or through the subjects that constitute it? Deploying an immanent critique of early modern meaning-making, my dissertation instead approaches these questions by turning the intersection of slavery with philosophy inside out. This analysis may be considered a long-form meditation on Dionne Brand's powerful question "what if the cognitive schema *is* captivity?"[xii]

The problem of abstraction, of our captive cognitive schema, is at the heart of the historiographical debate on slavery. Social scientists consider abstraction an intellectual *necessity* for clarifying and interpreting historical swaths of data. Abstraction, in this rendering, is a powerful technique of the scholarly mind. The first line of Orlando Patterson's magnum opus *Slavery and Social Death* announces its abstraction, "social death," as a solution to the historical and definitional disunity of slavery as a concept: "There is nothing notably peculiar about the institution of slavery," he declares.[xiii] Patterson instead conceives of slavery as ubiquitous, spanning time and place, from ancient Greece to late old English society through the European Middle Ages, the Renaissance, across to the Islamic World and regions of precolonial Africa. By triangulating fragmented and divergent visions of slavery, Patterson nonetheless argues that slavery is different in degree (of power) and kind (of coercion), and thus, "distinctive as a relation of domination."[xiv] While "social death" as intellectual abstraction helps identify slavery's distinct features—natal alienation, general dishonor, gratuitous violence—as metaphor, social death has

also functioned as a metacommentary on the evacuation of slave experience from historical consciousness. "Social death" promises to both explain *what* slavery is and *why* its study has proved so intractable.

However, for a significant number of historians, attuned to the reverberating echo between presupposition-laden models of universality and early racial meaning-making, abstraction represents a *failure* of imagination that does disservice to the "actual lived experience" of slaves, and indeed has been cast as an "axiomatic denial of social existence to both the slavers and the individuals enslaved."[xv] The concept-metaphor social death, in particular, is charged with reifying history, mystifying the political import of slave sociality and vitality into a misguided specter of withdrawal and negation. the presiding assessment of Patterson as not properly *historical,* as producing an Historian Vincent Brown has cautioned us to remember that social death is an invention of Patterson's own mind, an intellectualism, a "*distillation*…a theoretical abstraction that meant not to describe the lived experiences of the enslaved so much as to reduce them to a least common denominator that could reveal the essence of slavery in an ideal-type slave, shorn of meaningful heritage."[xvi] The implication is that the efficacy of social death has a negative correspondence to its emphasis, that a heightened presumption of pathology is in opposition to the real work of political recovery. Only an ethnographic edge, Brown presumes, can cut through Patterson's "totalizing" tendencies. The scholarly abandonment of the "essence" of slavery in favor of the "existence" of slaves can provide texture to the institution, to lives lived under erasure, but can this approach discern the origin and structure of slavery, its constitutive continuities and charged transformations? Is knowing about the experience of slaves enough to halt the repetitive trauma of the institution?

Historians, although characteristically careful readers of human actions, overwhelmingly end up side-stepping the constitutional question, instead implicitly imputed slavery's generative causes to apolitical and ahistorical philosophical, to "timelessness" manifest as narrow economic motive.[xvii] Brown's history of death in Jamaica is featured as just one instance of the "historic changes" generated when the quintessential relations between the living and the dead "emerge as the source of struggle."[xviii] Fitting into the problem of the common, the same, the general, in "other times and places"—something about his "mortuary politics," like Patterson's "social death" remains stable throughout history.[xix] Likewise, when Joseph C. Miller, another of Patterson's prominent critics, replaces the "social death" with the processual "way of death," his self-advertised "privilege of eclecticism"—the "hole" in his theoretical structure—gives way an origin story of slavery as the symptom of when the "greed present in us all" that supposedly "breaks through the constraints of culture and becomes historically significant as slaving."[xx] To seek an approach that can account for the splintered ubiquity of the concept social death—denounced (actively so) in the discipline of history, and celebrated (but amorphously so) in social science—is to be plagued by the gaps and elisions, within Patterson's work and slave historiography more broadly, concerning the question of an epochal break or epistemic rupture of slavery through race. Brown wants to tell his story without "metaphysical speculation," but at the base of Brown's project is a metaphysical assumption about finitude's transcendent frame.[xxi] If death is seen as "the driving force of a sociohistorical process," then what might happen if we see death as the driving force of transatlantic slavery *in the first instance* (if something like a first instance can be speculatively gauged)?[xxii]

Miller, meanwhile, wants to avoid what he identifies as the "originary fallacy": the "ahistorical trap of seeking simple causation by sequencing decontextualized abstractions," where

race is thought to "cause" slavery, or the other way around, but he has no account of how race (or slavery, for that matter), emerged *qua* abstraction.[xxiii] This alignment between the aversion towards abstraction and the problem of origin is telescoped in the century-long chicken-and-egg debate in early Virginia. The absence of a codified concept of race has been taken to mean that blacks in early Virginia, barring any legal claim of ownership, were *de facto* indentured servants until laws in the mid-1600s began to adjudicate relations of slavery.[xxiv] Slavery, as such, would be a merely a profit-driven activity and race but a retroactive and super-structural justification for the socioeconomic institution of slavery. This oddly idyllic version of the past, uniting slaves and indentured servants under the banner of exploitation, can then be mobilized as either a redemptive reprieve, anchoring the liberal desire to align the contemporary with post-racialism, or a cautionary tale, vindicating the Marxist desire to identify capitalism as the ur-totality. Scholars have rebutted this broad historiographical consensus by sifting through the anti-blackness of "documentary scraps," those deeds, wills, and litigation (and later literary texts and missionary journals) suggestive of sharp distinctions in prices, punishments, term-length, and political participation.[xxv] David Eltis's important historical counter-factual helps turn the presumptive economic base on its head by examining how, by the late Middle Ages, Europeans (who by his accounting would have made *more* profitable slaves than Africans) ceased considering themselves "eligible for enslavement."[xxvi] When paired with the broader global context—the Atlantic ascendancy of "slave-sugar complex" predating Columbus,[xxvii] the transmutation of Africa into an "economic annex" for slaves and raw materials, the transformation of not only practices of navigation and commerce but also the space of Africa, the comprehension of the globe, taste and *sensibility* in general[xxviii]—these racialized undercurrents, antecedent to both the establishment of the American colonies and the philosophical or biological codification of race, suggest alternate and more

obdurate dimensions to the trade's momentum and from which one can conclude that the problem of race has not necessarily withered away with the formal abolition of slavery. Still, the problem of origins—the strange rhythm of the *always already*, in which the quintessential slave appears to always have been black, making of this marking a mold—remains.

Instead of relativizing race in relation to a timeless slavery, an alternative approach has been to historicize slavery, or to multiply its origins *and* constitution relative to broader upheavals in the world—secularism, the nation-state, capitalism. Instead of presupposing, as Seymour Drescher does, that "modern" slavery is, "institutionally and economically the direct heir of medieval slavery,"[xxix] we might instead follow Blackburn's caution that slavery is both woven from the bonds of its time and also productive of "something quite new."[xxx] Such newness puts pressure on "slavery" as a conceptual or definitional unity, leading prominent anthropologist and slave scholar Claude Meillassoux to assert that slavery "is a notion…that has no theoretical status."[xxxi] Robert Padgug, in extrapolating from this provocation, has inquired how to make sense of slavery's time and space when it has come to be bound up in something like a totality: "To what degree," he asks, "can we even speak of 'slavery' as a single institution with its own specific features when its appearance in history is associated with the most varied social and economic system?"[xxxii] Distinguishing broadly between "patriarchal" slavery and "commodity" slavery, Padgug renders the latter form markedly complex, rebounding to complicate any notion of the whole: "Unlike the so-called Asiatic societies or those of classical antiquity, those which arose as a result of the expansion of Europe are not independent units of analysis. They belong to the wider world of capitalist development and *it is only in the context of their relationships to that world that they can be understood*."[xxxiii]

While my research shares this historicizing problematic, I argue that to present a "history of ideas" of slavery but retain its dominant critical paradigms (capitalism or history) is to preserve the origin of racial slavery as an *effect* of capitalism or history. It renders slavery a problem in the history of capitalist totality, not a problem *of* totality. Instead of applying a historical or historical materialist mode of analysis to the "rise" of race and the transformations of slavery, my dissertation is informed by black studies' critical-theoretical disruption of the very presumptions of time and space, capital and sovereignty, as ultimate horizons for theorization. With racial slavery, we cannot, Nahum Chandler has argued, analytically presuppose "the system in which the subordination occurs," and then insert white or black subjects "into this pre-established matrix to engage in their functional articulation of the permutations prescribed therein."[xxxiv] Doing so almost always leaves in place an unquestioned origin—the predetermined, pure subject—against which blackness is posed as "nonoriginary and displaced, *and* as resistant to subordination and creative in practice."[xxxv] This analytical presupposition of a system, the consequence of which is the situatedness of blackness in a reactive position, is true not only for those describing the world of power, but for those discourses that go "under the guise of recognizing the agency of African Americans in the making of some social text."[xxxvi] Take the tools of the historian: the ritualistic interface between free actors, contingent events, and social forces facilitates the metabolization of being as and in presence and posits the achievement and awareness of man's freedom as the mark of modernity, its distance from the past, and its possibility for the future. History, as a project trumpeting freedom from religious necessity, might be conceived as a weapon in modernity's self-conception.[xxxvii] The periodizing that history permits is how, with the waning efficacy of theological structures of meaning, one can still account for human genesis and make sense of one's place in the world.[xxxviii] Once activated this "periodizing drive," as Jordana Rosenberg calls a mode

of abstraction that can only be made by authorizing subjects, seems inescapable.[xxxix] It tinges how we think of the origins of racial slavery—as a return of an archaic structure to be abolished or a fundamental feature of humanness unhinged—as well as its end. The centuries-long project of abolishing slavery in Europe and the Americas, while not perfect, becomes a sure step on the way to recovering slaves as historical subjects endowed with self-determination. But this freedom is a chain, a "double bind" in Saidiya Hartman's theorization,[xl] ensnaring slaves in a foreclosed subjectivity, never meant to contain them, always constructed to fail. To be free from events in history, it seems, we are indebted to historical presuppositions all the more.

This diagnosis enables us to ascertain, however dimly, that even theorists who recognize racial slavery as an epochal break, and who recognize its breaking as a foreclosure in the same gesture, in/directly produce a recovery internal to the onto-epistemological coordinates purportedly up for contestation.[xli] Even the claim that modernity is coincident with or, more precisely, *emergent from* the anti-blackness of racial slavery reduplicates the modern preoccupation with siphoning the old from the new, the speciously concrete with the appropriate abstraction able to grant reality to modern "self-assertation" and self-presence.[xlii] The detection of an epochal break, that is, might itself be a resource of this break. One risks, in this doubling, remaining conceptually dependent on the resonant modes that are, arguably, slavery's most generative products—the free, self-determined subject, the progressive march of time, the enveloping globe, the commodity form, the "transcendental aesthetic."[xliii] This returns us to abstraction. Just as racial slavery relied on "abstracting" slaves and reducing them to quantities, historians, Stephanie Smallwood charges, "have described the slave ship's lethal nature the same way the slave traders did."[xliv] The historian's counter-imperative to avoid the "originary fallacy" and the quantification of slaves by filling in the concrete presence of slaves, however, might not

correct this process of abstraction, which has come to occupy our mode of coordinating being against non-being, presence against absence, now against then. Instead, the corrective of the concrete, the contextualization of absence, might leave the fundamental structure intact and, considering the post-racial celebration of irreducible individuality that marks our global imaginary, even extend and entrench it all the more.

Such a redoubled, recalcitrant, riven philosophy of history not only repositions the origin (of global modernity) and the structure (of the institution and metaphysics of slavery): racial slavery's "epochal rupture" (Wynter), its "tear in the fabric of the world" (Brand), more distinctly suggests a derangement effected on all modes of organizing and representing beings-in-time, such that historical representation and philosophical inquiry itself is in crisis.[xlv] We might ask whether there something unrepresentable about slavery—about the deaths of slaves, their experiences, their longings, their fears, their prayers, their grammar of suffering—about slavery's institutional logics, its epistemological appearance and historical rupturing. Is this why death enters not only as an object for historians but also as an interpretative schema?[xlvi] Colin Dayan intervenes to query whether the negative appraisal of social death as an "academic artifact" may be "relevant to the historiography of slavery, but not to the powerful mythology that underlay it."[xlvii] Taking Dayan further, we may try to understand the historiography of slavery as inescapably within the "mythology" of slavery, insofar as the mythos we now take for granted is a historical artifact. Is it because both death and slavery represent limits in a certain imaginative enterprise that they are drawn together? If, as Brown admits, "the dead serve to make an ineffable abstraction like death more immediate, personal, and knowable," then are death, slavery, and blackness connected because of an *analogous* "unspeakability"?[xlviii] If this unspeakability is located *within* a social process, then the historical structure of analogy itself has a history, and the slave historian would

be tasked with uncovering this fantasmatic interplay, and further still, tracking the ways that the legibility of the analogy may have been written in the incipient gestures of slavery, a condition of possibility for the structuring of slavery itself. Does the (very political) division between life and death *reflect* other divisions like white and black, master and slave, present and past, or work to *sustain* (and even *generate*) social positionalities and possibilities?

By identifying black studies as a project twinning a critical philosophy of history with a critical history of philosophy, I suggest the need to return to what goes under the heading of "first principles": the first principles not of an already formed essence or phenomenon, but of the conditions that make any analysis of "race" or "slavery" possible.[xlix] These first principles will be repeatedly renamed and reformulated throughout this study—from Brand's "cognitive schemas" to Hortense Spillers' "American grammar," Denise Ferreira Da Silva's "modern text," Sylvia Wynter's "the science of the word," and Afro-pessimism's "political ontology"—and refocused through the problematic of the "abstract slave." The abstraction of slavery, I argue, is not merely an intellectual reification. It is neither methodological necessity nor failure. Instead, it is an anti-black protocol that dictates the realization of the abstract slave, both in practice (from a particular problem to a problem of ontology) and in thought (as an increasingly analogic figure divorced from relations of race). My argument, then, does not simply substitute an ahistorical "timeless slave" with a historical-materialist "abstract slave." Instead of presuming a universal coherence to both "race" and "slavery" and calibrating their inter-relation within a pre-established frame, my analysis registers the ways that the questions of slavery (what is our relation to a sovereign and how do we justify our mode of social organization?) and the questions of race (what is variety and how do we determine its telos?) cannibalize each other.[l] When slavery connects with discourses of race, the elements that may have sutured the piecemeal, inchoate rendering of slavery in its

particular contexts now facilitate new technologies of capture—no longer needing a reason for enslavement (debt, self-sale, war captivity), slaves can be acquired without justification and for the express purpose of sale; and an unlimited scope to violence, capturing not only slaves and masters but *all* beings, all relationality, in a delineation *of* being.[li] If I follow the centralization of *anti-blackness* as a more expansive frame than racism,[lii] signaling that the conditions of racial slavery are ultimately in (ontological and epistemological) excess to "race" and "slavery" as discrete universal formations, I also warn that the "abstract slave" poses a challenge to all representational or discursive access to racial slavery as an object for thought.

"The Idea of Slavery" confronts this challenge through an immanent critique of immanent critique. Taking political theory and political economy as illustrative (and compounding) topographies, I explore how it is at the excesses productive of the intersection of race and slavery that the projects that characterize our foundation—concerning sovereignty, secularization, and civil society; labor, value, and the commodity; history, origin, and structure—can most fulsomely be comprehended and critiqued. These key discursive fields, even in their most critical guises, offer up theoretical objects—the "political slavery" of tyranny and the "wage slavery" of capitalism—whose orbit around blackness consolidates the shape of modern thought, suturing would otherwise be impervious crises for a world grappling with ruptures in symbolic authority. Political theory presages race by producing a threatening, unstable indeterminacy to be captured under the sovereign logic of self-preservation; while political economy crystallizes value and the wage laborer by obscuring the productivity of the black slave. Both inside and outside the modern vortex, blackness appears in these texts less as the negation of sovereignty or subjectivity than as an absence whose "figurative capacities"[liii] sustain the commodity, the state, and civil society as ways of comprehending temporal movement and transcendence. As slavery spins away from itself

to become a metaphor of relationality for the self-determined modern subject, the black slave becomes arrayed as the reflexive conceptual and visual marker for violent indeterminacy, in need of unbridled, ceaseless constraint, not ethical or political determination.

Taken together, these discourses appear to be an object-lesson in impossibility. The proliferation of metaphorical slaveness reveals, as with psychoanalytic accounts of dreamwork, a revelatory condensation, one requiring a method of reading and historical interpretation that banks on neither resuscitating historical fact nor achieving understanding.[liv] Indeed, there is likely no methodology that can fully make sense of their anti-black textual residue—a tangled mixture of open violence and active indifference, rhetorical elision and historical protrusion, blithe acceptance and maddening denial. Nonetheless, this collection of what Frank B. Wilderson III identifies as "ruses of analogy,"[lv] does provide differential access to the roots of abstraction. The analogical mystification of slavery—where the distinction between racial slavery and slavery in general collapses, where the specificity of black suffering is morally and politically leveraged to transcend widely divergent structural positions—is not just a ruse because it promiscuously deflects the specificity of suffering. It is a ruse because it conceals nothing. At the violent site of some of modernity's densest analogical impulses, racial slavery only ever appears legible when affixed to the forms that refuse it: a psyche, a coherent political project, an ethnography, a restitution, a past, a present, a future, a demand, a promise.

But this does not mean it is not "real." The slave's apparent aporias, straddling the real and ideal, the historical and structural, metaphysical and metaphorical, are stabilized by the emergent dictates of a species-division that appears to operate, as Sexton puts it, "*as if* it were a metaphysical property across the *longue durée* of the premodern, modern, and now postmodern eras."[lvi] The crux of the critique of what goes under the heading of Afro-pessimism turns precisely the status

of this "as if," the abstraction at its heart. For Afro-pessimism, blackness, as "the position of the unthought,"[lvii] is assessed as an absence that, even as it constantly revivifies discourse, cannot be recovered by culture or history; this absence is not error (to be filled in with social or cultural context) but the condition of its being. For Lewis Gordon, however, there is a distinction between the premise of "*an* antiblack world" and conclusion that "*the world is antiblack*."[lviii] In his dissension from the Afro-pessimist currents that continue to find resonance with his work, Gordon evokes the historian's eschewal of abstraction to insist that the "world is an antiblack racist *project*" and should not be mistaken for its "historical achievement."[lix] Gordon would agree with Neil Roberts's assessment that "The metaphor of slavery is a trope in the Western imagination that overextends itself, the metaphorical eclipsing the experiences of the real."[lx] Of course, from the lines between political treatises to the virulent racism of personal letters, symptomatic projection of popular culture, the stitch that would join blackness to slaveness is nowhere demonstratively secured. But Gordon takes this contingency as a failure of critical theory to apprehend reality: although black personhood may be existentially entangled with death and slavery, black people are not still slaves, nor did their slaveness ever reduce them to social death. If anti-black violence were to have been achieved, if social death were generalized and slavery abstracted into being, there would, Gordon contends, be no black position whose appearance could ever matter, and "the basic premises of the Afropessimistic argument" would be "locked in performative contradictions." For how can nothing enunciate itself? Gordon does concede that Afro-pessimist claims "have rhetorical force."[lxi] But by rhetorical force, Gordon means simply the fact that its analytic has attractive intellectual and political weight. The metaphorical valences of anti-blackness *and* black critique, its "as if" quality, are diagnosed as bad faith overextensions into our metaphysical and material worlds. A false abstraction.

By insisting, as Wilderson does, that "we need a new language of abstraction to explain this horror," we diverge from the empirical and experiential lenses that characterize socio-historical studies of race precisely because anti-blackness composes a challenge to the reality that would undergird such an access.[lxii] Granted, slavery is stuck in a catachresis: always aiming to represent an idea which it is not. But the structure of rhetorical retroaction and interpellative disavowal I find in early modern texts has material force. As slavery becomes more metaphorized, its implicit connection to a range of Enlightenment era ideas, and their critics, becomes more condensed. In service of this changing world, slavery's abstraction from social status into metaphysics is forgotten, dissolved into an anti-black totality that mediates negativity, the measure of the human, and its history. As Spillers contends, "The captive body…brings into focus a gathering of social realities as well as a metaphor for *value* so thoroughly interwoven in their literal and figurative emphases that distinctions between them are virtually useless."[lxiii] "Given back to me sprawled out, distorted, recolored, clad in mourning,"[lxiv] the slave analogy works most as a ruse because the literal term of reference—"actual existing slavery"—does not exist except in its semantic transfer of meaning, from blackness to slave of the tyrant or capitalist.[lxv] For Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, this may indeed be "the fundamental violation of enslavement: not any one particular form of violence—animalization or objectification, for instance—but rather coerced formlessness as a mode of domination and the *unheimlich* existence that is its result."[lxvi] Blackness is without analogy because it is analogizable all the way down.[lxvii]

Insofar as anti-blackness signifies nothing, the ruse of analogy is most fundamentally the regenerative operation of anti-blackness, its very constitution in motion. Blackness *is*, insofar as it is semantically and gratuitously captured and substituted. Nothingness spins into namelessness, formlessness, lawlessness, propertylessness, as well as caricature. When propositioned by space

and time, it can be framed as excess, motion, immanence, stasis. Indeed, the anti-black modality of the "as if" dictates the discernment of slavery's origin and the assignment of its categories—universal or historical; past not present; event not relation; effect not constitution; material not representational. That is, it is precisely because of this rhetorical traffic that racial slavery, as an object for thought, can be assumed and slavery in general can be thought. This is true both of proponents of slavery and abolition, of racists and anti-racists, of historians who seek to find the concrete lives behind the abstract death, the something behind nothing. In this sense, even in its failure as a project, the black slave represents the abstraction of slavery, registering the modern materialization of metaphor and bearing what appear to be constitutive aporias.

Although this dissertation focuses on slavery as an obfuscating metaphor, "race" itself is entwined in the "ruse," taking on a leveling function that shrouds its structure and genesis.[lxviii] It becomes a figure that, by mobilizing a shared root (racial oppression, discrimination, exclusion), highlights a universal structure that misses the specificity of its emergence and the violence of its intersections. If race is a metaphor, complexly figured through slavery, race is not, to follow Spillers, "*simply* a metaphor and nothing more."[lxix] Insofar as the concept of race emerged as a thought project to consolidate the teeming contradictions unleashed by racial slavery, blackness, I argue, should be studied in its specific (non)relation to race. Slavery violently forces blackness into a historical form—"race" and its offshoot, the human—such that the overwhelming infusion of racial ordering inhibits any pure retrieval of what may be its creative and empancipatory capacities. Blackness, then, is not one node on a continuum of racial oppression. Even as blackness is racialized as the lowest link on a developmental scale, blackness, the "zero degree of social conceptualization," simultaneously operates as the constitutive outside of scaling itself.[lxx] By navigating an order of power whose temporality is askew, the black slave marks an incompleteness

in subjectivity itself. In between the impossibility of subjectivity, finally realized as a reflective and generalized object for thought, and the impossibility of slavery, which is almost never theorized and instead always assumed, lies the violence of anti-blackness. Racial blackness, we can say, represents the materialization of this formal impossibility—of time, space, being, representation—whereas anti-blackness, antecedent to explicit racial ideologies and exclusions, is the violent formal strategy in the pursuit of pure being, constructing modern man and fashioning his racial variants to protect him from modern crises in meaning.[lxxi]

Outline of Chapters

My immanent critique begins conventionally, with Aristotle. Through a provisional mobilization of Karl Marx's methodological innovation—"real abstraction"—my first chapter, "The Natural Slave," challenges the generic dialectic of the "political animal" and "natural slave" and complicates the transcendent recuperation of the Ancients for critical theory. Natural slavery remains a central starting point for theorizing slavery and freedom in large part because, as Jonathan Lear has argued, "Aristotle was the first political thinker to realize that slavery *needed* a defense."[lxxii] The necessity of such a defense is commonly considered to be an aristocratic reflection of the social world; after all, an expedient legitimation of the institution is most necessary when slavery persists in a social tradition committed to justice. Dominant interpretations of Aristotle not only attribute to natural slavery an apologist function, they also inscribe natural slavery with a transcendental epistemic efficacy. The degree to which slavery is determined to be in/essential to the history of democratic theory and practice, its dialectical charge with the flourishing of virtue and freedom, continues to frame not only the success and future of political philosophies, but the very governing terms of what counts as political. Despite the presumption of a

"timeless" quality to slavery, the actual prevalence and purpose of slavery in the Ancient world—the status of its persistence—is recurrently contested, as data concerning the slave's role and function is sparse, pieced together from largely incidental references in literature, philosophy, and legislation.[lxxiii]

Moreover, Aristotle's concept itself is riddled with ambiguities. When Aristotelian nature is theorized as dynamic and changeable, how could natural slavery ever represent a static category? My first chapter indexes natural slavery as a symptom, conscious or not, of the injection of political activity and particularism into Plato's transcendent forms.[lxxiv] In Aristotle's turn from idealism and towards plurality, natural slavery represented less a problem of difference (which Aristotle could incorporate by conceding to a diversity of political forms) than a projection from the excess that remains even after difference was accounted for, put in its place. Political philosophy, Aristotle seems to be saying, *needed* slavery. While Marx conceptualizes slavery as the historical limit to Aristotle's reflections on the significance of labor for value, I contend that race is the historical limitation to the philosophical development of slavery, and, in turn, value and labor. When natural slavery was taken up in the 16th Century, right when early modern thinkers were reworking their relationship between the ideal and the real, there suddenly was a ready population primed to materialize this excess. In attempting to retrieve the legacy of the ancients, then, one need be attentive to how an epistemic shift—the overdetermination of slaveness as black and with global-ontological consequence—infuses the methods and modes of our backward retrieval. Without this reckoning, one ends up relying on 1) an impoverished philosophy of history; 2) an anemic vision of the human, the political, and freedom; 3) a merely *analogic* understanding of the relationship between blackness forms of difference like womanness, labor, and indigeneity. Through a rehabilitation of Patterson's "social death," I conclude by elaborating how interpretations critically

emboldened by the "political animal," such as the work of Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben, are also those that freeze the natural slave into a post-racial emblem whose logic is timeless but whose historical pertinence has somehow passed.

The "timeless slave" I adduce in Aristotle, Patterson, Arendt, and Agamben is a cautionary thread that establishes the parameters of the remainder of the dissertation. Subsequent chapters take up an intellectual field (political theory and political economy, respectively), critically situate racial slavery at that field's conditions of possibility, and trace the relationship between the rhetorical resourcing of the black slave, as when slavery is diffused into subjection to a tyrant or to capital, to the development of thought. Chapter Two ("The Political Slave") diverges from the critical approach to slavery as a "contradiction" for political theory (in which a theorist's concrete investments in the slave trade undermine more lofty propositions for freedom) and instead draws attention to the double-movement in early modern thought between the proliferation of metaphorical slavery and the absence of the black slave. Practicing a close reading of natural law's uneven mobilization of three figurations of the slave—the natural slave, the war captive slave, and the voluntary slave—I track how slavery morphs from being one, important figuration among many in mapping sovereignty (Grotius), to the very template of sovereignty (Hobbes), to the negative measure of man (Locke). At the positive or oppositional constitution of the state and subject, the productive ascendency of the abstract slave, I argue, marks the achievement of anti-black abstraction of slavery. Natural law enlists its readers in this vision most when they are required to imagine from abstractions to empirical reality—like post-racialism today, the power of the abstraction is in its abstraction, an ahistoricism necessitated by natural law's promise of geometric order. This is why it is impossible today to disentangle discourses of rights from the institutionalization of transatlantic slavery: those readers of abstraction acknowledged as the

proper collective of the social contract are carved out of an empty space retroactively reified as permanently chaotic and violent at its core.

If "The Idea of Slavery" begins with a Marxist critique of Aristotle, it ends in Chapter Three, "The Wage Slave," with an Afro-pessimistic critique of Marx. While slavery sounds off in political theory as a question of *contradiction,* political economy engulfs slavery in a problematic of *transition,* enabling Marx's critical apprehension of capitalism's historical evolution and its characteristic relationship toward violence. Divested of the constitutive problem of slavery and blackness, the slave only analogically reappears as theoretical ammunition in a comparative explication of capitalist materiality. I find that even when Marx, Marxists, and critical race thinkers attempt to situate slavery as "coeval" to capitalism,[lxxv] the content and form of slavery is not usually up for debate, only the status of its interaction with capitalist circuits. Marx, who *historically* thought the empirical reality of slavery appearing together with capitalism, but *theoretically* unthought the significance of the conjuncture slavery and capitalism, comes to separate "abstract domination" from "concrete domination," the value-form from force, sequestering his profound insights into the genesis of subjectivity from the problem of race and formalizing freedom and the fulcrum by which capitalist fetters might be overthrown through labor's historically specific social representation. Mirroring the Marxist methodology of rising from the "abstract" to the "concrete," this chapter moves to substitute the abstraction of labor with slavery and closes by restaging the concrete development of "real subsumption" through the problem of abolition. In deconstructing Marx's method, I situate slavery's transposition to brute force and race's reduction to false consciousness as the productive source not only of commodities but of the capitalist form of value itself.

If these chapters appear to make a circular argument, if each chapter repeats, in structure and argument, a similar set of concerns, one intention of this dissertation is to leave open the status of the homology. It bears emphasizing that my attempt is not meant to be exhaustive. I do not claim to fully represent all the varied traditions of modernity, and less still the well documented instances of what are heralded as "alternate modernities."[lxxvi] Rather, by deferring, as much as possible, to a categorical prescription—racial slavery at every structure and register of being-in-the-world, as the very quantum level of reality and the frame for our cognitive coordinates—I hope to demonstrate the explanatory power of this perspective to elaborate a critique of critical thought. This means that, against a dialectical telos, a more loosely progressivist narrative, or even a historical one, for that matter, I linger in the discursive reoccupation of questions. Certainly, these chapters do correspond to sequential, albeit overlapping timelines. It may be that in the displacement from ancient philosophy to natural law to civil society (and my larger project will encompass political theology and psychoanalysis), the same problem is simply historically addressed from different registers, that of god, the sovereign, and capital, each seemingly spiraling down to earth in what some might designate as an enlargement of knowledge. While I provide interconnective tissue and interpretive signposts along the way, I hope to also encourage reading *between* chapters for resonances and dissonances that enact disruptions of disciplinarity, transparency, and historicity. By interpreting the textual distortions effected by iterative figurations of slavery, both in their *generativity* for elaborating systems of thought and their ethical-political *impotence* in confronting racial slavery, I intend to bring materialism and metaphysics into a complicated and unresolved orbit.

But if my explicit ambition is to stay open to disruption and a mode of multiplicity, I am also driven to address *how* slavery changed forms and *why* different registers emerged to do the

work of dispersing anti-blackness into a materialized metaphysics. As Wynter contends, "shifts in epistemes were not only shifts with respect to each episteme's specific order of knowledge/truth, but were also shifts in what can now be identified as the 'politics of being'; that is, as a politics that is everywhere fought over what is to be the descriptive statement, the governing sociogenic principle, instituting of each genre of the human."[lxxvii] If there appears to be a resemblance between the analogizing of slavery and its generative outside that extends from political theory to political economy, I find that there is accumulating strength and elasticity of the analogy's mode of mediation, in the way the "politics of being" encodes the "cathedralization" of slavery into the invisible ether of ontology and its categories.[lxxviii] But because it is at this juncture—the occupation of thought and history by the "abstract slave"—that my critical capacities are revealed to be my limits, it may be more accurate to say that my introduction of a new abstraction—"abstract slavery"—is conflicted, in form and content, between the displacement of capitalist totality with anti-blackness and the displacement of totality.[lxxix]

Lastly, I will caution that anyone familiar with the black radical tradition will likely find nothing new in these pages. My move to make the problems of modernity internal to racial slavery has always been a central project of black studies. I am not, that is, going for shock value. Nor am I hoping, necessarily, to gain converts from philosophers, political theorists, or Marxists. By stitching together a series of immanent critiques, making "black critique" legible where it might not otherwise be, I do aim to accentuate an already ongoing re-configuration of the world and, perhaps, wear down its anti-black intellectual gears of motion. However, my deployment of immanent critique does not mean I ultimately believe in its capacity. For how can Marx's political-philosophical lessons, on the production of knowledge, the movement of history, the genesis of subjectivity and the objective social world, and the potential for freedom, retain their theoretical

promise when Marx's scope leaves the slave unthought? Demonstrated in the very form of the immanent critique that is *Capital,* Marx's great hope is that social contradictions can be resolved by overthrowing regressive fetters and realizing a transcendental possibility. But shoring up contradictions do not point to a dialectical overcoming when the world's resources retain within them the negativity of the slave. The danger of immanent critique is the likelihood that its recuperative faith in an "inside" will not only absorb but erase black critique. Insofar as I may very well exemplify the failure of an immanent leveraging of the world's collapse, the argument becomes something of a methodological and metaphysical spectacle, as I am also writing myself into destruction.

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[i] W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* [1935] (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1962), 5.

[ii] Lindon Barrett, *Racial Blackness and the Discontinuity of Western Modernity,* eds. Justin A. Joyce, Dwight A. McBride, and John Carlos Rowe (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 2.

[iii] Fred Moten, "Notes on Passage (The New International of Sovereign Feeling)," *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* 3, no.1 (2014): 51-74; 65.

[iv] See Eric Williams's classic *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

[v] See, for instance, Jason Read, *The Micro-Politics of Capital: Marx and the Prehistory of the Present* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

[vi] For an example of the sufficiency of contextualization, see Susan Buck-Morss's *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), which I will discuss in Chapter Three.

[vii] On perfection, see Anthony Paul Farley, "Perfecting Slavery," *Loyola University Chicago Law Journal* 36 (2004): 221-51. On slavery's status as an event, see Saidiya Hartman, "The Time of Slavery," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 101, no. 4 (2002): 757-777; 772.

[viii] Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the African Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 45.

[ix] Moten, "Notes on Passage," 69.

[x] Jared Sexton, "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism," *InTensions* 5 (2011): 1-47; 32-33.

[xi] On the distinction between "slave socieities" and "societies with slaves," see Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) as well as earlier formulations in Moses Finley, "Was Greek Civilization Based on Slave Labour?," in *Slavery in Classical Antiquity,* ed. Finley (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1960), 53-72 and Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Viking Press, 1980). For an attempt to historicize these two trajectories, see Kostas Vlassopoulos, "Does Slavery Have a History?: The Consequences of a Global Approach," *Journal of Global Slavery* 1 (2016): 5-27.

[xii] Dionne Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging* (Toronto: Doubleday, 2001), 34, emphasis added. Another way to approach this philosophical inversion of priorities might be to say that social and political philosophy is always metaphysical and that those metaphysical commitments are always "raced." On the first point, see Ruth Groff, *Ontology Revisited: Metaphysics in Social and Political Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2013). On the latter, see Denise da Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007) and J. Reid Miller, *Stain Removal: Ethics and Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[xiii] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), vii.

[xiv] *Ibid.,* 2.
[xv] Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 20.
[xvi] Vincent Brown, "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," *American History Review* 114, no. 5 (2009): 1231-49; 1233. The bulk of Brown's arguments proceed from the premise that more can be accomplished "if one begins by *closely examining* their social and political lives rather than assuming their lack of social being," 1239. See, by contrast, Patterson's discussion of how "revisionist scholarship," focusing on the positive interpenetration of the past "got out of hand," in *The Ordeal of Integration: Progress and Resentment in America's "Racial" Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint/Civitas, 1997), 78.
[xvii] For a critique of the economic reduction, see David Eltis, "Europeans and the Rise and Fall of African Slavery in the Americas: An Interpretation," *The American Historical Review* 98, no. 5 (1993): 1399-1423.
[xviii] Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 6.
[xix] *Ibid.,* 258. That is, if the relations of the living to the dead have "perhaps featured to some degree in all of human history," the history of Jamaica is one example "merely throw[ing] more general processes into sharper relief," 257.
[xx] Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), xiv and Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History,* 29.
[xxi] Brown, *Reaper's Garden,* 5.
[xxii] Brown, "History Attends to the Dead," *Small Axe* 14, no. 1 (2010): 219-227; 223.
[xxiii] Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History*, 128. The originary fallacy is taken from Robin Blackburn's *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (New York: Verso, 1997), 33, who is building from Marc Bloch's *The Historian's Craft* [1953], trans. Peter Putnum (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 24-29.
[xxiv] Popularized in 1902 by James C. Ballagh, this benign relationship to blackness gained early adherents in John H. Russell and Ulrich B. Phillips. Its rudiments were taken up and reworked by Oscar and Mary Handlin in the 1950s (and later still in versions by George Fredrickson, Edmund Morgan, and T.H. Breen and Stephen Innes, the latter of whom consolidated and elevated Bacon's Rebellion as the causal dissolution of revolutionary unity).
[xxv] See Carl Degler, "Slavery and the Genesis of American Race Prejudice" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (1959); Jordan, Winthrop. *White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812* (1968); Alden T. Vaughn, "The Origins Debate: Slavery and Racism in Seventeenth-Century Virginia" in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* (1989). See also, Donald Noel, *The Origins of American Slavery and Racism* (Columbus, OH: Merill, 1972); Winthrop D. Jordan, "Modern Tensions and the origins of American Slavery," *Journal of Southern History* 28 (1962); Raymond Starr, "Historians and the Origins of British North American Slavery," *The Historian* 26 (1973-4): 1-18; Warren M. Billings, "The Law of Servants and Slaves in Seventeenth-Century Virginia," in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* (1991); John C. Coombs, "Beyond the 'Origins Debate': Rethinking the Rise of Virginia Slave Law," in *Early Modern Virginia: Reconsidering the Old Dominion,* eds. Douglas Bradburn and John C. Coombs (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 239-278; and Engel Sluiter, "New Light on the '20. And Odd Negroes' Arriving in Virginia, August 1619," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (1997): 395-398.
[xxvi] This phrase appears first in Eltis's "Europeans and the Rise and Fall of African Slavery in the Americas."
[xxvii] See Charles Verlinden, *The Beginnings of Modern Civilization: Eleven Essays with an Introduction,* trans. Yvonne Freccero (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), ix. See also, the self-proclaimed "heretical disciple" of Verlinden, Felipe Fernández-Armesto's *Before Columbus: Exploration and Colonization from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1229-1492* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1987); Sidney M. Greenfield's essay "Plantations, Sugar Cane and Slavery," in *Roots and Branches: Current Direction in Slave Studies,* ed. Michael Craton (Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1987), 85-119; the work of Barbara L. Solow, especially "Capitalism and Slavery in the Exceedingly Long Run," in *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery,* eds. Barbara Solow and Stanley Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and the essays in her edited *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
[xxviii] See Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011) and Christopher L. Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). Luís Adão da Fonseca reads the "modernization of perception" through the shift in the etymology of "discovery": place, and the meaning-making of its human purveyors, was superseded in the African Atlantic by abstract space, a "growing abstraction of thought" facilitated by travel along the African coast. Fonseca, "The Discovery of Atlantic Space," in *Portugal the Pathfinder: Journeys from the Medieval Toward the Modern World 1300-1600,* ed. George D. Winius (Madison, WI: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1985), 5-18; 15-16.

[xxix] Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 12.
[xxx] Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery,* 34.
[xxxi] Claude Meillassoux, "Introduction to Jean Bazin's 'War and Servitude in Segou,'" *Economy and Society* 3, no. 2 (1974), 107. See Robin Blackburn's attempt at undermining any taken for granted definition, cast instead as an exploration into the very possibility of defining: "Defining Slavery – its Special Features and Social Role," in *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour,* ed. Leonie J. Archer (New York: Routledge, 1988), 262-79. See also, Susanne Miers, "Slavery: A Question of Definition," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 24, no. 2 (2003): 1-16; Joel Quirk "Defining Slavery in all its Forms: Historical Inquiry as Contemporary Instruction," in *The Legal Understanding of Slavery: From the Historical to the Contemporary,* ed. Jean Allain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 253-277. For more general concerns with comparative method as it pertains to slavery see Winthrop D. Jordan, "Planter and Slave Identity Formation: Some Problems in the Comparative Approach," in *Comparative Perspectives on Slavery in New World Plantation Societies,* eds. Vera Rubin and Arthur Tuden (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1977), 35-40, and Thomas Wiedemann and Jane Gardner's "Introduction" to their edited volume *Representing the Body of the Slave* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1-10.
[xxxii] Robert A. Padgug, "Problems in the Theory of Slavery and Slave Society," *Science and Society* 40, no. 1 (1979): 3-27; 3.
[xxxiii] *Ibid.*, 15-6, emphasis added. See also Padgug's review of Patterson, which draws attention to the tension between Patterson's comparative perspective and his attempt at definition, "Slavery and Social Life (review essay: Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*)," *Radical History Review* 31 (1984): 85-92.
[xxxiv] Nahum Chandler, "Originary Displacement: Or, Passages of the Double and the Limit of the World" [2000], in *X: the Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 129-170; 140.
[xxxv] *Ibid.,* 141. Instead, Chandler suggests that we begin to account for "the *constitution* of the general system or structure" and not just its *operational* dynamics.
[xxxvi] *Ibid.,* 140.
[xxxvii] Constantin Fasolt, *The Limits of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). For a different history of history, see Michael Alan Gillespie, *Hegel, Heidegger and the Ground of History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984). For a racial account of how the "historical subject is always already a racial 'I,'" see Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race,* 196. See also David Marriot's reading of Sylvia Wynter: "insofar as what cannot be historicized are the codes or genres that make History itself 'historical,' history is in some senses the least historical of discourses. It also seems reasonable to suppose that these codes, which are 'historical' while being themselves never simply historical, are in some sense more originary than the narratives of history which they ground, and are thus the origin and possibility of History itself," in "Inventions of Existence: Sylvia Wynter, Sociogeny, and 'the Damned,'" *CR: The New Centennial Review* 11, no. 3 (2011): 45-89, 48. This argument bears some resemblance to Slavoj Žižek's adjudication of the difference between historicism, which he conceives as "deal[ing] with the endless play of substitutions within the same fundamental field of (im)possibility" and *historicity,* which "makes thematic different structural principles of this very (im)possibility," "Class Struggle or Postmodernism? Yes, Please?," in *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left,* eds. Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek (London: Verso, 2000), 111-112. Unless historicism sees itself as a historical variant (like we read with Althusser, the very distinction between the real and the is found within the actual), Žižek argues it "ends up becoming that which it fights against (it elevates situated contingency into the unsurpassable condition of possibility for any and every phenomenon)," 119.
[xxxviii] See Janet R. Jakobsen with Ann Pellegrini, "World Secularisms at the Millennium," *Social Text* 18, no. 3 (2000): 1-27.
[xxxix] Jordana Rosenberg, *Critical Enthusiasm: Capital Accumulation and the Transformation of Religious Passion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 47.
[xl] Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 115-124.
[xli] See Walter Johnson's argument that "By continuing to frame their works as 'discoveries' of Black humanity, indeed, historians unwittingly reproduce the incised terms and analytical limits of a field of contest (black humanity: for or against) framed by the white-supremacist assumptions which made it possible to ask such a question in the first place," in "On Agency," *The Journal of Social History* 27, no. 1 (2003): 113-123; 114. In response to Hartman's argument that 'The event of captivity and enslavement engenders the necessity of redress, the inevitability of its failure, and the constancy of repetition yielded by this failure,' Fred Moten writes "The event of captivity and enslavement is not an event. *Event* isn't even close to being the right word for this unremitting non-remittance, as Hartman's own writing shows and proves. This formulation is testament to the ways she exhausts the language and conceptual apparatuses

with which she was given to work. Precisely because she establishes with such clarity that slavery conditions an aftermath that bears it, an afterlife that extends it, Hartman uses up the word *event*. There's nothing left of it, nothing left in it for us. Moreover, the ubiquity of such exhaustion in her work is why faithful reading of Hartman's must be deviant. Her work, it seems to me, is for building, rather than scolding, that deviance. In this regard, the notion of time that underwrites the very idea of the event is also offline," Moten, *Black and Blur (Consent Not to Be A Single Being)* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), xii.

[xlii] See Hans Blumenberg who maintains that "self-assertion" is the distinct modern quality that breaks the transcendental frame of what he calls the secularization thesis, in *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983).

[xliii] On the latter, see Fred Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (2013): 738-780; 740.

[xliv] Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 137.

[xlv] See Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3, no. 3 (2003): 257-337; 281; and Brand, *A Map to the Door of No Return,* 4.

[xlvi] For suggestions as to why death is the "unmatched" prism through which to grapple with New-World "cross-cultural encounters," see Erik R. Seeman, who suggests that 1) death's ubiquity in the violent encounters of the New World; 2) its centrality to religious systems of meaning; 3) its curious encumbrances pervade archival fragments accounting for cultural exchanges; 4) its sedimented materiality "leaves traces" that preoccupy archaeologists most. Seeman, *Death in the New World: Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 4-5.

[xlvii] Colin Dayan, *The Law is A White Dog: How Legal Rituals Make and Unmake Persons* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 43.

[xlviii] Brown, "History Attends to the Dead," 221. See Walter Johnson for how slavery is unspeakable for modernity, "The Pedestal and the Veil: Rethinking the Capitalism/Slavery Question," *Journal of the Early Republic* 24, no. 2 (2004): 299-308.

[xlix] Denise Ferreira da Silva, "Notes for a Critique of the 'Metaphysics of Race,'" *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 1 (2011): 138-148; 139.

[l] I agree, as Smallwood argues, that "Purchasing 'in large numbers' and dealing in 'multitudes' of captives transformed the very nature of captivity," but it transformed a great deal more "captivity," narrowly conceived. See *Saltwater Slavery*, 31. See also Anthony Pagden's assertion in *Lords of All Worlds:* "For the first time, instead of taking slaves in so-called 'just wars,' instead of, as the Roman Law of slavery had insisted, 'saving' a captive from the death his captor was entitled to inflict on him, men began to buy slaves who were innocent of any act of aggression," *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France, c. 1500-c.1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 170, as well as Russell-Wood, who writes that "…neither the Americans nor their slave traders from Portugal and later England made war in Africa (with the possible exception of the Portuguese in Angola) in order to draw on that reservoir" that potential slave labor represented," "Iberian Expansion and the Issue of Black Slavery." 85. See also, William D. Phillips, Jr., "The Old World Background of Slavery in the Americas," in *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System,* 43-61 and Phillips, *Slavery from Roman Times to the Early Transatlantic Trade* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985).

[li] As Patrice Douglass and Frank Wilderson incisively identify, if slavery, as an "ancient political system finds itself disfigured by blackness," its effect is to "proliferate the constraints and definitive power of the master's gaze beyond the reach of actual physical property status and proximity," exacting "infinite refractions of violence at the level of being and existence within the world," in "The Violence of Presence: Metaphysics in a Blackened World," *The Black Scholar* 43, no. 4 (2013): 117-123; 119.

[lii] "[R]eframing racism as a relation grounded in anti-blackness rather than white supremacy," Jared Sexton writes, "push[es] through the conceptual framework of racism altogether toward an apprehension of the world-historical transformation entailed in the emergence of racial slavery," in "Afro-Pessimism: The Unclear Word," *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge* 29 (2016): 1-21; 5.

[liii] Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 7.

[liv] See Bruce Fink, "Against Understanding: Why Understanding Should Not Be Viewed as an Essential Aim of Psychoanalytic Treatment," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 58, no. 2 (2010): 259-285, and Nathan Gorelick, "Extimate Revolt: Mesmerism, Haiti, and the Origins of Psychoanalysis," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 13, no. 3 (2013): 115-138.

[lv] See Wilderson: "The ruse of analogy erroneously locates Blacks in the world—a place where they have not been since the dawn of Blackness. This attempt to position the Black in the world by way of analogy is not only a mystification, and often erasure, of Blackness's grammar of suffering (accumulation and fungibility or the status of being non-Human) but simultaneously also a provision for civil society, promising an enabling modality for Human ethical dilemmas. It is a mystification and an erasure because…their grammars of suffering are irreconcilable," *Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 37.
[lvi] Jared Sexton, "People-of-Color Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery," *Social Text 103* 28, no. 2 (2010): 31-56; 36-7.
[lvii] Saidiya V. Hartman and Frank B. Wilderson III, "The Position of the Unthought," *Qui Parle* 13, no. 2 (2003): 183-201.
[lviii] Lewis Gordon, "Thoughts on Afropessimism," *Contemporary Political Theory* (2017): 1-8; 2, emphasis in original.
[lix] *Ibid.* Brown similarly labors to rewrite social death as a *predicament*, not a *condition* in "Social Death and Political Life," 1248.
[lx] Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 28.
[lxi] Gordon, "Thoughts on Afropessimism," 3.
[lxii] Wilderson, *Red, White, & Black,* 55. See Jared Sexton: "I work from a notion of race as neither a biological index of natural kind nor and illusion produced in culture. Nor do I take race to be simply a social fact or a 'complex of social meanings.' Of course, race does exist, in some sense, as a reliable social indicator of life chances and as a traceable chain of significations, but its political ontology exceeds the terms of sociological investigation and the operations of the symbolic order: it is, to try another phrasing, a 'division of species' effected and maintained by the technologies of violence and sexuality that underwrite the social formation, not a discriminatory manipulation of already existing bodily marks," *Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiracialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 11. The Afro-pessimist "political ontology," informed by a subterranean political and intellectual genealogy before and beyond its more recent formal announcement, can be provisionally thought as a fundamental, continuous, *radicalization* of the violence that is the object and inhabitation of radical black studies.
[lxiii] Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," in *Black, White, and in Color;* 203-229, 209.
[lxiv] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* [1952], trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1952), 113.
[lxv] See the assertion that "Metaphor exemplifies a semantic translation or transfer, as this generates an excess of meaning based on the moment of difference" in Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 183.
[lxvi] Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, "Losing Manhood: Animality and Plasticity in the (Neo)Slave Narrative," *Qui Parle: Critical Humanities and Social Sciences* 25, nos. 1-2 (2016): 95-136; 117-8. Silva argues that blackness's referent to matter is "that without form—it functions as a nullification of the whole signifying order that sustains value in both its economic and ethical scenes," in Silva, "1 (life) ÷ 0 (blackness) = ∞ − ∞ or ∞ / ∞: On Matter Beyond the Equation of Value," *e-flux* 79 (2017).
[lxvii] On a good reading of blackness as without analogy, see Daniel Colucciello Barber, "…Wilderson's analysis of the position of blackness as that which is without analogy is a matter of essential specificity. Such 'withoutness'— without analogy, without the world—is specific to the position of blackness. Yet this specificity does not refer to a particularity that relates (together with other particularities) to an overarching universality. On the contrary, it indexes a point that is without, and that thereby breaks, the total configuration—the (ensemble of possible) relations between particularities and universality—of the world," in "World-Making and Grammatical Impasse," *Qui Parle* 25, no. 1-2 (2016): 179-206; 189.
[lxviii] I follow Lindon Barrett's lead to excavate the "substance of racial blackness," not as phenotype or fixed essence, but as a problematic inhabiting "the formal structures of consciousness coalescing the state with the subjects composing the common relations of the state," in *Racial Blackness and the Discontinuity of Western Modernity*, 87.
[lxix] Hortense Spillers, "'All the Things You Could Be By Now, If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother': Psychoanalysis and Race," in *Black, White, and in Color*, 376-427; 380. Race, as it "demonstrates the power and danger of difference, that signs and assigns difference as a way to situate social subjects," is the "outcome of a politics," and, I would argue further, the expression of a metaphysics. Race, like value, mediates and resolves excesses, possessing a productive, self-valorizing power and taking on an objective reality that, before and beyond what capital does to laborers, or the state does its citizens, generates divisions with ontological pretensions and world-changing ramifications.

[lxx] Spillers, "Mama's Baby," 260. See also Sylvia Wynter's exploration of a "triadic" model of race in Sylvia Wynter, "1492: A New World View," in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View*, eds. Vera Lawrence and Rex Nettleford (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 5-57. Interestingly, Lewis Gordon seems to agree (at least in his earlier work): "In the antiblack world, there is but one race, and that race is black. Thus, to be racialized is to be pushed 'down' toward blackness, and to be deracialized is to be pushed 'up' toward whiteness" in *Her Majesty's Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), 76. See also Robbie Shilliam's argument that "While in no way playing down the centuries long (and continuing) genocidal war against indigenous peoples of the Americas…it is the enslaved African interpolated as the 'Negro' that has most haunted the linear narrative of savagery-to-barbarism-to-civilization because it was the 'emptied-out' body of the slave that came to represent the absolute verso to the fullness of the civilized subject," in "Civilization and the Poetics of Slavery," *Thesis Eleven* 108, no. 1 (2012): 99-117; 101.

[lxxi] Here I am inspired by Silva's very generative philosophical elaboration of an "analytics of raciality," which I modify by introducing blackness and slavery as necessary framing categories, in *Toward a Global Idea of Race.*

[lxxii] Jonathan Lear, *Aristotle: The Desire to Understand* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 197.

[lxxiii] See Victoria Cuffel: "it is surprising how little serious attention was really given in classical Greece to the institution of slavery itself. The presence of slaves was a daily fact, not so much inescapable as below the level of comment or observation," in "The Classical Greek Concept of Slavery," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27, no. 3 (1966): 323-342; 323. See also, Walter Scheidel's "humanistic approach" to "qualitative impressions" of slavery origin and scope in "The Roman Slave Supply," *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, eds. Keith Bradley and Paul Cartledge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 287-310. Another alternative is the reading of popular culture from literary texts, found in Sara Forsdyke's *Slaves Tell Tales: and Other Episodes in the Politics of Popular Culture in Ancient Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[lxxiv] On the "anti-political" philosophy of Plato, see Dick Howard, *The Primacy of the Political: A History of Political Thought from the Greeks to the French & American Revolutions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 21-85.

[lxxv] On "covealness," see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia Press, 1983).

[lxxvi] See the edited collection by Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, *Alternative Modernities* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001) and Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[lxxvii] Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom," 318. Of this epochal shift, she elsewhere narrates how, in the "move beyond the Absolution of our present economic categories, as in the fourteenth to the fifteenth centuries, the lay humanists of Europe moved beyond that of the *theological* categories of Scholasticism; and the nineteenth century Classical economists moved beyond that of the *political* categories of the earlier epistemological order," "No Humans Involved: An Open Letter to My Colleagues," *Forum N.H.I.—Knowledge for the 21st Century: Knowledge on Trial* 1, no. 1 (1994): 42-73; 66. See also Rei Terada's suggestion of "a pattern of transfer from metaphysical/ontological to social to political differential oppositions: a 'secularization,' so to speak, of organization that continues to bear the weight of subordination through its passage to abstraction," in "Hegel and the Prehistory of the Postracial," *European Romantic Review* 26, no. 3 (2105): 289-99; 299.

[lxxviii] On the cathedralization of slavery, see Wilderson, *Red, White and Black*, 18, and Patrice Douglass and Frank Wilderson, "The Violence of Presence."

[lxxix] This tension bears some resemblance to David Marriott's critique of Wynter: "Rather than going beyond disciplinary narratives, then, Wynter's notion of epistemic breakthrough can only preserve the latter's heterogeneity via a kind of a transcendental optimism, which continues to think inventivity in teleological terms (as a moment wherein the human and the historical can be reconciled)," in "Inventions of Existence: Sylvia Wynter, Frantz Fanon, Sociogeny, and 'the Damned,'" *CR: The New Centennial Review* 11, no. 3 (2011): 45-89; 50.

CHAPTER ONE:
The Natural Slave

> *As a rule, the most general abstractions arise only in the midst of the richest possible concrete development, when one thing appears as common to many, to all. Then it ceases to be thinkable in a particular form alone…Here, then, for the first time, the point of departure of modern economics, namely the abstraction of the category 'labor,' 'labor as such,' becomes true in practice. The simplest abstraction, then, which modern economics places at the head of its discussions, and which expresses an immeasurably ancient relation valid in all forms of society, nevertheless achieves practical truth as an abstraction only as a category of the most modern society.*[1]
>
> *But before 'race,' something else has happened, both within the context of 'race' and alongside it*.[2]

In an important crystallization of *Capital*'s method, Karl Marx explains why the "great investigator" Aristotle could not deduce the substance of equivalence between otherwise incommensurate things and, thus, value from commodity exchange. Although correctly identifying the necessity for commensurability in his prototypical exchange of a bed and a house, Aristotle comes to the conclusion that equivalence is only made possible by human manipulation, and is consequently artificial—"only 'a makeshift for practical purposes.'"[i] Marx explains that Aristotle fails to find a more synthetic solution not because of a logical error or intellectual deficiency; rather, the "historical limitation inherent in the society in which he lived prevented him from finding out what 'in reality' this relation of equality consisted of."[ii] That is, beds cannot be made truly equivalent to houses in the Greek historical context because the "secret of the expression of value"—homogenous labor—requires formal freedom and equality, ontological capacities overshadowed by the ancient Greek dependence on slavery and inequality. Marx's example does

[1] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, ed. and trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 104-5, emphasis added. See Stuart Hall's aim to "inaugurate a 'reading'" of the 1857 text, "Marx's Notes on Method: A 'Reading' of the '1857 Introduction to the *Grundrisse*,'" *Working Papers in cultural Studies, no. 6* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 1974), 1.

[2] Hortense Spillers, "'All the Things You Could Be By Now, If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother': Psychoanalysis and Race," in *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 409.

historical and theoretical work by destabilizing universal pretenses to epistemology and indexing instead that abstractions like value and labor are "real," gaining traction in the sociality of their relations.[iii] For Marx, the trans-individual homogenization of labor, irreducible to how labor qualitatively appears to various subject positions, is a historically new and specific form. Although labor "seems a quite simple category," and is, "in its general form…immeasurably old," Marx insists that "'labour' is as modern a category as are the relations which create this simple abstraction."[iv] While capital's *differentia specifica* may appear to be reflected in certain social practices of antiquity, notably the rise of money in Greek exchange, capitalist production inaugurates a *qualitative* shift in which labor is no longer "mediated by social relations but, rather, constitutes itself as a social mediation."[v] As such, labor is only realized supersensibly through the long-term practices that disintegrate hierarchical relations and establish formal equality. Equality thus takes on a fetish-character: we misrecognize its source, instead attributing it to the immediacy of essence.[vi]

If the problem of value can be historicized in this way, I propose that we exert similar pressure to other operative categories in Aristotle's thought (here, I take "natural slavery" as key), Marx's thought (the primary subject of Chapter Three), and, by extension, thought as such. By deconstructing the assumptive logic behind what I have identified as the "timeless slave," I submit "slavery," and with it, that other abstraction, the human, to a methodological reconstruction of "historical abstraction" (or what Alfred Sohn-Rethel elaborates, in the spirit of Marx, as a "real abstraction").[vii] Blackness is isolated as a "practical truth," the mode by which the slave, the laborer, *and* the human concurrently come into view. I approach this reconstruction by assessing the historicity and hermeneutics of Aristotle's theorization of "natural slavery," encircling questions of 1) the category's function—is natural slavery mobilized as a critique or defense of

the institution of slavery?; 2) its historical purchase—is natural slavery, in its dialectic with the citizen, representative of Athenian politics?; and 3) its mediating power—is natural slavery synonymous to or distinct from other categorizes like woman, barbarian, or laborer? Because the Greek example continues to return as utopian resource or a dystopian cautionary tale, reflected in the neo-Republican celebrations of democracy that mark the founding of the United States, as well as in critical interrogations of it, the answers I find disrupt assumptions of perception, punishment, and the political at the heart of what Sylva Wynter calls "genres of the human."[viii]

In relativizing natural slavery as a "virtual" problem, only materialized through racial slavery, I am not merely submitting political theory to political realism, although, as Niall Mckeown claims in his deconstructive approach to ancient slave methodology, it bears repeating that "The way we choose to interpret ancient slavery has much to do with the way we want to interpret it."[ix] My interpretation, aimed at addressing the *longue durée* of anti-black violence, situates the reification of "race" as the historical and interpretative limit to any definition or defense of natural slavery. Natural slavery thus remains an ambiguous proposition whose imputed timelessness requires problematization, as does the background of inequality that supposedly blocks Aristotle's insight into value. The instability of this backdrop, as Chapter Three will elaborate further, also poses problems for Marx's presupposed shift from the inequality of the slave mode of production to the formal equality of capitalism. Instead of granting this historical progression and its implicit generalization of slavery to all subjectivity—a relation referred to as "wage slavery"—I follow black feminists to argue that it is only the blackening of slavery and the ungendering of reproduction, with its changing technologies of capture, forms of violence, and methods of categorization, that promises to resolve the previously paradoxical premise of natural slavery and primes the emergence of formal equality.

This chapter critically unpacks the historicity of the "natural slave" through two tendencies in contemporary theory that most assume its coherency. On the one hand are theorists of slavery, exemplified by Orlando Patterson, whose oft-cited conceptualization of slavery as "social death" has as its rallying cry the charge that "without slavery there would have been no freedom."[x] Despite this incisive inversion, Patterson rearticulates the same timeless theorization of slavery that naturalizes racism as generic prejudice, instead of according it any transformative capacity in the constitution of the modern subject. I interrogate how Patterson's intellectual and theoretical production nonetheless reveals blackness as his unspoken elaborative possibility, the position from which he pivots to centralize slavery in the story of freedom. "Social death," that is, captures the material and conceptual culmination of natural slavery *and* explains, I contend, why slavery becomes frozen in a functional relationship with race. After re-positioning natural slavery and social death as mutually entangled "real abstractions," this chapter closes with a cautionary complication of the anti-black horizon of two political critics of political freedom (Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben) who, despite their contributions to the critique of contemporary violence, remain dependent on the link between a timeless version of slavery and Aristotle's "political animal."

Aristotle's Ambiguous Defense

Aristotle's natural slave is both theoretically indispensable and thoroughly ambiguous. From the opening lines of *Politics*, the *polis* is displayed as the *telos* of the natural life of the household (*oikos*). There, slaves, women, and children can be considered the constitutive outside of political life. They subsist in an originary war-like realm of inequality and hierarchy where sovereign violence reigns, in contrast to, but sustaining and supporting, the good life of that other realm, the

political (*bios*).[xi] Slavery can thus be seen to privatize the Greek city state, subsidizing the freedom necessary for citizens to realize and embody that which is most distinct about humanity: equality, virtue, speech, and deliberation.[xii] As Aristotle muses, "there is a need for leisure both with a view to the creation of virtue and with a view to political activities."[xiii]

The importance of virtue is that it does not, as with the slave's *techne*, serve an end outside of itself; virtue instead is most manifest in activity (*theoria* and *praxis*) in which "doing well is in itself the end."[xiv] Aristotle takes citizenship to be the culmination of philosophic virtue because as participatory, collective activity, it shapes the institutions that guide self-determination and activate the deliberation (*phronesis*) of human actualization. Although historically consequent from the individual and household, Aristotle reasons that the self-sufficient city logically precedes it for, like a body is to a hand, "the whole must of necessity be prior to the part."[xv] Living well means acting with common purpose to sustain the whole, "for a city is the partnership of families and villages for a complete and self-sufficient life."[xvi] This is why, for Aristotle, value is not given; it is decided and acted upon. The same is true for his deconstruction of Parmenides in the *Physics*: being is not one but plural because, he argues, its predication is part of the performance of its being.[xvii] Unlike merely social beings—"any kind of bee or herd animal"—political man's singular capacity for speech, manifest as "voice," enables the discrimination of "good and bad and just and unjust."[xviii] Those who are "without a city through nature rather than chance"[xix] are like the part to the whole, not only "defective" but, more strikingly, "either a beast or a god."[xx] Because "justice is a mean…an intermediate condition, whereas injustice is about the extremes,"[xxi] the political animal embodies justice in modulating the exalted and the base, the godly and the mere animal.

Lacking deliberative capacities, and, thus, an important part of the soul,[xxii] the slave certainly exemplifies a deviation from human politicality that analogically aligns with the

animal.[xxiii] "[L]ike the soul from the body or the human from the animal,"[xxiv] their work is constrained to the "use of the body" while "the work of the human being is the being-at-work of the soul."[xxv] Given that Aristotle defines the slave as "not only slave of the master but…totally part of him," in other words as "animate equipment" and "assistant for things of praxis," the master's use of the slave body is part of furnishing the soul's activity.[xxvi] Although reduced to use (*chresis*) and body (*soma*), the slave facilitates between body/use/praxis on the one hand and soul/energeia/poesis on the other.[xxvii] The slave's remainder in the realm of the household—their economic-domestic subordination to dominance and necessity characterized by "command over the soul and the body"—serves as the threshold for politics, a paradoxical source of virtue.[xxviii]

Aristotle instructs readers in this arrangement through a peculiar methodology. Unlike Platonic formalism, Aristotle's standard is *a posteriori,* beginning by surveying the existence of phenomena, only after moving on to a consideration of essence.[xxix] With the question of virtue, for example, Aristotle begins with its existence and emphasizes its non-inheritable elements, given the tendency of aristocratic families to produce rogues and layabouts. Only after does he then determine the trifold features of virtue: "people become excellent because of three things…nature, habit and reason."[xxx] Indeed, for Aristotle, habit is the surest way to access ethical virtue.[xxxi] With the natural slave, however, this movement from the known to the unknown, from the sensible to the metaphysical, is reversed: Aristotle first provides an overview of the slave's essence *prior to* delimiting its existence.[xxxii]

His eventual foray into slave existence is cast in opposition to generic arguments for and against slavery, dispensing with *both* the critical Stoic stance that men are made slaves by human custom, not nature[xxxiii] *and* the conservative defense of slavery that claims that "there is no force without virtue,"[xxxiv] i.e., that might is right. Contrary to the *nomos* that "things conquered in war

belong to the conquerors"[xxxv] and that slavery originates on the battlefield (what I will examine under the heading of the "war slavery doctrine"), Aristotle argues that the right of the victor does not always license the enslavement of the vanquished, especially given his premise that the "beginnings of wars are not always just."[xxxvi] It is entirely probable, even likely, he muses, that the natural slave does not correspond with the legal slave. The legal slave, then, designates the condition of becoming adrift from the city by contingency, not nature. Despite foreclosing the possibility that all who are enslaved are so justly, Aristotle returns to reinstate slavery's justice. Although "nature indeed wishes to make the bodies of free persons and slaves different as well as their souls," Aristotle laments that bodies don't correspond to slavishness, as the visible detection of the depths of the soul proves impossible.[xxxvii] This non-correspondence, like the incommensurability between the use-value of commodities, initiates an unraveling of the presuppositions of nature. More sweeping statements like "It must be admitted that some are slaves everywhere, others nowhere" are followed immediately by vacillations on nature's authority: while nature may wish that "from the good should come someone good, just as a human being comes from a human being and a beast from beasts," it is "often unable to" guarantee such an outcome.[xxxviii] The absence of such a guarantee places the status of slaves and citizens alike in contention. Nonetheless, after this string of precautions and exceptions, a general rule of natural slavery persists: "the distinction does exist for some, where it is advantageous as well as just for the one to be enslaved and the other to be master."[xxxix]

The justness of slavery is then grounded in a feature not of birth but of individual advantageousness in the use of the body. While this advantage seems to go both ways, even including friendship, it only does so "incidentally": "Mastery, in spite of the same thing being in truth advantageous both to the slave by nature and to the master by nature, is still rule with a view

to the advantage of the master primarily, and with a view to that of the slave accidentally (for mastery cannot be preserved if the slave is destroyed)."[xl] Because the unity of the slave and master is dictated by the needs of the master first, the relationship is a hierarchical composite. Like "the part and the whole and for body and soul…the slave is a sort of part of the master—a part of his body, as it were, animate yet separate."[xli] The slave's usefulness validates Aristotle's schema—with politics presupposed as meaningful, virtuous speech, the slave is (as the hand to the body) a conduit for the self-actualization of human *phronesis.* Slavery can only be just, then, if its benefits are both mutual and directed towards the soul who could most be actualized.

This circular reasoning begs its own questions.[xlii] If a citizen's essence is predicated primarily on their existence, such that the very activity of practicing citizenry is what makes someone a citizen, then what makes someone a slave? Is the slavish deficit nature or habit, permanent or mutable? If the slave "participates in reason only to the extent of perceiving it, but does not have it,"[xliii] if the slave, then, may not be completely human but can participate in reason enough to *appear* human, can slaveness in role ever be definitively proven as slaveness in nature? Given the centrality of war to the building of politics, one might wonder whether natural slavery was ever Aristotle's concern or, rather, whether it is a small-scale foil or structural prelude for his later assessment of deviant political forms—tyranny among them.[xliv]

It is through an additional categorical relay that political rule (*arche politike*) becomes distinct from household rule (*arche despotike*). In Aristotle's household, the soul lords over the body (as "it is according to nature and advantageous for the body to be ruled by the soul"), but because political participation presupposes participation in the soul, political difference divides the soul further into the distinction between reason (*nous*) and emotion (*orexis*).[xlv] The foundation for varying forms of freedom, the most robust of which is democratic rule, is made relative to the

proportion of reasonable or passionate participation. If slavery seems to represent the deficiency of deliberation (the "beast"), tyranny (the "god") tends toward its excess. What distinguishes the tyrant from the virtuous political ruler is too much passion, an overactive investment in mastership "in accordance with their own will" and to the disadvantage of their subjects.[xlvi] This is Aristotle's rejoinder to the Platonic thesis that there is a single virtue of ruling, for the household slave mastership should not be conflated with political tyranny, "as if each of these differs in the number or fewness of those ruled and not in kind."[xlvii] But if these relative investments in reason and passion are united in kind, do they indicate differences in role, habit, or nature?

On the one hand, Aristotle proposes that "For by nature there is a certain people apt for mastery, another apt for kingship, and another that is political, and this is both just and advantageous."[xlviii] In the next breath, he then turns to assert that "Nothing, however, is naturally apt for tyranny, or for the other regimes that are deviations: these cases are contrary to nature." The injustice of tyranny as distinct from household slavery seems to lay in a natural disposition against being ruled; as Mary Nyquist has succinctly assessed, the deviance of political enslavement "lies not in slavery per se but rather in the attempt to enslave those who patently ought not be enslaved."[xlix] If the difference between those who can legitimately be enslaved (under the despotism of the household) and those whose enslavement is always unjust (under the tyranny of political rule) is not in number but in kind, we are still left with the puzzle of the requirements of that kind. Why does Aristotle seem to reject the transcendent god/tyrant, but give his stamp to the slave/beast? In the cross-hairs of the question of the ideal, slavery seems symptomatic of the dilemma of immanentizing and diversifying Platonic unity without abandoning a sense of the justice of a political-philosophic whole.

Interpretations on whether or not the theorization of natural slavery constitutes a *defense* of the institution usually deflect from this para-philosophical problem and can be split into two, loosely schematized camps: one casts Aristotle as an apologist whose pragmatic metaphysics legitimizes the status quo and the other makes him out to be a moralist whose *Politics* should instead be positioned as a subtle condemnation of slave-owning societies.[l] With the first, more commonplace interpretation, we find what some call "an intellect in the service of injustice": Aristotle implicitly begins with the world as it appears—the political community —and finds ways to defend its appearance, throwing up contradictions to resolve them in support of existing social formations.[li] For Orlando Patterson, for instance, slavery confronts us with a "strange and bewildering enigma": "are we to esteem slavery for what it has wrought, or must we challenge our conception of freedom and the value we place upon it?"[lii] Aristotle could openly submit that the full realization of the political animal has been built on an unfortunate, albeit necessary, contradiction—the sacrifice of mere life for virtuous life—such that slavery's benefits for all overrule the incidental injustice of enslavement for some. Instead, Aristotle smooths the scales of justice with a circular argument that sutures slavery to a deficit in virtue: though slaves may partake in virtue to the extent that they avoid "licentiousness or cowardice" there is difference in the virtue of the ruled and enslaved that corresponds to what by nature is "a ruling and ruled element."[liii] These elements reinforce the advantageous qualification because they mirror the structure of the city—if what is good for the ruled is good for the rulers, then the very fact that some are slaves establishes their natural fitness for slavery, despite any appearance to the contrary. As "phenomena," slavery adheres to "the received and reputable (*endoxon*) views of what was or what ought to be the case as presented in philosophically acceptable form by the prudent or reasonable

Greek male citizen."[liv] As Aristotle ends up insisting, "For he is a slave by nature that is *capable* of belonging to another—which is *why* he belongs to another."[lv]

This argument also puts significant stock in Aristotle's climatic theory as the linchpin between nature and capability. In a key series of passages, Aristotle positions high-spirited and thoughtful Hellenics at the geographical and collective middle between the deficits and advantages of two sorts of barbarians, the unsociable and unintelligent Europeans, and the docile and enslavable Asians: "barbarians are by nature more slavish in their characters than Greeks (those in Asia more so than those in Europe) that they put up with a master's rule without making any difficulties."[lvi] Aristotle's link between barbarianism and enslavement, if based on a climatic conception of character, not only disrupts his vision of a mutable nature; by subsuming a whole people as enslaveable, it goes a step further in collapsing the difference between household rule and political rule: "The barbarians…have no naturally ruling element; with them, the community of man and women is that of the female slave and male slave. This is why the poets say 'it is fitting for Greeks to rule barbarians'—the assumption being that barbarian and slaves are by nature the same thing."[lvii] Given the earlier argument that some undetermined few *can* be *unjustly* enslaved—"no one would assert that someone not meriting enslavement ought ever to be a slave"[lviii]—Aristotle's double-talk has been assessed as "ideologically motivated," a politically savvy safety measure against any encroaching enslavement of Greeks[lix]—especially at issue given the Persian Wars and the enslavement of Thebes by Philip of Macedon[lx]—that simultaneously permits a qualified defense of the institution (and potentially justifies absolute rule).[lxi] Natural slavery is thus conceived as a manipulable category.

Against Aristotle the Hellenic supremacist and slave apologist, counter-interpretations run with the critical spirit of *Politics* as a whole to contextualize the category of the natural slave as a

thought-experiment, borne from what is actually an implicit critique of slavery as it existed in Aristotle's time.[lxii] Aristotle, this more rehabilitative vision suggests, sets up such strict standards for enslavement that none can in fact justly embody this category. (The inverse of this impossibility, which appears in Hobbes, is that perhaps everyone, and *especially* those who make use of their body for their own sustenance, may be conceived as a natural slave).[lxiii] One can, by staying true to Aristotle's wider system, attribute his imprecision on this matter to his philosophy of the mutability of nature itself. Nature is more "force" or "influence" than essence: "With us, though presumably not at all with the gods, there is such a thing as the natural, but still all is changeable."[lxiv] Although those consigned to slavery make inadequate use of their powers of *logos*, slavery—premised on the changeable, dynamic state of *physis*—can be reversed by the actualization of latent capabilities and mobilization of new skills.[lxv] In this instance, slavery is "equal opportunity" and could befall anyone whose actions are not virtuous: "Certainly the good man and the statesman and the good citizen ought not to learn the crafts of inferiors except for their own occasional use; if they habitually practise them, there will cease to be a distinction between master and slave."[lxvi] Any citizen, then, is potentially vulnerable to the lapses that lead to slavery, just as any slave can favorably revise their status.[lxvii] This may be why Aristotle holds out manumission as a promise for all slaves.[lxviii]

Here, the neat dialectic between the political animal and the slave dissolves—the mere fact of having a slave does not guarantee one's virtue, it only frees one for action. In fact, natural slavery not only exposes the enslaveability of Greeks, it might also turn mastership into a form of slavery, by creating "in the master a kind of desire that turns him away from his obligations as a citizen."[lxix] Given these threats, it may be possible to overturn the configuration of the *oikos* and *polis,* if those that "can engage in politics and philosophy" use their powers and technology to

liberate man from the necessity that binds them.[lxx] If *bios,* that is, set out to complicate *zoē,* politics, rather than nature, would stand as the guarantee for hierarchy.[lxxi] Indeed, in Aristotle's only explicit example of slavery, the Asian barbarians "have souls endowed with thought and art"; as such, they don't seem essentially doomed for enslavement, instead representing more simply a taxonomic variation of monarchy based on law and descent.[lxxii] Aristotle even relativizes Greek achievement, as "the nations of Greeks display the same difference in relation to one another. Some have a nature that is one-sided, while others are well blended in relation to both of these capacities."[lxxiii] His didactic message seems more in tune with thinkers like Herodotus who posited a connection between Athens' past tyrannical rule and military weakness, citing democracy as the source of its current military force.[lxxiv] In this account, freedom needs to be continuously earned. This might mean, as Eugene Garver supposes, that what needs to be changed is the presumption of "institutional slots" that aims to assign a vision of hierarchy to existing social bodies.[lxxv]

In neither of these two interpretations is it assumed that Aristotle has hit upon a stable substance uniting the category "slave"—in both, nature is politically amenable. Natural slavery is somehow a response both to the problem of slavery in the world and to the problem of Platonic philosophy. By complicating Marx's method of "real abstraction," I wish to hold open, rather than resolve, this hermeneutic tension. If it is true that categories gain salience historically, perhaps the ambiguity surrounding Aristotle's suturing of slaveness and nature against war and contingency has to do with his historical limitations. For Marx, the political arbitration of slavery in the ancient world is considered the given that curtailed the development of formal freedom.[lxxvi] But what happens to Marx's method and totality when the background of slavery *and* freedom are in contention? The remainder of this chapter and the next will shift the speculative totality from

capital and labor to anti-blackness and slavery, and examine natural slavery as a *virtual* anticipation to the material processes that secularization and racialization attempts to answer.

Aristotle's Speculative Sociology

Given Aristotle's ambiguous defense and peculiar methodology, there is already significant cause to view his "natural slave" as more speculative than sociological. The virtuality of the natural slave has been further highlighted by historiographical interventions on the question of slavery's origin, its field of influence, and possibilities for emancipation. First, despite what a flurry of contemporary commentary on natural slavery might lead readers to believe, the theory was never representative of an ancient worldview.[lxxvii] There was no sure way to definitively demonstrate who was justly enslaved because, although features of "proto-racism" existed in the ancient world—especially in the consolidation of the term "barbarian" during the Persian Wars to refer to a generic group of outsiders[lxxviii]—there was no operable concept of race that could corroborate the teeming variety of "nature" with the inner depths of the "soul." Collective belonging *was* signaled by concepts like *ethnos, genos, phylon,* or *laos,* but those indices of genealogy and descent were employed to plural, overlapping, and instable effect.[lxxix] And, while the relative fluidity of Hellenic identity may have had caps based on ethnic appeals to birth, the color of freedom was never reified as whiteness. Greeks' use of *leukos* and *melas,* for instance, did not uniformly value lightness over darkness, and "white-skinned" specifically signified weakness.[lxxx] The pseudo-Aristotelian *Physignomica,* meanwhile, appealed to a chromatic middle ground: "Those who are too black are cowards, observe Egyptians and Aithiopians. And those who are too white are also cowards, look at women. The color that favours bravery is between the two of them."[lxxxi]

Pertinent divisions were civic, not climatic; status was primarily a problem of virtuous achievement rather than nature.[lxxxii] More typical, especially with the Stoics, was a discourse of slavery originating in unhappy fortune: that is, humans, being born equal, were thought to be enslaved as a result of their bad choices *in the world* (a view that came to be complemented by Christianity).[lxxxiii] This postulate of equality means that the eternal fallenness of slaves was not an enduring feature of slaveness, which was instead posited as a more worldly fall resultant from debt or war.[lxxxiv] A rhetoric of warring violence continues to dominate discussions of the origins of both the slave condition and the institution. Legible enough in the justifications of the ancients, where it was "repeated like a litany,"[lxxxv] and, for Orlando Patterson, empirically verifiable in the practices of "kin-based or tribal societies," [lxxxvi] war has been mobilized in such a wide range of texts that Mary Nyquist has provided us with a synthetic concept to trace its vexed reappearance: the "war slavery doctrine."[lxxxvii] While 16th century just war theorists would come to debate the relative justness of war, the demonstrable connection between war and slavery is certainly more persuasive, if less permanent, than nature. Aristotle does attempt to suture war to nature, under the rubric of advantageousness: "the art of war is a natural art of acquisition, for the art of acquisition includes hunting, an art which we ought to practice against wild beasts, and against men who, though intended by nature to be governed, will not submit; for war of such a kind is naturally just."[lxxxviii] But in the crosshairs of the two targets of war—wild beasts and unruly rulers—still stands the unresolved figure of the natural slave. Although the bestial word for "slave," *andrapodon* ("man-footed thing"), came from slave conquest alongside *tetrapoda* ("four-footed things" such as cattle), the frequency of intra-Grecian war often meant enslaving other Greeks which destabilizes any sure animalization of slaves via war.[lxxxix]

Many historians submit that the natural slave is better conceived as one figure (albeit a very polarizing one) in a continuum of dependence where contingent degrees of virtue, not nature, are what separate the free from the servant.[xc] Although it is typically assumed that Aristotle considers citizens and those who work for a living as mutually exclusive, *Politics* offers a range of mediating roles that indicate a more capacious range of exclusions and inclusions.[xci] When it comes to labor, for instance, Aristotle likens the "vulgar craftsman" to a "kind of delimited slavery," as dependence on the will of another ultimately can "debase the mind and deprive it of LEISURE."[xcii] This social position, established first by birth and then maintained by habit, historically represents a conjunction of freedom and dependency that falls short of both the optimal ideal of leisure *and* the preconditions for natural slavery. Aristotle accepted that some may have to work to sustain themselves, but only trades that permit leisure *and* cultivate virtue—not labor itself—can be virtuous, in that they approximate, even if they don't achieve, the ideal of the *polis*. If Aristotle's categories reflect anything, then, it may be negotiations with the free citizenry.[xciii] Aristotle allows, for instance, that free land owners are self-sufficient enough to participate in democracy, a telling concession considering a historical background that may very well warrant the designation "class antagonism."[xciv]

Indeed, according to Ellen Meiksins Wood, unlike pre-capitalist societies generally maintained by "extra-economic, political, juridical, military domination," the Athenian material base might be "free and independent labour" and *not* agricultural slavery, as generally supposed by prominent historiographers like Michael Jameson and G. E. M. de Ste. Croix.[xcv] Mobilization by the masses had, in the centuries before Aristotle, brought key reforms to Athenian assemblies. Implemented by the likes of Solon, Cleisthenes, and Ephialtes these changes centered on broadening democratic participation and personhood by decentralizing many of the barriers to

office holding. What culminated in a transition from traditional allegiances of "kinship to locality"[xcvi] also generated new ideological means of inclusion into citizenship and its freedoms. No longer were Athenian citizens only rich landowners and aristocrats. This revision of historical modes of production could redefine Marx's assessment of Aristotle, and Marxist methodology more generally. If the general category of labor *did* exist in ancient Greece, Marx's insight into real abstraction may be over-stated, if not wrong.

But does the possibility of an ideologically united working class mean the realization and enactment of labor in the abstract? Even if there was a unique class of peasant-proprietors whose "love of industry and labor" was key, the focus remained on the artistry of craftsmanship and on the particular production of goods, in which different trades necessitated different practices of exchange.[xcvii] Freedom was not built into the base of exchange which means, at least according to the value-form theory derived from *Capital* (the subject of Chapter Three), that although commodities, money, and markets existed in the trading periphery of Greek Antiquity, the commodity-form was in no sense "the universal form of the product of labour," nor was "the dominant social relation…the relation between men as possessors of commodities."[xcviii] Marx castigates those "philologists who speak of *capital* in antiquity, of Roman, Greek capitalists": "If the concern is the word, capital, which does not occur in antiquity then the still migrating hordes with their herds on the Asiatic high plateau are the biggest capitalists, since capital originally means cattle." [xcix] And, it is worth emphasizing, the ideal of the Aristotelian *polis* is not that of capital, for the pursuit of wealth without limit becomes degraded into the pursuit of a life of bodily enjoyment.[c] Even Wood herself admits that "the evidence suggests that production for exchange was limited even at the height of Athenian prosperity."[ci]

It is more adequate, perhaps, to situate the partial and uneven liberation of labor in Athens in the transference of freedom from what Orlando Patterson conceives as the "individual-personal domain to the public."[cii] This newly expressed civic consciousness or public freedom (which entailed obligations to the state such as military service) should not be conflated with the realization of formal political freedom that follow the rise of discrete owners of exchange-value under capitalism. Indeed, most historiographical evidence suggests that key offices and the executive function in general remained concentrated in the hands of the elite, especially those who resided in or had capacity to travel to the city.[ciii] Aristotle's manipulation of these facts is fairly transparent: he can philosophically emphasize a "farmer's democracy" that permits median participation to peasant-citizens, but only insofar as his continual reinstatement of the divides between ruler and ruled aspirationally guards *against* anything representing full-fledged economic equality and political participation.[civ] If anything, then, freedom and equality were offered as super-structural leverage to quash demands for redistribution of resources, importantly land, and only granted measured access to political inclusion.[cv] We can agree with Marx that, unlike the "economic mystification" of capitalism, "the actual community and its conditions" of the Greek *polis* "presents itself as the basis of production…its reproduction of this community being production's final purpose."[cvi] If this smacks of an Aristotelian sublation of production to praxis, it is because labor was still being determined by socio-political forces, rather than the other way around. The bodily necessities of the natural world (use-value) were instead metabolized through a variety of valorizations which Aristotle insists could only be rendered just by the ideal *polis*. The fetishization of the political was not in service of the fetishization of the commodity and nor did it facilitate the expanded reproduction of commodity exchange.[cvii]

There are overlaps between Marx and Aristotle. In representing the movement from labor in the "instinctive" and animalistic sense to the form that stamps its "exclusively human characteristic," Marx appears to be Aristotelean—man "develops the potentialities slumbering within nature, and subject the play of its forces to his own sovereign power."[cviii] But whereas Aristotle's political animal mobilizes "practical wisdom" to mediate justice, Marx's species-being is more minimally conceived as the sheer capacity for self-determination. It is this intentional, inventive interiority that for Marx "distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees," for "the architect builds the cell in his mind before he constructs it in wax."[cix] Indeed, as Ruth Groff has elaborated, "this very capacity for freedom entails that we cannot know ahead of time what the governing norms of the Marxist analogue of a proper Aristotelian *polis* will be."[cx] Marx does, however, have a critique of the estrangement that is "abstract labor": it deactualizes our *energeia,* even as it actualizes formal conditions for freedom and justice and provides a distinctive perspective into a broader anthropology.[cxi] Aristotle might agree that capital, or what he calls the increase of "money without limit," is a perversion, but it is because unvirtuous men deviate from nature in their disproportionate pursuit of excess.[cxii] His constitution of the political animal gives us the justice of "proportionate equality," and vice-versa. But because justice is decided in advance, Aristotle fails to understand how the mediation of value could be both arbitrary and objective.

Marx's assessment of Aristotle's limits to labor also pertains to justice, considering the imbrication of the value-form and legal-form. Aristotle is the first to define crime, as Marxist legal scholar Evgeny Pashukanis notes, as an "involuntarily concluded contract" in which a person with free will (notably excluding children, idiots, the mentally ill, and individuals in a state of ecstasy) elects to take away the dignity or property of another.[cxiii] With justice more broadly conceived as

a mean between taking too much and taking too little, rectificatory justice, which "manifested in the adjustment of balance in transactions between man and man,"[cxiv] would restore the imbalance caused by crime, which might involve life imprisonment, capital punishment, or slavery. If gods and tyrants expose the arbitrary element to this decision, abstract labor sublates it. For Marxist theorists of law, labor time becomes the key to equalization of punishment, insofar as it can measure the value of stolen commodities. Incarceration, in particular, develops the abstract criminal in tandem with the abstract laborer.[cxv] Under capitalism, the state is able to appear as a sufficiently abstract apparatus, devoid of contaminating moral sentiments and capable of exercising justice over equal bearers of exchange value. If that punishment is a payment meant to rectify injustice, and if only the emergence of value could normalize punishment, then justice becomes a glaringly ambiguous value in Aristotle. Because some crimes, like murder, are not based on a preceding voluntary contract, but instead are "transactions independent of any consent, in which one party has wronged the other," resolving these crimes become especially contentious without having established *a priori* freedom.[cxvi]

I propose that this triangulation, between justice, labor, and species-being, is a historical limitation that extends to Marx's "thin Aristotelianism." Historically, incalculable modes of punishment—the corporeal—were typically reserved for the slave. Demosthenes wrote that the slave differs from the free man because the slave is "answerable with his body for all offences."[cxvii] This prohibition against bodily punishment mirrors a major element of Athenian political reform: the abolition of debt-bondage for Greeks through the Solonian *seisachtheia* ("shaking off of burdens"). While merely *having* a slave guaranteed the ground for virtue (though not virtue itself), not ever being able to *become* a slave could become a guarantee of a different sort. In the context of Greek democracy, freedom *within* the polis was extended to freedom *from* intervention and

freedom *over* others.[cxviii] Reflecting a fear of enslavement that permeates classical literature (Apuleius' Golden ass is exemplary to this end),[cxix] to be non-Greek seemed to be subject to be enslaved, just as to be Greek was to be non-enslaved. If Aristotle at times seems to echo these sentiments, with his climatic speculation of difference and quips that barbarians are lacking a "natural ruling element," he just as equally admits that Greeks vary in their dispositions and "display the same difference in relation to one another."[cxx] Although framed as a compromise with peasants for their acquiescence to the state, what was eliminated was not only "*enslavement* for debt" but more broadly all forms of "pledging the body as security."[cxxi] The body could not be used as payment for punishment, nor could it be leveraged as a form of capital.[cxxii]

Insofar as the reduction to slavery could be imposed as restitution far outweighing the crime, the prohibition aims to curtail otherwise groundless features of justice and punishment exposed by slavery and amplified by its uncertain categorization. Indeed, the legal distinction between the fully free and fully enslaved in the Greek context was constantly upset in practice, with freed men easily passing for citizens and citizens being accused of slaves.[cxxiii] The "Old Oligarch" warned that "if it were customary for a slave (or metic or freedman) to be struck by one who is free, you would often hit an Athenian citizen by mistake on the assumption that he was a slave."[cxxiv] Seneca the Younger claimed the Senate once proposed to have slaves wear distinctive clothing—until they realized how dangerous it would be if the slaves could enumerate their masters.[cxxv] As Kostas Vlassopoulos clarifies, "since it was impossible to differentiate who exactly was a citizen and who was a foreigner, a freedman or a slave, it was prudent to abstain from aggressive behaviour in general. Thus, the unintentional effect of democratic citizenship was that slaves, freedmen and foreigners were often protected by association."[cxxvi] Because of this associative crossing, the protection of freedmen from the punishment of slavery extended to the

protection of slaves from the punishment of slavery as a permanent condition. Enslavement, especially among the Romans, ultimately functioned more as a provisional process of mobility and incorporation than as an inheritable exclusion.[cxxvii]

This is my preliminary corrective to Marx. If Aristotle is constrained from finding the true medium of equality because of hierarchy, it is also the case that he is constrained from finding the medium of hierarchy because of a degree of associative equality.[cxxviii] Because, as Eugene Garver points out, "not everyone unqualified for civic life is a natural slave, and not everyone capable of living independently ought to be a citizen," the line between slavery, laboring, and civic activity shifted "from constitution to constitution."[cxxix] Although it often may be in the benefit of the city to possess slaves, because Aristotle cannot ontologically bind the practice of freedom and virtue to slavery, it also may be even more crucial to relieve not only the permeance but the very possibility of slavery. With the slavery ban, new citizens were free from the arbitrary dangers of justice, but they were also "free" in the negative sense from the rewards of distributive justice, the "distributions of honour, wealth or whatever else is divisible among those who enjoy citizen rights."[cxxx] Sociologically, then, Aristotle's speculations on natural slavery condense pressure from "free" peasants whose struggle to claim meaningful citizenship is animated by the uneven, insecure actualization of law, justice, and virtue. His hesitant concessions do not merely propose to grant citizens a foothold in freedom from natural slavery; they endeavor to build a middle-class culture whose deliberative "mean" can cultivate virtue and justice without disrupting the order between the ruler and the ruled, reason and emotion.[cxxxi] The superficial resemblance between Greek exchange and capitalism dissolves into neither the difference of Marx, where slavery in actuality limits freedom in potential, nor the sameness of Wood, where free labor reigns across history. Rather, the potentiality of slavery germinates the potentiality of freedom.

Beasts, Gods, Natives, Women

Although never actually taken up by the ancients, natural slavery re-appears as a viable concept in 16th century theological debates over the status of colonized Native Americans. Following the Spanish Dominican theologian Francisco de Vitoria, a consensus emerged that decided *against* assigning Native Americans to the category of natural slaves.[cxxxii] To be clear, it was the *application* of natural slavery that became open for debate, not its relative truth, which suddenly was assumed. While these debates will be subject to further scrutiny in the following chapter, I want to assert here that natural slavery re-appeared as fact because blackness had already become reified as unquestioned slaveness, a truth "hardly doubted."[cxxxiii] What was at issue with the "intermediary subject" of the Native American was not slavery but conquest, not an enslavement ideology but a colonial ideology.[cxxxiv] Unlike the voluminous attention paid to the status of Native Americans, deemed by Lewis Hanke as the "dawn of conscience in America," and blazingly staged in the 1550 debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Gines de Sepúlveda,[cxxxv] no theological or legal treatises appeared concerning the black slave's status until the 18th century.[cxxxvi] Indeed, in a 1546 letter, Vitoria unequivocally supports the continued Spanish and Portuguese purchase of Africans without "any scruples" as to the justice of the slave's original procurement.[cxxxvii]

But what is the origin of this immaculate conception of anti-blackness, which precedes what most critical race scholars identify as the emergence of race discourse by at least one, if not two centuries? Although we can see its apparent need in Aristotle, I want to caution against what Frank B. Wilderson III calls "the ruse of analogy." Vitoria's reflections on the political possibility of the Native Americans were drawn from Aristotle's *ethnos*, who were supposed to be children

whose adulthood was yet to come. Standing in for originary, natural hierarchy, household slavery can illustrate what Aristotle imagines to be the pre-political *ethnos,* those alliances and federations not yet joined in commerce and common values. Unlike *oikos, ethnos* is the germ of political potential and purpose—it encompasses both natural and contingent criteria for who a people *could be* if ruled by a virtuous hand.[cxxxviii]

In order to differentiate between the permissible diversity of the political and impermissible variants of the political animal, Aristotle presupposes natural slavery as a negative outside and a political pre-history. But he does so from *within* his political positionality, especially as his *polis* retains theoretical and practical interpretative priority.[cxxxix] Seen through the prism of the natural slave, Aristotle's categories—*zoē* and *bios, oikos* and *polis, body* and *soul, use* and *energeia*—are most significant not in their priority to the *polis* but their persistence within it. By positing their persistence, they seem to provide evidence of a prior hierarchy and for a natural order, a "before" (*palai)* and "now" (*nym)* that mediates the distinction between essence and existence.[cxl] But while the *ethnos* of barbarism is explicitly a signifier of difference *within* politics, the *oikos* of natural slavery remains a vacuum, a being that doesn't exist, with no essence except as the negative of the human—only entering the scene as exorbitant deficiency *and* excess—around whose orbit is presupposed a natural economy of an outside to politics. Slavery, then, doesn't simply mediate between freedom and unfreedom, but between now and then, actuality and potentiality, politics and nature, human and animal, being and nothing.

My next chapter, "The Political Slave," addresses how this indeterminate position becomes occupied by the black slave, who becomes figured as not only outside of subjecthood but inimical to it, the violent figure the modern political calls itself into being to protect. Already, creeping into is Aristotle is the assumption of the slave as not only lacking in reason but a threat to reason, whose

incarceration as slave can equalize and establish virtuous life and justice; can substitute for murder. But absent the meaning-making the abstraction of slavery through blackness enables, the coherency of natural slavery, and the vision of man and justice it dialectically subtends, crumbles. Physiology and metaphysics languish in a proximity that is only speculative at best. Politics, and attendant questions of value, virtue, and punishment reach similar aporias. Anti-blackness, then, is virtual in Aristotle; it is as if it had to be invented. It represents those philosophical paradoxes that protect themselves through the bio-cultural mapping of race.

With the historical arrival of the figure of the black slave comes not only the material and intellectual flourishing of democracy and Republican values, but also the intensification of their contradictions as the economy is said to usurp the political or, rather, exchange-value supersedes use-value. When we consider that racial slavery deals not simply with the problem of use (the reduction of need to bodily limits) but with the circulation of the presuppositions of exchange (freedom and equality), the "abstract slave" represents a challenge to Marx's "abstract labor." Aristotle believes that commodities retain their nature after exchange, but for Marx, this nature is retroactively re-totalized by the two-fold character of the commodity under capitalism.[cxli] Commodities are considered commensurate and "acquire a socially uniform objectivity as values, which is distinct from their sensuously varied objectivity as articles of utility," according to Marx, "only by being exchanged."[cxlii] But undergirding this transubstantiation into exchange-value is not only the commodification of labor but the capture of being. Racial capitalism frees labor through the alchemy that yokes natural slavery to blackness, that frees freedom in wild proportion to the groundless actualization of the slave.

While a more robust rethinking of the relationship between Marx, labor, and slavery will wait until Chapter Three, I can provide an additional "ruse of analogy" that clarifies the question

of this reproductive outside: that between the slave and women. There are several ways to think of this analogy—the first would prioritize Aristotle's naturalization of differences between men and women as the "master hierarchy," that is then relayed through the "social differences" between the free and slave.[cxliii] The second, more common procedure, is to equalize the suffering of the slave and the woman, which plays out as a functional equivalence between race and gender. Lewis Gordon, for instance, theorizes a parallel between gender in "Aristotle's world" and race in the "anti-black world." In Aristotle's world, "there was simply one gender: male. What we call female was in that world, simply not-male. Race, in that world, simply meant genus."[cxliv] An anti-black world retains this oppositional logic but claims a negative identity with respect to race: one's humanness no longer means "to be gendered and to avoid being nongendered," but "to be raceless and to avoid being racialized—that is, black."[cxlv]

I want to propose instead that the black woman, whose labor Saidiya Hartman refers to as the "belly of the world," offers a more capacious starting point to think genres of the human, from gender to labor to indigeneity. It is true that much of my critique of the speculative elements of natural slavery applies to Aristotle's "ideologically charged" construction of gender, in that a deconstruction of the nature/culture binary also upsets the sex/gender binary.[cxlvi] Both Thomas Laqueur and Anne Fausto-Sterling have, for instance, addressed Aristotle's ambiguity on this front: on the one hand, Aristotle naturalizes gender roles; on the other, he is indifferent towards genitalia or bodily functions and prioritizes the "heat of the heart."[cxlvii] Nonetheless, even virtually, slaveness differs from gender and sexual difference for two reasons. First, because while slaves lack a soul, women participate in the soul, but lack reason.[cxlviii] Their emotion makes them quantitatively distinct to men, but not qualitatively so. Laqueur clarifies that for Aristotle, women's "adaptations were not the basis for ontological differentiation. In the flesh, therefore, the sexes

were more and less perfect versions of each other."[cxlix] Second, for Aristotle, "males contribute the form and females the matter to generation."[cl] The difference between women and slaves, however, is that while women are conceived as tools for reproduction, slaves are tools for production.

What should be immediately apparent is that Aristotle does not think from the position of the slave woman; indeed, the sexual and gender identity of the slave doesn't matter, and Aristotle scoffs at barbarians precisely because they collapse slaveness and femaleness.[cli] On one level, Aristotle's non-gendering of the slave resembles what Hortense Spillers in "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe" calls the "ungendering" of the slave women in racial slavery, in which "we lose at least *gender* difference in the outcome and the female and the male body become a territory of cultural and political maneuver…"[clii] But non-gendering lacks the historical movement and ontological import of ungendering. Because race is non-determinant for Aristotle's slave, reproduction is not a salient feature of the slave condition. Ungendering does not evaporate gender: decidedly, for Spillers "the quintessential 'slave' is *not* a male, but a female."[cliii] But under the anti-black conditions of commodification and fungibility, in which the slave is positioned as quantities of flesh, as Saidiya Hartman writes, "The sexuality and reproductive capacities of enslaved women" become "central to understanding the expanding legal conception of slavery and its inheritability."[cliv] What the slave woman reproduces is not a hierarchical lesser member of the political realm, either man/woman or citizen/native. While the generic woman is a genre of the human, the enslaved woman cannot appear as a gendered being at all. Her labor is one that "conscripted the womb, deciding the fate of the unborn and reproducing slave property by making the mark of the mother a death sentence for her child."[clv] To be a black slave is to be "excluded from the prerogatives of birth" in which "the mother's only claim—to transfer her dispossession to the child."[clvi] But the mother's reproductive capacities do more than produce and reproduce

slaveness—as the "belly of the world," her non-relationality produces modern relationality as we know it, framed by historically emergent versions of will, love, desire, capacity, hetero-domesticity, kinship, and property that are themselves produced and reproduced by a slave-human antagonism.

If the "belly of the world" links the ungrounded claims of virtue, belonging, and reproduction to the biological-cultural imperative of race and gender, it is not because race simply stands in for the terms that govern repetition or reproduction. That would only reproduce the analogy, but now through Marxist feminists that posit un-waged work as the key to capitalist reproduction.[clvii] On the one hand, its libidinal economy carries with it the deposits of irresolvable philosophical debates. On the other, the historicized *materialization* of anti-blackness erases historical and philosophical irresolvability in an attempt to transform slavery itself, from a problem of social status to a resolution of the global order of being. The virtual slave is pregnant with the problem of natality. Anti-blackness, writes Hartman, is the "ghost in the machine of kinship," the pre-history of the post-racial, because even when it fails to erase the contingency of transmission, it seems to revitalize itself eternally, projecting its failures into the historical figure of the black slave.[clviii] The slave's violence, ungovernability, criminality, or hyper-sexualization becomes the infinitely generative cause for the reproduction of slavery, even and especially after its supposed abolition. As Zakiyyah Jackson clarifies, "What appear as alternating, or serialized, discrete modes of (mis)recognition—sub/super/humanization, animalization/humanization, privation/superfluity—are in fact varying dimensions of a racializing demand that the slave be all dimensions at once, a simultaneous actualization of the seemingly discontinuous and incompatible."[clix]

In this way, both interpretations of Aristotle end up being correct: the natural slave names an empty signifier, a "problem for thought," that manifests the black slave and necessitates the

ideological invention of race.[clx] Anti-blackness realizes slavery by generalizing its ontological condition and repressing its problem of origin. That is why when blackness-as-slaveness is condensed into the legible matrix of race or gender, the enslaved woman becomes, in Spillers' words, the "principle point of passage between the human and non-human world."[clxi] In between nothing and the ungrounded substance of race and gender, her ungendering is an immanent cause, establishing those modes of relationality (filiation and affiliation) whose generalizability as human disavows its violent, anti-black reproduction. The black feminist conceptualization of "the belly of the world" then raises anti-blackness to a working totality, offering a philosophy of history with a greater explanatory power than any other presumptive totality, because it engages with questions that move from the political to ontological, historical to universal, natural to cultural, nothing to being, without resolving them.

Social Death and Transcendence

To encircle the terms of the historiographical dilemma: if, on the one hand, blackness was operable in ancient times, then blackness (as philosophical indeterminacy) and slaveness (as its ontological infusion) risks being of such universal provenance that its categories could offer nothing substantial to the comprehension and critique of the specific historical ground facilitating the expansion of the trans-Atlantic trade. On the other hand, if blackness is a purely historical invention, consequent *from* early modern ruptures of the slave trade, then it is one divisive identity construct among others on a spectrum of claims of belonging, and its relationship to slavery is incidental. I have argued a third option is available: if anti-blackness is historical *as an abstraction,* it exists "not as false consciousness but itself a possibility of knowledge."[clxii] Slavery is a real abstraction in that it invades and occupies the position of the transcendental, such that we can't go

back without its freight, then our exposure of the ancients will always be anti-black. In this vein, it is instructive to explore the collusion between interpretations that insist on the logical coherence and historical accuracy of Aristotle's natural slave and those that transmute slavery to the past while insisting on post-racialism in the present.

Even thinkers who complicate natural slavery's efficacy, such as Ellen Meiksins Wood, end up erasing slavery from the present. Wood considers her injection of freedom into the presumptive slave base as a political corrective to conservative anti-democrats of the 18th and 19th centuries who, locked in ideological battle against the freedoms promised by the French Revolution, denigrated those whose dependency on slavery fostered a disdain for the virtues of work.[clxiii] Because this ethos of the "idle mob" was actively misread as representative of the actual Greco-Roman citizenry, instead of as an aristocratic ideology, it became the historical presupposition that "set the agenda" for all debates concerning slavery, including the Marxist characterization of an ancient slave mode of production.[clxiv] But what happens when we conceive of the interpretative link between the present and classical past not solely through 18th century anti-freedom readings of Aristotle by conservative democrats, as Wood maintains, but also through pro-slavery readings? After all, the Haitian Revolution and American Revolution both represent moments where discourses of freedom were captive to the maintenance of slavery in fact.[clxv] These social-philosophical struggles better account for why, despite his ambiguities, Aristotle is so routinely read as a clear-eyed supporter of slavery. Their readership was occupying a position in which slavery had already been realized as 1) ontologically grounded and 2) a threat to freedom.[clxvi]

Orlando Patterson's concept-metaphor "social death" represents the reverse of this dynamic. While he differs from Wood by centralizing slavery as the interpretive lens for freedom, he does not account for the important question as to how slavery (and, in effect, freedom) has

historically and conceptually been hypostatized through different institutions or relations of power nor does he interrogate how his own research into Jamaican slavery, in particular, informs the generalizability of his theorizations. His book *Freedom,* for instance, draws direct analogies between the triangulation of labourers, slaves, and aristocrats in both the ancient world and Atlantic sugar plantations like Jamaica, where independent farmers conflicted with the British colonial elite.[clxvii] Given *Freedom*'s genealogical beginnings in the ancient world, it is telling that these analogies are framed through Jamaica—"endless parallels to the Jamaican case could be found all over the world and throughout history"—and not the other way around.[clxviii] His analogical relay isn't merely illustrative; it grounds the comparativist conceptual apparatus that defines slavery as "social death." From the heights of a global and general perspective (inauspiciously correlate with the objective purview of mastery), *Slavery and Social Death* then defines slavery by way of distinctive features, or "constituent elements"—gratuitous violence, natal alienation, and general dishonor. These elements of "social death" seem in large part extensive of natural slavery, where gratuitous violence corresponds with "total use," natal alienation with "foreignness" and general dishonor with "absence of virtue."

It should not be surprising that Patterson circles the question of "Genesis or Structure" in nearly every iteration of his work, found from the presumptive quest for the "origin and structure" of slavery in the *Sociology of Slavery,* to the essay on "The Structural Origins of Slavery," to the thematic headings "Origins and Forms" and "Origin and Nature" that organizes his early *Ethnic Chauvinism,* up through the long examination the historical rise of freedom in Volume 1 of his proposed *Freedom* series, to his later texts that grapple with the abiding problem of continuity, cultural or otherwise.[clxix] By identifying "natal alienation" as a salient feature of social death, Patterson draws attention to a meaningful connection between negativity and reproduction, what I

have otherwise been considering as the birth of anti-blackness through an empty structure that erases its origins. Patterson, however, avowedly displaces the intimacy between slavery and anti-blackness by instead statically situating the genesis of slavery in the martial logic of *substitutability*. "[O]riginated (or conceived of as having originated) as a substitute for death, usually violent death," Patterson finds social's roots on the battlefield, where the victor does not pardon the war captive but instead suspends the physicality of death, now transmuted into death's living variant. Since the publication of *Slavery and Social Death*, Patterson has become the shorthand source for the war slavery doctrine.[clxx]

But we have to be attentive to the parenthetical in Patterson—"originated (or conceived of as having originated)." Moses Finley, for one, argues that this "conquest theory" only explains the *character* of slavery, not necessarily its *emergence*. Contrary to breezy certitudes of the likes of historian Fustel de Coulanges, the ancient invention of large-scale slavery is not "a primordial fact…easily explained."[clxxi] The war slavery doctrine does not sociologically or historically provide us with a "window onto Roman sociomilitary practices, as is often assumed."[clxxii] That, statistically, the inhabitants of lands conquered by Romans far outpaces the number of Roman slaves leads us to consider the alternatives to enslaving captives that must have been engaged, Patterson himself concluding that "slaughter, ransom, temporary imprisonment, colonization, impressment, and simple release were all at various time, separately or together, the more common fate of captives."[clxxiii] Patterson, like Aristotle, appears to begin with the (conceptual) essence of slavery before preceding to delimit instances of its existence but Aristotle uses natural slavery to mediate the problem of origin which, by the time of Patterson's writing, had dramatically shifted. If Patterson's study shows that the means of acquisition of slaves were actually carried out more by birth and trade than by war,[clxxiv] and that the problem of debt-bondage is absolutely central to

the emergence of a distinct public freedom,[clxxv] why remain entranced by slavery's proximity to death via a war story?

Historians, rebelling against the taxonomies inherited by social science and the seductive origin stories that seem grounded in myth more than fact, have proposed a methodological solution. Instead of pursuing general elements of slavery, the thrust of slave historians in the past century want to return to the specificities of "lived experience" and the archive, substituting false abstractions in favor of further contextualization.[clxxvi] Yet this solution takes the problem of origin and abstraction to be an intellectual misstep and not a problematic endemic to and constitutive of slavery. Joseph C. Miller's *The Problem of Slavery as History*, to take a rather stark example, announces its departure from Pattersonian abstraction through the assertion that historians are "epistemologically humanists," that is, "people" apart from abstractions: "a historical approach starts by focusing on the *contexts* that Patterson backgrounds to sense the strategic considerations that motivated the people who managed to acquire slaves at all."[clxxvii] His analytic focus on "slaving," as a thick, contextually motivated strategy that nonetheless unfolds in a "supramillenial timescale,"[clxxviii] seeks to explain purpose in the humanist tradition for which acts are "intentional" and "motivated by meanings that people derived from the contexts (of times, places, cultural heritages) in which they imagined themselves as being."[clxxix] Pivoting around a distinction between "actor's experience" and "sociological modeling,"[clxxx] Miller has a contention, not with the fact of abstraction as such, but with the insufficiency of abstraction as organizing principle for human action. For the bad sociologist (and Patterson is his exemplar),

> slavery presented as an institution is a fait accompli, accomplished, a done deal, general, and static. Conceived in this conventional abstracted form it axiomatically becomes the intractable problem that scholars have accepted it as being, however they lament the dilemma that they have themselves thus created by structuring it as such.[clxxxi]

Miller counter-poses his political economy to what he conceives as a persistent, unfortunate

"racialized framework," first pervading the "emotional" comparative studies of the 1940s and 1950s, whose practices diverged from "proper" historical work by reflecting "modern racial obsessions" and tending to "tangle up race with slavery almost indistinguishably."[clxxxii] On this score, the most damning dead-end plaguing historians is the recourse to an "ahistorical conflation of race and slavery as the abstract dual demons of prejudice," where race and slavery are taken-for-granted abstractions.[clxxxiii]

In practice, this means that Miller offers an alternative to social death with his earlier "the way of death," which deals in the dense detail of the *effects* (though not, ultimately, the ground) of the Brazilian bullion trade as a transatlantic trade in slaves. Death pushes Miller's text heterogeneously as a metaphor; its very "comprehensiveness" arising from its indeterminacy: "physical for some slaves but sociological for others, financial as well as physical for European traders in Africa, political for many ambitious Africans, and paradoxically philosophical as mercantilism and industrialism coalesced in the Atlantic."[clxxxiv] These different forms of death (apart from perhaps, that enigmatically categorized "paradoxically philosophical") are conceived as the *appearance* and *outcome* of the dynamic of the flows of commodity exchange—the trembling and transforming different economic systems, values and beliefs in Angola, Brazil and Portugal. But because Miller assumes the existence of a clarity of desires—rational and logical series of exchanges when Europe trades with Africa what it has (consumer goods) for what it needs, and vice-versa—his "way of death" becomes curiously one-dimensional.[clxxxv] Behind Miller's swath of contextualizing, he insists in a Hobbesian consistency to slaving, intentionally manifest as greed, whose underpinnings point to a generalized abstraction of human nature.[clxxxvi]

In some ways, Patterson anticipates the standard historian critique of social death as dangerously ahistorical, cautioning against what he elsewhere calls the whirlwind of "social

vacuums"[clxxxvii]: "even at this most elementary level of personal relations it should be clear that we are dealing not with a static entity but with a complex interactional process, one laden with tension and contradiction in the dynamics of each of its constituent elements."[clxxxviii] In the "unfolding of this complicated drama known as slavery," contradiction is key: contradictions, seen at the level of personal relations, become institutionalized, and these institutionalizing modes create habitual pathways for resolving or, more precisely, containing and deferring tensions.[clxxxix]

Patterson is adamantly unapologetic of his "schematism": "it is the essential heavy plow that must first clear the ground, turn the soil, and demarcate the boundaries."[cxc] *Social Death* is his attempt to arrive at the "silent languages" of "cultural systems," what we will expand to a *grammar* of violence and the governing codes of meaning-making, while recognizing how "the ground underneath differs from the pebbles and rocks above."[cxci] Patterson, in his later work, calls the "puzzle of persistence…one of the most challenging problems in the sociology of culture" and one that has "been steadfastly neglected" by a prevailing "disdain for cultural determinism, the well-based suspicion of essentialism, and the laudable need to acknowledge the role of meaning-making and agency in cultural analysis."[cxcii] Patterson turns this key more avowedly in an early essay-version of social death by counter-posing an inner dialectic with its outer one:

> There is an inner dialectic by which the basic forces of slavery are revealed: master against slave; power against powerlessness; alienation against disalienation; social death against social life; honour against dishonour. This inner dialectic, however, works itself out as part of a wider, outer dialectic: that of the dynamics of the relationship between slavery, seen as a single process, and the total complex of processes which we call society or the social formation. It is this outer dialectic which, in the last analysis, determines the outcome of the struggle within the inner dialectic. It determines, for example, whether master or slave wins; whether powerlessness is what it appears to be or something else.[cxciii]

Patterson, however, never gives the outer dialectic power to transform the terms of the inner dialectic. The origin of war significantly shapes his inner dialectic, dominating any subsequent

alternate features of slavery's manifestation. For him, slavery's (very political) epistemology seems to flow in only one direction.

Patterson's theory of institutionalization, however, only considers the concept of race as merely an *operational* technique of power. The relation of blackness to slavery was, he condenses: "something new."[cxciv] This "something new," a curiously imprecise phrase which, when mobilized, marks the difficulty of securing the ground of any emergence, is not heralded in its integral or transformative capacity—surprisingly instrumental, "race" contributes nothing substantive to Patterson's general definition. Indeed, in his interview with Scott, Patterson partially accounts for his move to the general presuppositions of slavery as implicitly undertaking the "ideological" work of "*undoing*" any easy translation that would demarcate the "quintessential slave as a *black* person."[cxcv] Patterson's brief, two-paragraph summation of what this "something new" might mean, and the context in which its signification coheres, condeses the long historiographical debate on the ideological and institutional ramifications of imported Africans in 17th century Virginia, blindsides an Atlantic perspective centralizing the sugar-slave complex and plantations predating Columbus, and dismisses any sustained engagement with theorists and activists of the black radical tradition, or early writers on the concept of race, for that matter.[cxcvi] Although he does give the Mediterranean centrality as a "veritable vortex of horror for all mankind,"[cxcvii] anti-blackness is for Patterson but a variant on a spectrum—"much the same sense of apartness, of not belonging, emerged in other cultures to differentiate the genuine slave from other forms of involuntary servants over whom almost total power was exercised."[cxcviii] The catastrophic abyss of the Middle Passage is rendered an instance of a larger problem: "millions of slaves, *for instance*, died between being captured and being forced on board the slave ships."[cxcix] We can find a partial expression of this contingency in his first major text, in which slavery is contained to specific parameters,

dissolving with its formal abolition: "The abolition of slavery in 1834 was simply the official seal of ruin on a system that had already collapsed."[cc]

Here, Miller dovetails with his nemesis Patterson. For both, the connection between slavery and Africa is incidental: "As it happened," Miller writes, the outsiders held as slaves "came from Africa." [cci] Although Miller grounds his work on the idea that all identities are "situational and relational," he is forced to acknowledge that most enslaved Africans "were categorized individually in the superficial, hence abstract terms of their strikingly distinctive appearance to people who did not know them personally."[ccii] Like the passage in Patterson, in which racial slavery is taken as "something new," Miller points to a necessarily *social* abstraction that undercuts his frequent disparagement of abstraction as a lazy intellectual practice. A whole series of conundrums are embedded in this acknowledgement. First, if abstraction is directly equated with superficiality, why is this form of racial distinction so pervasive and so tenacious? Second, how are we to comprehend the "individual" preceding this categorization, and how can this individual be linked to a "strikingly distinctive appearances" without assaying the supersensible historicity of a racial analytic? What follows, in Miller's reading, are hasty brush strokes, with imported Africans "eventually categorized as black," a process forcing on their progeny "the same somatic social convention as the category acquired legal definition and discriminatory political force in the nineteenth century."[cciii] We have to wonder why Miller's dismissal of the "dark penumbra of contemporary racial politics,"[cciv] which, to him, renders "all but invisible the critical initiating step of slaving in the Americas"[ccv] does not engage with *why* racialization becomes of historical concern, for both scholars and actors—the way in which, as Spillers writes, "ethnicity," or race, as a "scene of negation" comes to belong in a "class of symbolic paradigms" that "confirm the human body as a metonymic figure for an entire repertoire of human and social relations."[ccvi]

If the raciality of social death is a *real* abstraction in the strained Marxist sense, "a powerful standard dictating complex social, legal, cultural, and political transformations and, above all, affecting the production of subjectivity,"[ccvii] then abstraction might have a place in the historical contextualizing of "political economy." We can, for instance, follow the work of Patrick Murray to distinguish between three concepts of labor operative in Marx's text: 1) abstract ahistorical work, 2) general labor, and 3) practically abstract labor.[ccviii] Whereas abstract ahistorical "work" drives analytically to grasp labor in-itself, general labor as adduced by Marx is "purposeful activity aimed at the production of use-values": the "universal condition for the metabolic interaction between man and nature, the everlasting nature-imposed condition of human existence, and it is therefore independent of every form of that existence, or rather it is common to all forms of society in which human beings live."[ccix] This thick analytic notion of physiological labor is common to all societies, but importantly only becomes apparent for thought as a transcendental ground in capitalism. Practically abstract labor, by contrast, is Murray's way of indexing the "*historically specific social form* of labor" that was Marx's great discovery. Writes Marx: "Political economy has indeed analyzed value and its magnitude…and has uncovered the content concealed *within these forms.* But it has never once asked the question why this content has assumed the particular form, *that is to say, why labour is represented in value.*"[ccx] Value-producing labor is irreducible to how labor appears to various subject positions; the exchangeability of quantities of heterogeneous labor comes to be defined by an indifference produced and reproduced "in the reality of economic relations itself, rather than in the abstract-making heads of theoreticians," becoming an "'active form,' a concrete universal law governing the destinies of each separate thing and each separate individual."[ccxi] These transcendental conditions for commodity exchange, Marx argues, are "precisely the beauty and greatness" of capitalist social relations, "this spontaneous

interconnection" which is "independent of the knowing and willing of individuals, and which presupposes their reciprocal independence and indifference."[ccxii]

Murray's three conceptualizations of labor can be mobilized as schematics for how the general concepts of natural slavery and social death (although not necessarily named as such until Patterson) is given to us in the material complex of new forms of sociality (and death), reproduced, with our participation if not knowledge.[ccxiii] Most historians place Patterson's enterprise in the first conception, arguing that his definition of slavery as natal alienation, general dishonor and gratuitous violence is arrived at through an irresponsible abstraction from lived particularities. The same is often said of Aristotle, though depending on one's interpretation, natural slavery may straddle both abstract slavery and a more historicized generality. Patterson might situate social death in the second conception—as a revelation of the general features of slavery, read through their institutional processes. Patterson can be pushed further, however, to ascertain a practically abstract "social death," not as a fancy of Patterson's mind but as a practical, "real abstraction," "caught up in the social whole,"[ccxiv] in which the logic of abstraction is historically commensurate with a certain globality, preceding and guiding the theorist's conscious decision-making, and perhaps bringing general slavery into view.

Social Death and Historicity

In Marxist terminology, the generalizability of social death might be considered a fetish revealing as much as it conceals. Although for Patterson, the indirect means of acquisition of slaves, what he calls the exceptional character of the scale and rhythm of the "internal trade" in the Americas, does not occasion a different reading of death in and as slavery, his 1977 encyclopedic entry, "Slavery," concedes a historicized and motivated account of the problem of definition and

slavery's mode of study. Surveying the rise of "General Histories of Slavery," Patterson notes that while there were some hesitant 19th century entries into a study of slavery in "grand historical scale," credit for the first "ambitious general history of slavery" goes to Saco, a Cuban from a prominent slave-owning family who, eventually exiled for his opposition to the trade, published a significant series of volumes on slavery.[ccxv] Waxing melancholic, almost, that this style of theorizing went out of fashion, Patterson foreshadows his later itinerary in the call to revitalize a "comprehensive, scholarly, interpretive study of the institution," through the delimitation of "(a) the problem of the nature of slavery; (b) the problem of the evolutionary origins of slavery; (c) the problem of the structural causes of slavery; and (d) the problem of the structure and dynamics of slave society proper."[ccxvi] If this methodology, a large-scale assessment of slavery's constitution, structure, and dynamics, is relatively new, does that not mean that the outer dialectic—whether defined as a problem of social formation, articulation, or institutionalization—has some bearing on the epistemological realization of the terms of the inner dialectic, slavery's "nature" as social death?

In a recent and revealing interview with David Scott, Patterson speaks, in contrast to the schematic of his work as a distillation, of the grounded "emergence" of the concept social death.[ccxvii] In Patterson's circumscribed genealogy, social death percolated, piecemeal, from his various readings—from the idea of the slave as an outsider, developed by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and then elaborated by Finley and Claude Meillassoux.[ccxviii] Meillassoux worked with the Touareg in the Sahel, who expressly denote the slave as "dead," and while Patterson saw resonances among the Romans' conception of *legal* death, he also conceptually travelled "funny enough...back to the Caribbean, the indigenous Caribbean, the Caribs, our notorious, funky Caribs" whose mourning rituals (cutting of the hair) replicated the strictures put on slaves: "they're *always* in mourning for

their *own* Death."[ccxix] Although the singularity of racial slavery is relativized, the formations of the American South and Caribbean are his most recurrent reference and, given the outgrowth of *Social Death* from his earlier life and work on and in Jamaica, his most apparent investigative touchstone. While his expansive scope seems to belie any distinct reference, Patterson's self-asserted "first comparative interest…was in the Americas," studying black life in the Americas and the Caribbean, through the prism of slave regimes.[ccxx]

In his interview, Scott presses Patterson on whether the "global conception of slavery is being read through [Patterson's] intimate sense of New World slavery, and slavery in Jamaica in particular."[ccxxi] Patterson, side-stepping the first iteration of the question, evidences this formative intimacy throughout the interview and the large breadth of his work. On his own account, this work, specifically his essay on slave revolts, provided the animating impetus for a more expansive comparative project. Patterson's long 1979 essay, "On Slavery and Slave Formations," written in the process of completing *Slavery and Social Death,* is both a capsule form and sounding board for the 1982 book which, Symptomatically, in this capsule essay, Patterson introduces the concept social death, for perhaps the first time, in a brief meditation on blackness:

> The social death of the black man in the American South lingers in the collective memory of his modern descendants. '*Nobody Knows My Name*', cries James Baldwin a hundred years after the legal emancipation of his ancestors. '*The Spook Who Sat By the Door*', echoes another popular black writer; '*Invisible Man*', declares the most accomplished; and there is a deadly irony in the title of the most famous of all black American novels: '*Native Son*'.[ccxxii]

It would not be too much of a stretch to add to this litany Patterson's reading of "dehumanization" and "mystification" in the *Wretched of the Earth,* as decisive for the concept social death.[ccxxiii] When reading the gratuity of violence, as rendering the submission of the slave "perfect," it would be egregiously remiss to suppress what difference racial blackness makes in crystallizing and synthesizing slavery and death. In *Social Death*, however, Patterson suppresses these ruminations

on “funky Caribs”, the haunting of “collective memory” and the fury of Fanon that he once called his “hope and promise.”

Instead, in Patterson’s rendering, so disturbing was the radical black political organizing of the 1970s, in his eyes a “dangerous identity movement,” that he “put aside” the research for *Slavery and Social Death* to write *Ethnic Chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse*, an indignant critique, as the subtitle implies, of political, cultural, and social essentialism.[ccxxiv] Patterson’s revelation that the research for *Ethnic Chauvinism* drew directly from his early comparative work on slavery and later fed into *Slavery and Social Death* clarifies his deliberate attempt to eviscerate any concerted ties between blackness and slavery.[ccxxv] Still, the examples towards which Patterson turns for elaborating the gratuitous violence underpinning *Slavery and Social Death* are explicitly situated in the context of the United States. Indeed, the North Carolina Judge Ruffin’s 1829 statement, “the power of the master must be absolute, to render the submission of the slave perfect,” is in Patterson’s estimation the first full formal recognition of “the necessity or threat of force as the basis of the master-slave relationship.”[ccxxvi] If Ruffin’s is more the disavowed self-representation of the master than the complex translation of social reality, for which Patterson provides a general account, then Ruffin has voiced what is examined under Marx as a “practical truth.”[ccxxvii]

Patterson seems to recognize the need to reflexively ground his generalized slavery when he opens Chapter I: “The Idiom of Power” with Marx’s “fetishism of commodities” to account for why *property* isn't constitutive of slavery per se:

> Man’s reflection on the forms of social life, and consequently, also, his scientific analysis of these forms, takes a course directly opposite to that of their actual historical development. He begins, *post festum,* with the results of the process of development ready to hand before him. Have already acquired the stability of natural self-understood forms of social life, before man seeks to decipher, not their historical character, for in his eyes they

> are immutable, but their meaning—the categories of bourgeois economy consist of such like forms.[ccxxviii]

The centrality of property to any definition of slavery is, for Patterson, a "classic instance" of "*post festum*" historicizing, where reflection on the past is presupposed by our present standpoint. He thus cautions: "the slave was a slave not because he was the *object* of property, but because he could not be the *subject* of property."[ccxxix] If, over the course of time, the "notion of absolute property became pivotal in private law…", we can attribute this to the rearrangements induced by the sociohistorical institutionalization of slavery: "It seems not unreasonable to argue that slavery played a critical role in this development."[ccxxx] In Patterson's reading of "the history of human thought backward": "it is not the condition of slavery that must be defined in terms of absolute property, as is so often attempted; rather it is the notion of absolute property that must be explained in terms of ancient Roman slavery."[ccxxxi]

Yet for Patterson, property's role as "the conceptual aspect of the idiom of power" bears no direct relationship with the "growing complexity of socioeconomic systems."[ccxxxii] Rather, as his notion of the transferability of freedom in time suggests, everything can be explained through inaugural ancient concepts. Patterson has freedom "fully established" in antiquity: "a pattern of continuity links the ancient to the modern expression and experience of the value."[ccxxxiii] The renaissance retrieval of ancient knowledge from its "monastic storage" was facilitated through an active Christian memory tasked with heralding what for Patterson was the "only practical sociological vision of sociation" beyond the backwardness of blood ties.[ccxxxiv] Here, Christianity offers very little to displace or develop the thought of freedom, beyond shepherding its Greek and Roman antecedents and, if freedom is to be thought as an emergent ideal out of slavery, Further, Patterson's version of a "crypto-theology," which is really a secular continuity with a theological shepherding of then and now, severs the church from its political and historical context: "The

influence of the church on secular thought and practice persisted regardless of the nature of the relationship between them…"[ccxxxv] The disjuncture, perhaps, partially explains why racialized modernity has little active or transformative role in theorizing slavery. For Patterson, the secular state is stuck in the "cross-fertilization" and "trappings" of the absolutist church it strained against.[ccxxxvi] To the question of whether there is a "necessary affinity between capitalism and the atomistic individualism associated with it in the Anglo-American world," Patterson later in his career answers with an "emphatic no."[ccxxxvii] By locating property-relations outside of the commodification of racial slavery, and in a specifically Greco-Roman fictive-paradigm, Patterson attempts to bypass the economizing approach of historians. Yet by seeking to understand only the "meaning" of transatlantic slavery, not its "historical character," and less still the condition of meaning for its historical character, he comes to actually exemplify bourgeoisie *post festum* theorizing.

Patterson's parochialization of race intensifies the deleterious dimensions of his project: social death not as slavery's "real abstraction," but its "general abstraction," spanning various forms of production in history but not actually constituting a mode of production itself,[ccxxxviii] rests on a reductive view of the productivity of power—positing an incidental relationship not only between property and slavery, but capitalism and freedom, only sustained by divorcing political philosophy, history, and humanism from race.[ccxxxix] Race, in Patterson's view, is external to slavery, just as, slavery is, for him, external to the specificity of the modern world, and freedom external to capitalism.[ccxl] In *Rituals of Blood,* Patterson abdicates the resources of "second sight" and a radical political and philosophical engagement with blackness: "I refuse to call any Euro-Americans or Caucasian person 'white,' and I view with the deepest suspicion any Euro-American who insists on calling Afro-Americans 'black.'"[ccxli] The summary dismissal of blackness as a

pathologically exhausted subject position, rather than a profound problematization, can also be unpacked in his methodological imperatives as, when in "Slavery," he cautions: "it is ironic that when not theoretically oriented and methodologically rigorous, comparative work can and often does become parochial."[ccxlii] In adopting the prevailing multicultural framework, Patterson argues that the oppression of other races—namely the "visibly nonwhite Asians and Latin Americans"—suggests that a "serious crisis of racial definition now confronts those clinging to the binary conception of race."[ccxliii] Most problematically, if this "serious crisis" necessitates a disposal of the black/white binary, it implicitly calls into question his analysis that slavery is a singular formation of power, leaving blackness in the lurch of a more capacious and insidious anti-blackness.[ccxliv] The practice of delinking slavery from blackness opens up space for the delinking of social death from slavery, against Patterson's own prescriptions. With social death re-commissioned as a catch-all for political technologies,[ccxlv] slavery can be relativized as but one form of power on a spectrum and loses the distinctiveness central to Patterson's definition.

Other limits, most apparent in Patterson's theorization of man, are generated by situating the emergence of freedom and property outside of race.[ccxlvi] For one, Patterson backs away from the "internalization" of slavery: "there is absolutely no evidence," he writes, "to suggest that any group of slaves ever internalized the conception of degradation held by their masters. To be dishonored—and to sense, however acutely, such dishonor—is not to lose the quintessential human urge to participate and to want a place."[ccxlvii] The ahistorical and asocial authentic subject he seems to find, hiding behind contingent relations of power, draws from Camus' invocation of the slave as one who sets a limit that demands "recognition of his humanity"—the slave presciently arrives at an "existential" realization of Camus' intellectual project.[ccxlviii] If this makes the slave more properly existential than the intellectual, it nonetheless grounds its project of freedom in an

incorporative project of the human. Patterson's extended call to shift the terms of the debate to class, transcendent of race, signals precisely this nexus.[ccxlix] The full range and highest summit of the human, for Patterson, can only be achieved by a repressive de-racialization, itself a racial project.[ccl]

I noted earlier that, in the interview with Patterson, Scott asks if a "global conception of slavery is being read through [Patterson's] intimate sense of New World slavery, and slavery in Jamaica in particular." Scott presses, a second time: "one of the questions that I want to ask is whether, in a sense, you haven't been always rewriting the story of Jamaican slavery" to which Patterson replies,

> Yes, that's where things started. In a way you can see *all* of what I've been doing ever since [*Sociology of Slavery*] as a way to try to understand Jamaica—but then I went wider and wider afield in trying to understand the people who were enslaving Jamaica, and how they themselves were so obsessed with freedom.[ccli]

Racial slavery is, in the broadest sense, Patterson's condition of possibility; his looping, circular expanse, frozen at a certain presumptive version of the human, needs to be looped back again. He indicates his intention to return to writing on Jamaica, and to continuing his Freedom Series, but both projects have yet to see publication. The recursivity of this not-yet, Patterson's interminable encircling, itself has significance. Perhaps the closest Patterson gets to the tenor of the questions of this dissertation is the revision in his 2008 essay "Black Americans": "the most important common consequence of slavery was the experience of racism," with natal alienation as a second major feature.[cclii] Here, he even invokes Du Bois, for one of the first times, and his formulation of the color-line.[ccliii] Yet, Patterson presupposes, again and again, that this color-line is not our onto-epistemological context, but an *experiential* result of conscious choices, taken by both blacks and whites: "the major problem of the new century will be the reformation, by all parties, of those ethnic preferences, intimate networks, cultural practices, and other ingrained habits of the heart"

that sustain socio-cultural segregation.[ccliv] Unsurprisingly, he calls into question black capacity to "meet the challenges of internal lifestyle and interethnic changes and do the cultural and interpersonal work required for integration into the private sphere of the 'beloved community' for which Martin Luther King, Jr., so often yearned."[cclv] Patterson's decontextualized, static dialectic, both diverging from and corresponding to Marx and Hegel, mirrors the anti-blackness that not only provided justification for slavery but made its presence in the modern world so voluble.

Indeed, it is precisely *because* it straddles this unstable juncture, I argue, that social death, the unceasing relegation of blackness beyond any redeemable form of life, remains so salient. Death is of special importance because, my reading suggests, modernity is the threshold where the beyond of death itself enters as a figure that is at stake, and in question, for the social whole, rather than just assumed as a universal in or as exchange. Blackness is the representation of the irrelational. Out of the shadows, and at stake as a potential guarantor of meaning or the space of meaning's dissolution, the unsettling of death's symbolic efficacy finds a reprieve in anti-blackness. It is not simply that natural slavery's generality lacked a proper object—racialized bodies—but that its generality, when developed with early modern transformations in thought and trade, was made possible through an objectification of being that was also an erasure of being.

In a remarkable essay intervening on the supposed split that the concept of social death signposts, between two radical black interpretative itineraries—Afro-Pessimism, and Afro-Optimism—Jared Sexton provocates: "there are problems in the formulation of the relation of power from which slavery arises and there are problems in the formulation of the relation of this relation of power to other relations of power."[cclvi] The immediate political purchase of this insight—that slavery cannot, or certainly cannot easily, be analogized to other power formations—specifically targets how the people-of-color organizing framework draws from fundamental

fissures in modernity such that a *comparative* analysis might be retooled to a "*relational* analysis more adequate to the task."[cclvii] Sexton's precise and doubled reading works not, in the first order, to explicate the geo-temporal generality of slavery; it radicalizes all other relations *to* violence as a relation *of* anti-blackness. If the relational problem, immanent to *any* invocation of slavery, is the shadowy substance of the concept social death—in the philosophical force-field that Moten probes as "the nonrelationality that structures all relationality"[cclviii]—then this reconfigures how we relate (and/or compare) the violence that collapses *racial* slavery and slavery *in general*. When Sexton writes "what is most stunning is the fact that the concept of social death cannot be generalized. It is indexed to slavery and it does not travel," he is theorizing social death tethered less to slavery *in general* than to what slavery's rending with blackness did to the generality of slavery, which, in its indispensability to globality, brings the problem of generality more clearly into view.[cclix]

To both defend Patterson against the historians' charge of intellectual abstraction, excise "social death" from the speciousness of sociological abstraction, and differentiate the "real abstraction" of the slave from the laborer, I argue then that "the abstract slave" defined by social death is neither historical nor sociological enough because the black slave has never cohered as a historical or social figure. Patterson's lacunas gesture to a problematic—social death—that is in excess of the protocols of sociology *and* history, as it sits at the cusp of the announcement of both frameworks—the history of history and the sociology of sociology. That is to say, "social death" has not yet found its properly methodological frame, and perhaps it *cannot* because the conceptual problems that inhere—between the ideal and the actual, the transcendent and the singular, the immaterial and the material, genesis and structure, the political and the social, violence and the law—are the core of the torsions of slavery and modernity.

While we may contest Patterson's historicity, social death bears the traces of this constitutive problematization. By confirming, in his allergic racial reduction, social death's singular epistemic and ontological entanglement to blackness, Patterson strangely intensifies the concept's material reality and explanatory efficacy. Patterson's articulation, that is, performs the very problem it names so unstably, shoring up social death's surround: blackness as excess. Social death, as a real abstraction beyond Patterson's explicit project, marks the epistemological generalization of slavery through blackness. As an index of natural slavery, it solidifies the worldly infusion of death without transcendence into a single, mediating figure—the black slave. Central not only to the right to live or die but the meaning of being and existence and the way these questions are given to us, in time, as history, we can follow Jared Sexton to ask: "But what if slavery does not die, as it were, because it is immortal, but rather because it is non-mortal, because it has *never* lived, at least not in the psychic life of power? What if the source of slavery's longevity is not its resilience in the face of opposition, but the obscurity of its existence? Not the accumulation of its political capital, but the illegibility of its grammar?"[cclx]

Freedom and Its Forms: Hannah Arendt

For Fred Moten, the problem with social death is not that it is prematurely bracketed from blackness, but that, in its evocation of the social, it is a problematic with the wrong name. Moten ascribes the "terminological dehiscence" of what he argues should more appropriately go under the heading of "*political* death" to Patterson's "deep but unacknowledged affinity" with Hannah Arendt.[cclxi] Before probing the implications or merit of elevating "political" over "social" death, I want to engage Moten's version of intellectual inheritance (certainly never avowed by Patterson) by parsing the political/social distinction through the anti-black prism of Arendt's "timeless slave."

Arendt's return to the ancients and her valuation of activity is marked by a refusal to be responsive to the epistemological, ontological, and historical problematic of the black slave, a refusal that effects profound contortions on the trajectory of her thought, from her diagnosis of the failures of modernity and the origin and violence of totalitarianism to her positing of the American project as "perhaps the greatest, certainly the boldest, enterprises of European mankind."[cclxii] This refusal, I elaborate, is relayed in proximate thinkers of the biopolitical, such as Giorgio Agamben.[cclxiii] By refiguring the problem of bare life through the historically transcendent black slave, I begin to identify how critical theories of sovereignty reproduce the para-philosophical dilemmas that haunted Aristotle's "natural slave."[cclxiv]

Arendt's *The Human Condition* revives the ancient Greek distinction between private and public spheres, reframing the former as driven by biological necessity and the latter by the expansive blossoming of humanity through freedom, plurality, action, speech, and spontaneity.[cclxv] For Arendt, humanity is tethered less to biology than it is to the achievement of a certain quality of life, elevated beyond the necessity of work by the dual conditions of action: 1) "the fact of natality," where action is "ontologically rooted," and 2) the condition of "plurality," in which we live among others—this latter political community is decisive in determining natality.[cclxvi] Necessity means to "follow the law of mortality," the "law of a life spent between birth and death" which would "inevitably carry everything human to ruin and destruction if it were not for the faculty of interrupting it and beginning something new."[cclxvii] Action, by contrast, is "the miracle that saves the world, the realm of human affairs from its normal, 'natural' ruin."[cclxviii] Those that exist without legal personhood are "literally dead to the world;" they can speak but their speech does not signify.[cclxix] Paradoxically, then, one becomes fully human only insofar as, through action, one is liberated from the human condition of necessity.[cclxx] If modernity fails to realize human

liberation, it is because the political, in Arendt's genealogical lament, becomes eclipsed by the ascendency of another category—the base, chaotically free "social." The social, as a normalizing force, funnels private economic processes into the realm of the public, subsequently depriving the political of its activity and pluralism. Its errs in elevating the *animal laborans,* whose reduction to labor entails "the actual loss of all awareness of individuality and identity,"[cclxxi] above the *animal rationale*.[cclxxii] This contemporary problematic, reflected (if not consolidated) in Hobbes, Locke, and Marx, frames the relative freedom of society as the measure that "requires and justifies the restraint of political authority," such that "force or violence becomes the monopoly of government."[cclxxiii] The political, then, recedes into an anonymous general will whose end goal becomes the technical *reproduction* of life itself, instead of the pursuit of the good life, whatever that may entail.[cclxxiv]

In mourning the private and public blurring by the social, the definitional premise of Arendt's ideal categories (as it is for Patterson) becomes almost Kantian, stable throughout time, outside and above categorical miscegenation.[cclxxv] If the social is an emergent property of modernity, and disfigures our access to the political, as Arendt suggests, her woefully insufficient theorization of racial slavery misses how our attempt to return to the Greek political is a gesture immanent to the problem, not a solution to it. While the goal of her Athenian example is to encourage a progressive recovery of lost, but fundamental, human experiences, the fact that this is only an *interpretation* of Aristotle's philosophy and not a reflection on ancient society or any anthropological experience itself does not seem to concern Arendt.[cclxxvi] For Ellen Meiksins Wood's project, this static quality of Arendt's thought is an outgrowth of the "idle mob" thesis, in which ancient Greek categories of freedom and slavery are representative of 18th century conservativism.[cclxxvii] There is some truth to the overlap: in *On Revolution,* Arendt disparages the

French Revolution for its focus on social standing, and favors the American Revolution for not being tied by the biological necessity of the socio-economic sphere and instead being spurred by the celebration of action in the public realm. "The sad truth of the matter," she writes, "is that the French Revolution, which ended in disaster, has made world history, while the American Revolution, so triumphantly successful, has remained an event of little more than local importance."[cclxxviii] Arendt's faith in the American republic's transcendence of instinct in favor of freedom mirrors her methodological approach towards the ancients: in her idealized version of historical events, the founding fathers' political achievement was buoyed by being neither "overwhelmed" by the poor nor encumbered by compassion.[cclxxix] Although Arendt admits that "the absence of *the social question* from the American scene was, after all, quite deceptive," noting that "abject and degrading misery was present everywhere in the form of slavery and Negro labor," she does not believe the founding fathers were caught in any irresolvable contradictions.[cclxxx] Rather, Jefferson and Adams, among others, were "aware of the primordial crime upon which the fabric of American society rested" and "convinced of the incompatibility of the institution of slavery with the founding of freedom."[cclxxxi] The founding fathers are absolved because of this presumed incompatibility.

Yet *The Human Condition* seems to have made peace with the compatibility between slavery and freedom. The Greek relation between household and city is, in some respect, the locus for identifying the private realm of need, and Arendt's critique of the social implies that the use of man-made violence to force necessity on some for the freedom of others is *preferable* to the elimination of violence in the private sphere, which has the danger of subjecting *everyone* to necessity and labor.[cclxxxii] But is the distinction between private, moribund necessity on the one hand and public, miraculous action on the other only stabilized by the Greek example, or

naturalized by it? For Arendt, the citizen's entrance to the political realm meant a decision on death, the readiness to "risk his life." The slave, by contrast, sacrifices freedom for life: being burdened by "too great a love for life," regardless of what that life entails, is a "sure sign of slavishness."[cclxxxiii] Unlike the idealized history that undergirds much of Arendt's reasoning, *this* choice is not abstract. Favoring life has its roots in a historically discernable decision: "To understand the ancient attitude toward slavery, it is not immaterial to remember that the majority of slaves were defeated enemies and that generally only small percentages were born slaves."[cclxxxiv] Under the war slavery doctrine, the slave is responsible for their condition, thus absolving the citizen of responsibility. But its applicability to the American Revolution falters, considering how the war slavery doctrine was reoccupied by the natural slave. When the speculative origins of the slave trade are still directly imputed to the slave's acquisition in war and capture, the slave has a degree of subjectivity, even if of distant province, even if a memory.[cclxxxv] But if the war slavery mythos, this symbolic scene of the slave's conversion, could be neatly translated into the global commerce of transatlantic slavery, with its role in the subduction of systems of value, would the concept of Race ever have emerged with all the drive for rigorous metaphysical and scientific coherence?

As illustrative thinkers have shown us since, the friend/enemy distinction, so central to how war frames international relations, relies on a minimal premise of sovereignty that sustains and engages the claims of two competing sovereigns.[cclxxxvi] Black slaves, however, captured and commodified, do not enter legally or otherwise as formidable actors in any recognizable war. As Vitoria's 1546 letter expresses, rather than broaching the possibility of a Portuguese injustice, whose seizure of Africans might be thought of as a "cowardly ruse," one can buy Africans without "any scruples," and the Portuguese can buy Africans from other Africans "without a qualm" as to

the justice of the slave's original procurement. [cclxxxvii] This startling mitigation of the legitimacy of capture is endemic to the increasingly pragmatic, mercantile perspective that bolsters the African enslavement. Slavery's commercial network and international martial codes dictate neither modes of engagement nor protocols of surrender with any recognized West African sovereign. Indeed, the case of Christian ransom of African slaves is ironically summarized as "*I do good business.*"[cclxxxviii] In the rise of the modern-nation state, blackness becomes the key to distinguishing the internal and external, the transcendent and the immanent, the friend and the enemy—extrinsic, "liminal," "vestibular,"[cclxxxix] without itself being fully incorporated anywhere.

Arendt's account of the evolution of the social in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* demonstrates the liminal production of the black slave.[ccxc] There, she locates the emergence of race not in the 15th century, when the trans-Atlantic trade took flight from a generalized anti-blackness, or the 17th century, when de facto racial codes were cohering, or the 18th century, when Kant first gives theoretical weight to the concept, or even to the early-to-mid 19th century, when scientific research into racial difference was in full flight. Instead, Arendt postpones the problem of race to the late 19th century when it is introduced as a *supplemental strategy*, one of the "irresponsible opinions"[ccxci] leveraged by purveyors of imperialism to rationalize their economic expansionism.[ccxcii] Arendt's reading is often celebrated for its critical apprehension of the continuities between slavery, colonialism, and totalitarianism, but on closer examination, it is clear that slavery is only the opening act in the drama staged to spotlight what is arguably actual theoretical interest: totalitarianism.[ccxciii] Slavery is subordinated to a critique of imperialism, in which the economic origins of "expansion" comes to saturate the political realm, which then "boomerangs" to the political consequence of totalitarianism.[ccxciv] While explaining the "road to total domination"—which includes war, colonization, and slavery ("one of the oldest institutions

of mankind")—as "relatively normal and quite comprehensible," the programmatic of Nazism is made to "transcend anti-Semitic reasoning as well as the political, social, and economic motives behind the propaganda of anti-Semitic movements."[ccxcv] As in *The Human Condition,* the ascendency of the social begins by investing violence in the state as an index of consent. The camp's distinct "anti-utility" is only so, Arendt claims, from the position of a "common sense" which "protests desperately that the masses are submissive and that all this gigantic apparatus of terror is therefore superfluous."[ccxcvi] Totalitarian logic cannibalizes this assumption to fully inherit the mantle of a self-preservationist mandate whose power lies in the reduction to a mass of "human beings as such," stripped from the activity and individuality of human life; it "strives not toward despotic rule over men, but toward a system in which men are superfluous."[ccxcvii] And Arendt's warning is that distinct Nazi and Bolshevik "factories of annihilation" crystallize the social generalization of violence in such a dramatic fashion that totalitarian solutions may well survive totalitarian regimes.[ccxcviii] Ultimately, then, it is not the slave, but the stateless Jew who, abstracted into the generic "refugee" and bereft of any political authority for enforcing rights, first exposes the lie of supposedly "inalienable" human rights.[ccxcix]

The rise of the refugee as the symbol of the lasting danger of totalitarianism requires negotiating the difference between modern slavery, here figured as "a device for cheap labor or an instrument of exploitation for profit production for profit," and ancient slavery as the exclusionary means by which meaningful life can cohere.[ccc] On the one hand, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* positions the refugee's "abstract nakedness of being human and nothing but human" as a fate *worse* than what befalls slaves, for in Arendt's schema, "even slaves still belonged to some sort of human community…and this kept them within the pale of humanity."[ccci] Although this statement appears at first glance beguiling—for by what measure are slaves "within the pale"?—it stands to reason

that if slavishness is the result of loving life and not risking death, slaves were not barred from the human community per se. Rather, the origin and repetition of their slave status was rooted in belonging, first as a warring subject who initially risked death but ultimately choose life. On the other hand, *The Human Condition* argues that "The slave's degradation was a blow of fate and a fate worse than death, because it carried with it a metamorphosis of man into something akin to a tame animal."[cccii] To close the gap that would make slavery both "within the pale of humanity" and an animalistic "fate worse than death," Arendt appeals to those timeless and recuperative readings of Aristotle that centralize its mutability, insisting that manumission changes not only a slave's status, but the "slave's 'nature.'"[ccciii] She proposes that natural slavery is not really natural in fact, as Aristotle "denied not the slave's capacity to be human, but only the use of the word 'men' for members of the species mankind as long as they are totally subject to necessity."[ccciv] If slavery really is a measure of one's willingness to risk death, then the slave is theoretically "free" for the duration of their condition to risk life by choosing death—an antinomy that has plagued every debate on slavery.[cccv]

Racial slavery demands a complication of this antinomy. In Cicero's proposition, "…life does not consist in breath: it does not exist at all in the slave."[cccvi] Life and liberty can become identical, not only correlative. In this way, already, the "life" of an authentic human can be elevated beyond those creatures outside its appropriate fold.[cccvii] If slavery is a "living death," in the sense that one's death is latent political possibility, a death deferred, then life and death are not necessarily closely linked, but only disciplinarily so. If slavery is a "living death," however, because the condition of slavery is prohibitive of what constitutes a good life, and hence, a good death, then it is not only the question of the value of life and death but the meaning of life and death that are at stake. Not only is the slave deathlike, but this condition provides a negative

measure, defining the conflux of who is a proper enemy, and what both friend and enemy share, above other contingencies at stake in battle, in giving meaning and value to life, to self-preservation. For those who are not presented with this choice, their status as slaves must signify a primal sin, in the Christian Hamitic sense, or a natural defect, which may be nothing more than an incapacity to make the crucial covenant. In short, an incapacity to properly live.

In between the gap that would make this a false choice, Arendt can reduce racial slavery to instrumentality, such that in the 18th century, "American slave-holders themselves considered it a temporary institution and wanted to abolish it gradually."[cccviii] This post-racial apology, which grasps race only as a cognitive distillation, is an extension of the anti-black logic that reduces slavery to the economic logic of "false consciousness," and proclaims "natural slavery" the conscious manipulation of a racist philosopher of Antiquity. Arendt's work relays the message that the black slave not only *approximates* death in a social form, but represents a new form of immanent death, infecting and invigorating the symbolic constellation of self-preservation. In the same breath that she speculates on Europe's structured ignorance of Africans—"when European men massacred them they somehow were not aware that they had committed murder"—she positions a natural substratum of preexisting racial difference that were then relayed and exaggerated in European encounters, famously echoing Conrad to write that "What made [Africans] different from other human beings was not at all the color of their skin but the fact that they behaved like a part of nature, that they treated nature as their undisputed master, that they had not created a human world…"[cccix] In this instance, European racism is comprehensible not as our recognition of its illusory manipulation of nature for economic gain but as the "natural consequence" of any human encountering African's position outside meaningful humanity. Indeed, this naturalization of racism is only clarified by applying these principles to "cheap Indian

and Chinese labor," where "for the first time, people were treated in almost the same way as those African savages…The difference was only that there could be no excuse and no humanly comprehensible reason for treating Indians and Chinese as though they were not human beings."[cccx] But inhumanity, the incomprehensible, can only be detectable and repudiated with regards to those for whom humanity applies. Arendt says as much: European "hearts of men" when "faced with tribes which, as far as we know, never had found by themselves any adequate expression of human reason or human passion in either cultural deeds or popular customs;" what Arendt misses is that this was not merely the exclusion of blackness from humanity—their exclusion was the resource for the "unity and equality of all men."[cccxi] By naturalizing the encounter between those that equate "reason and man" on the one hand, and those without "adequate expression of human reason" on the other, Arendt not only remains fundamentally affirmative of European capacity and African incapacity, she articulates totalitarianism through an uncritical mobilization of Africa not as the site of racial violence but the origin of it.[cccxii] Her framing of totalitarian distinctness depends on a historiographical postponement of the dialectic of self-preservation and violence that invests blackness with violence.

The instability of Arendt's terms breaks through every time she begins with the private, now "social," problem of slavery and, against herself, ends with its political implications.[cccxiii] Race is written as both instrumental exclusion, on the order of the social, whose abolition would be the prelude to political participation, *and* the reason why slaves *cannot* be emancipated. Arendt's trajectory elsewhere can asymmetrically celebrate Jewish uprisings while denigrating Fanonian violence,[cccxiv] argue *against* equality and *for* educational segregation in her highly problematic "Reflections on Little Rock,"[cccxv] and uniformly refuse to recognize slaves as political agents.[cccxvi] When the infection of the social is akin to dehumanization, the social retains, in

potentia, human revitalization. As Calvin Warren writes, "even for those who would argue that they experience 'ontological violence'—the loss of human dignity following Arendt's theory, for example—the victim of such violence *can still lay claim to Being* (and *human* rights)."[cccxvii] By containing slavery as a private problem, unfortunately made social, and thus transformed into another instrumental path for profit seeking, rather than, as theorists within black studies insist, situated in relation to the wider political world, indeed, at the root of the problem of modernity, Arendt is unable to comprehend the transformation of slavery and labor, instead reducing both to forms of biological dependence.[cccxviii] The social's historical emergence on the scene does not merely retain the distinction between the political and natural, it rearticulates it boundaries.[cccxix] Manumission does not entail a transformation of the nature of black slaves who, in what Hartman calls slavery's "afterlife," remain "imperiled and devalued by a racial calculus and a political arithmetic that were entrenched centuries ago."[cccxx] Not only does the oxymoronic black "citizen" persist, Hartman clarifies, as a threat to the purity and preservation of the nation, it is their constant policing and regulation that most distinctly characterizes the emergence of the social problem in general (think segregation).[cccxxi]

Although her definition of the human is always plural and political, abolishing any general human essence (unlike Patterson), Arendt refuses to account for how the hypostatization of abstract humanity informs the meaningful political human potentiality after which she longs.[cccxxii] The social cannot be simply the generalizability of the private sphere, the "unnatural growth of the natural," because the horizon of plurality *and* natality shifts. Social death teeters on the realization that blackness collides with death not only in the system of racial slavery's *operational* dynamics, that is, not only *derived* from historical processes, but also *driving* them, mediating the contestations and aporias attendant to representations of life and death, and presence and

absence.[cccxxiii] Likewise, the social does not make *all* slaves because the referent "slave" does not exceed the social; the problem of the social is an effect of the abstraction of slavery through anti-blackness. It decides who is a political animal, who is a political animal in potential (the refugee, the Jew), and who is the threat (the representation of death, necessity, and violence) that unites the human community. Arendt's conjoined theorization of the "political" (subtended by Aristotle's "natural slave") and the "social" (debatably informing Patterson's "timeless slave"), abstracts from slavery in thought, and thus is energized by anti-black metaphysical violence.

Freedom and its Forms: Giorgio Agamben

Giorgio Agamben draws from these Arendtian post-racial and ahistorical elements to read Aristotle against Michael Foucault's biopolitics.[cccxxiv] While Foucault finds the "threshold of modernity" in the displacement of politics by life—"for millennia, man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for a political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question"[cccxxv]—Agamben seeks to radicalize biopolitics by reframing Aristotle's "inclusive exclusion" of bare life in political life.[cccxxvi] Agamben's self-stated task is to return the question of politics to ontology.

To accomplish this return, Agamben mobilizes Aristotle's distinction between mere life and the good life to uncover how the production of life was never only pre-political but was always the "original activity of sovereign power." The root of Agamben's analysis, as with Arendt's, is the "bond…between modern power and the most immemorial of the *arcana imperii.*"[cccxxvii] Historical movement is found within this transcendental problematic only when modern democracy "presents itself from the beginning as a vindication and liberation of *zoē,*" a celebration of life itself. Agamben thus attributes modern democracy's "decadence and gradual convergence

with totalitarianism" with the aporia that seeks to find meaningful life in the bare life that constitutes subjection,[cccxxviii] when the "obscure figure" of Roman law, the *homo sacer,* becomes the paradigmatic figure akin to Arendt's *homo laborans*. Like Arendt, Agamben's bare life culminates in the Muselmänner of Nazi death camps, with the refugee as the "limit category" that serves as the contemporary matrix for politics and reveals how the law *always* exceptionalizes its outside in the abandonment of *homo sacer*.[cccxxix] Because modernity no longer represses this inclusive exclusion, and instead normalizes a Schmittian "state of exception" into a generalized norm, Agamben posits that we are "all virtually *homines sacri*."[cccxxx] This zone of indistinction elides divisions of identity insofar as it represents "the emergence of something like an *absolute biological substance* that cannot be assigned to a particular bearer or subject," such that "the biopolitics of racism so to speak transcends race."[cccxxxi]

But Agamben's absolute biological substance is already cut through with emancipating difference—it is not a relay of a generalized timeless slave.[cccxxxii] Transcendence occupies a familiar doubling: bare life is produced, as Denise Ferreira da Silva contends, through "an act of dehumanisation, the stripping off of legal and moral protection (the 'ban')," which means, unlike as for the slave, a prior political possibility of relationality is presupposed.[cccxxxiii] While slavery is nearly absent in the first volume of the *Homo Sacer* series, slavery reappears, in timeless form, as the paradigmatic figuration for the final volume in the series, *The Use of Bodies.* Unlike theorizations that posit slavery as a problem of production (under the sign of labor, exploitation, and capital), Agamben's recently translated intervention seems to draw from elements of black studies to carve out a conception of slavery as part of the philosophical production of ontology: "if the human being is defined for the Greeks through a dialectic between *physis* and *nomos, zoē* and *bios,* then the slave, like bare life, stands at the threshold that separates and joins them."[cccxxxiv]

To facilitate this philosophical meditation on man, Agamben replaces Arendtian action with an idiosyncratic evaluation of a form of use, as prior to its usual understanding as utility.[cccxxxv] If for Arendt action is "the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter,"[cccxxxvi] for Agamben use is the original mediation of relations of nature with other human beings in a "reciprocal relation." His concept of use elaborates a "form-of-life" that consists of no productive content; it is "inoperable," functionless, "set free from every figure of relation."[cccxxxvii] Use is set apart from "labor," which in turn is different than praxis—like Marx, Agamben reaffirms that the classical world did not recognize "labor" as such because it did "not distinguish it from the work it produces," from its artisanal imbrication in use-value.[cccxxxviii] In fact, Agamben traces the origins of abstract labor to slavery, and not to the free labor celebrated by Ellen Wood. For the ancients, remember, the end of the artisan's praxis fell short of the ideal of the "good use of things," because activity remained external, in production. The slave, by contrast, was deprived of proper work: even if he engaged in the same trades as an artisan, "his praxis was not defined by the work that he produces but only by the use of the body."[cccxxxix] The slave is not a tool for production (like a shuttle), but rather an object for use (such as a garment or bed).[cccxl] The clearest symbol of this distinction of use is that the use of slaves extends to the realm of fantasy—when slaves serve as sexual objects in dreams, according to Artemidorus, the dreamer derives "pleasure from his equipment, which will grow greater and more valuable."[cccxli]

If the appearance of abstract labor "happened in the case of the slave before that of the artisan,"[cccxlii] it is because of the historical precedent established when owners rent out the use of slaves. Use here is not necessarily dependent on any particular skill of the slave, but simply their laboring power, for even though a slave used by their owner and a slave used by their renter are both concretely laboring, the use of the rented slave becomes significant first for its market value

and then for its productive activity. The distinct capability to make life labor—"the separation of something like a labor activity"—is possible "only by separating the body as object of use from its activity as alienable and remunerable," and this is what slavery distinctly clarifies in its root.[cccxliii]

It is obvious that Agamben does not agree with Arendt's transhistorical categorization of labor, which Agamben characterizes as the collapse of slavery and labor under the assumption that the "condition of the slave…of the one who is entirely occupied with the reproduction of bodily life, has, with the end of the ancient régime, been extended to all human beings," such that "the modern worker is more comparable to the slave than to the creator of objects."[cccxliv] Agamben hesitates in fulling embracing a genealogy that, in subsuming the slave into a hybrid *homo sacer/laborans,* would make the worker "really a slave" all along (a feature of the "wage slave" analogy investigated in Chapter Three) precisely because of his special category of "use." The use of the slave isn't merely degradation; in Agamben's hands, it "seems almost to constitute the other face of the good use of things on the part of the free person," and "preserve the memory or evoke the paradigm of a human activity that is reducible neither to labor, nor production, nor to praxis."[cccxlv] How is this so? Agamben's slave signals an idiosyncratic "form-of-life" that can never be isolated to bare life insofar as its inoperability preserves the use-of-oneself, otherwise known as the virtue of acting. Centralizing use implies both this enigmatic potential and the perversity of its transposition into the instrumentality of utility, "reified in juridical terms through the constitution of slavery as a social institution."[cccxlvi] Prior to this perversion, however, Agamben projects "a zone of indifference between one's own body and the body of another" that is not about domination but reciprocity, because the "master, in using the body of the slave, uses his own body, and the slave, in using his own body, is used by the master."[cccxlvii] Indeed, "Use, insofar as it

neutralizes the opposition of potential and act, being and acting, material and form, being-at-work and habit, wakefulness and sleep, is always virtuous."[cccxlviii]

By this account, the slave, more than the *homo sacer,* has prefigured the inclusive exclusion of Agamben's larger analysis. In one of Agamben's more assertive (and Pattersonian) moments, he writes, "Aristotle developed his idea of the human being starting from the paradigm of the free man, even if this latter implies the slave as his condition of possibility. One can imagine that he could have developed an entirely other anthropology if he had taken account of the slave."[cccxlix] Curiously, the same could be said of Agamben. Slavery as such is his concern only insofar as its violence can be "transformed and inverted into something positive, having been posed as a figure of a new and happy intimacy."[cccl] When Agamben claims to prioritize slavery, he really prioritizes what Wilderson has identified as a "prior plentitude."[cccli] Agamben's slave is conceived as the signal figure whose archeological recovery can show us the genesis of categorical division and its possibility otherwise. Instead of conceiving how blackness might generalize and realize natural slavery, Agamben distances himself from any serious consideration into the hermeneutics of slavery or its impact on interpretations of Aristotle, for Agamben takes it for granted that "ancient philosophers not only did not problematize slavery but seemed to accept it as obvious and natural."[ccclii] Slavery simply withers in modernity, as its abolition "freed up the possibility of technology, that is, of the living instrument."[cccliii] With this transition to technology, Agamben stakes his intervention as one of anthropogenesis. Although slavery isn't labor, its relationship to necessity means that "slavery is to ancient humanity what technology is to modern humanity."[ccccliv] On both sides of this threshold, the mediation by in/animate objects severs ancient and modern humans from their connections with each other and with their own animal action and retards the achievement of freedom.

Thus, when Agamben tries to wrest slavery from its interpretation by moderns as purely a problem "from the point of view of 'labor' and production," he ends up transcendentalizing slavery.[cccliv] Labor, apparently, can be historical, but slavery cannot. In fact, for Agamben, the master/slave antagonism tracks historical change simply by being captured in law, for the "master/slave relation as we know it represents the capture in the juridical order of the use of bodies as an originary prejuridical relation."[ccclv] To access the prejuridical, Agamben *has* to ignore race (an ignorance that can take the shape of race's reduction to instrumentality). Instead, his timeless slave persists in its spiral away from blackness and its ontological horizon and towards the Foucaultian exploration of sadomasochism as an "ontological relation" with "two poles in mutual exchange."[ccclvi] This use of the body exposes a parodic truth, inducing "desubjectivation" and exceeding "subject/object and active/passive scissions."[ccclvii]

To begin here, with potential of a figurative slave-relation for mutuality, rather than the potential of a slave antagonism, is 1) to ignore a long legacy of black feminist theorizing and 2) to swerve back into the embrace of the ontological coordinates, in which potential and essence supersede action and existence, that are the book's object of critique. Even though Greek and Roman freedom was predicated on the use of slaves, such that slavery produced free activity with no external end (a dialectic, of course, taken up by Hegel), slavery had not been generalized as total use, total fungibility. Slaves could be acquired through war, and maintained in the home, but their use, as I have proposed, was not yet the productive inclusive exclusion of Aristotle's speculative natural slave. That would require a strict calculation of slavery without promise of emancipation, where use was sufficient to prove nature, where use was exhaustive and "infinitizable."[ccclviii] What Hartman names as the "figurative capacities of blackness" do exceed instrumental use, refiguring property, sexuality, and humanness.[ccclix] But Agamben's supposition

of this generation *outside* of the structural and historical problem of slavery—and instead limited to a problem of the repression of possibilities in fleeting, almost indiscernible, interpersonal encounters—becomes collaboratively in tune with slave apologists for whom, as Hartman has analyzed, "The reversibility of power and the play of the dominated discredit the force of violence through the assertion of reciprocal and intimate relations."[cccLxi]

What would it mean instead to consider the statement that "ontology and politics correspond perfectly"[cccLxii] through the black slave? As Agamben rightly notes, "to every change in ontology there corresponds, therefore, not a change in the 'destiny' but in the complex of possibilities that the articulation between language and the world have disclosed as 'history' to the living beings of the species *Homo sapiens*."[cccLxiii] While a political variant of "Hellenic Supremacy" may have impeded the historical and conceptual realization of labor,[cccLxiv] the economic specification of slavery as the dialectical outside of politics blocks insight into relationship of sovereignty. Agamben can get us this far. But immanent to the modern problem of the abstract human, slavery is impossibly occluded, is incomprehensibly comprehensible, because, unlike the Arendt's stateless—"nothing but human"—or Agamben's *homo sacer*, black slaves belong to a human community in the sense that they are possessed by it, a constitutive outside compelled to produce (their own violent evacuation from) both political *and* human qualities. Indeed, the architecture of power supposedly stabilizing the scales of the biopolitical fails to comprehend the infinitization of violence beyond the purview of any one overseer or plantation, a violence that is both overt *and* capillary in its formative influence over very definition of the (always raced) self. With regard to racial slavery, the sovereign wields an infinite power, not only to let live or make die (or its disciplinary chiasmus), but a letting live that lays claim to force forms of life (the regulation of the slave family being one pertinent feature), allow death (Brazilian sugar plantations,

to take one dramatic model, considered it "cheaper" to work a slave to death and buy another, instead of providing minimal living conditions), make die without any ethical compunction (beating, lynching, shooting, and limitless torture were gratuitously routine), *and* make deadly (where "social death" marks the space of a being whose life is granted no discernible capacity for life). Agamben's so-called "discovery" after years of scholarship—that the "slave represents the capture within law of a figure of human acting that still remains for us to recognize"—need begin from *this* position, already "recognized" in all its terrible tension by the work of the black radical tradition, and its implications, if its interest in the violent collision of ontology and politics.[cccLxv] By disavowing the existence of racial slavery as the achievement of the essence of slavery, Agamben re-instantiates the split between action/potential and existence/essence that his whole fetishization of use was meant to upend.

With these clarifications, it may be instructive to return to Moten's Arendtian version of Patterson. Although this intellectual inheritance is never explicitly avowed by Patterson, Moten maintains that "social death" can be conceived as an intellectual bastardization of Arendt insofar as the natal alienation of slaves represents a subtraction from Arendt's human condition of "natality." Following the Arendtian schema, slaves, by consequence of this subtraction, lose the distinction, action, and speech that is essential to their political personhood.[cccLxvi] In Moten's reading, exclusion *from* the political order is better thought as "something on the order of a radical relegation *to* the social," such that, in a "terminological slide," social death might be more effectively rendered political death.[cccLxvii] Moten thus renames and revaluates Arendt's genealogical pessimism: the civil society coterminous with racial slavery is not the social but the "*the field of the political*, from which blackness is relegated to the supposedly undifferentiated mass or blob of the social, which is, in any case, where and what blackness chooses to stay."[cccLxviii]

I would in turn argue that Moten's inversion of the Arendtian poles bears more than a passing resemblance to Agamben. Indeed, Moten critique of "social death" echoes his critique of those whose too ready mobilization of bare life "moves—or more precisely cannot move—in its forgetful non-relation to that quickening, forgetive force that Agamben calls the form of life."[cccLxix] For Agamben, remember, this "form of life" is "a zone of ethics entirely subtracted from strategic relationships, of an Ungovernable that is situated beyond states of domination and power relations."[cccLxx] For Moten, the Ungovernable is conceived through the "paraontological" structure of blackness, an insistent eruption, an anoriginary force, the freedom that Moten evocatively poses is "in unfreedom as the trace of the resistance that constitutes constraint."[cccLxxi] The difference between Agamben and Moten seems to hinge on the quality of the "prior"—for both, this beyond is certainly a philosophical construction and one should approach its "actual" existence with a degree of skepticism.[cccLxxii] But while Agamben finds the trace of possibility in a slave relation *inclusive* of slaves and masters, Moten insists on tarrying with blackness to implicate the master as coterminous with the human and the political. A generic sadomasochism would not emancipate ungovernability, for this would imply stepping outside the realm of racial slavery altogether, to a logically and temporally prior form of sexuality and ontology. Nonetheless, even when passing through blackness, Moten tends to affirm an ahistoric version of the prior: it is "not (just) that blackness is ontologically prior to the logistic and regulative power that is supposed to have brought it into existence but that blackness is prior to ontology."[cccLxxiii] The poetic promise of an outside to ontology, which Moten wants to positively re-claim from Arendt as the sociality of blackness, means that Moten comes paradoxically close to arguing, like Agamben, that blackness can be claimed outside of racial slavery, that its promise is for "Everyone whom blackness claims, which is to say everyone, can claim blackness."[cccLxxiv]

Given that there may be no way of knowing whether the "ungovernable" is an effect of anti-blackness or its cause, there is no way of knowing whether the authorization of everyone to claim blackness means reinvigorating anti-black violence in the form of ontological minstrelsy. Can the invitation to dance paraontologically ever not be what Ann duCille has identified as the desire to "have that 'signifying black difference' without the difference of significant blackness"?[cccclxxv] Do not the seductions of the prior operate in tandem with master's mode of seduction, which is to say, anti-blackness's mode of reproduction?

This trajectory of thought produces equivocations symptomatic of what, in passing, Arendt herself admits—that the "the institution of slavery carries an obscurity even blacker than the obscurity of poverty."[cccclxxvi] The real abstraction of natural slavery puts the social under such pressure that its epochality seeks, at the very least, another narrative. From its anti-black ground issues both the social elevation of "abstract humanity" Arendt decries and the capacity for political purposiveness she endorses, both Agamben's emancipatory use of oneself and its capture and calcification in law. For at the same time that the seduction of prior intimacy disavows the violence of the present, it prohibits the possible ethics of black revolutionary violence. In our contemporary context, when republicanism *a la* Arendt and Agamben are heralded as resources for rethinking the return of the violence of totalitarianism, we need to understand that the blob of the social, the problems and potentials of use, the virtue of death, the seductions of the prior, may all be accretions of the way the timeless slave as an anti-black and ungendered position infects thought, deranges time, delineates death, demarcates human-ness, and disavows its violence. Blackness, consequently, cannot be apprehended apart from black people, whose resistance may or may not toggle the anoriginary. The fact that the undecidability of this state becomes the generative fuel to enable Agamben indicates that this impossible possibility is yet to come. Its possibility might come

from claiming blackness as sociality but only if the social is the radical destruction of the structures that subtend it. Otherwise, the seductions of the prior will continue to reverberate in exploratory calls "beyond the human," as Zakiyyah Jackson prophesizes of our present: "The question of the 'beyond' not only returns us to the racialized meta-physical terrain of orders of being, temporality, spatiality, and knowledge—it reveals that we have never left."[cccLxxvii]

Conclusion

I have made the case that the modern attempt to fix blackness in a conceptually coherent schema (race) is the condition of possibility for the abstraction of slavery "as such" and, perhaps more contentiously, for modern practices of abstraction "in general." The figure of the slave is, I have argued, tied to the figure of the human; both are historical realizations that, projected across time and space, appear as "timeless." Racial slavery is not merely for profit, not merely comprehensible, nor inoperable, it is the originary surplus that exceeds the *homo sacer/laborans* because social death, as it were, becomes the embodiment of indistinction and clarifies sovereign operations—letting live, making die, or its inverse—to generalize the exception. The remainder of this dissertation examines how the early modern grammars of political theory and political economy exert this constitutive, epochal distortion on the timeless logic of the ancients' "constitutive outside." By reducing racial slavery to force, necessity, and labor, these discourses enable an emancipatory generalization of slavery in an analogical register that 1) reworks recuperative claims of humanness, uniting the human distinctions against which a field of human battles are waged and 2) deposits all aporias into the event horizon of blackness.

[i] Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, trans. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 151-52. Marx refers to the passage in the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which Aristotle proclaims that "it is in truth impossible for things so different to become commensurable…", trans. W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 1133b19-20.
[ii] Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, 152.
[iii] Ruth Groff writes that "when different types of laboring have come to be functionally interchangeable, their similarity ceases to be a mere cognitive distillation," in "On the Ethical Contours of Thin Aristotelian Marxism," in *Constructing Marxist Ethics*, ed. Michael J. Thompson (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 313-335; 316.
[iv] Marx, *Grundrisse*, 103.
[v] Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 188.
[vi] See Nicole Pepperell, *Disassembling Capital*, PhD thesis (2010), 255-6, as well as her account of Marx's Aristotle in 87-90, 151, 201, 247-8.
[vii] In a letter to Engels, Marx writes of value that although it is an "abstraction, it is a historical abstraction," April 2nd, 1858, *Marx and Engels Collected Works, Volume 40* (Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 298. On "real abstraction," see Alfred Sohn-Rethel's classic *Intellectual and Manual Labour: A Critique of Epistemology*, (London: Macmillan, 1978); and Alberto Toscano's interpretation in "The Open Secret of Real Abstraction," *Rethinking Marxism* 20, no. 2 (2010): 273-287, as well as Toscano, "Materialism Without Matter: Abstraction, Absence and Social Form," *Textual Practice* 28, no. 7 (2014): 1221-1240.
[viii] See Sylvia Wynter, "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory, and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of *Désêtre*: Black Studies Toward the Human Project," in *Not Only the Master's Tools: African-American Studies in Theory and Practice*, eds. Lewis Gordon and Jane Anna Gordon (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2006), 107-118; 116; Wynter, "Gender or the Genre of the Human? History, the Hard Task of Dessa Rose, and the Issue for the New Millennium," Paper presented at symposium "Black Women Writers and the 'High Art' of Afro-American Letters," University of California, San Diego, CA, May 15-17, 1998. For commentary on the gender/genre overlap in particular, see Patrice Douglass, "At the Intersections of Assemblages: Fanon, Capecia, and the Unmaking of the Genre Subject," in *Conceptual Aphasia: Displacing Racial Formation Theory*, eds. P. Khalil Saucer and Tryon P. Woods (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), 103-25, as well as essays in Katherine McKittrick, ed. *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).
[ix] Niall McKeown, *The Invention of Ancient Slavery? Duckworth Classical Essays* (London: Duckworth, 2007), 28-9. See also, Vaia Touna, *Fabrications of the Greek Past: Religion, Tradition, and Modern Identities* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), and Kostas Vlassopoulos, *Politics: Antiquity & Its Legacy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010). On realism in political theory, see Mark Philip, "What Is To Be Done? Political Theory and Political Realism," *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010): 466-84, as well as Iain Hampsher-Monk, "Politics, Political Theory and Its History," in *Political Philosophy versus History? Contextualism and Real Politics in Contemporary Political Thought*, eds. Jonathan Floyd and Marc Stears (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 105-27 and, in the same volume, Melissa Lane, "Constraint, Freedom, and Exemplar: History and Theory without Teleology," 128-50.
[x] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 342.
[xi] Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Carnes Lord (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 1252a24-3, pg. 2.
[xii] *Ibid.*, "Hence for those to whom it is open not to be bothered with such things, a steward assumes this prerogative, while they themselves engage in politics of philosophy," 1255b36-8, pg. 12.
[xiii] *Ibid.*, 1329a1-3, pg. 202. G.W.F. Hegel echoes this claim: slavery "was a necessary condition of an aesthetic democracy, where it was the right and duty of every citizen to deliver or to listen to orations respecting the management of the State in the place of public assembly, to take part in the exercises of the Gymnasia, and to join in the celebration of festivals. It was a necessary condition of such occupations, that the citizens should be freed from handicraft occupations; consequently, that what among us is performed by free citizens – the work of daily life – should be done by slaves," *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: P.F. Collier and Son, 1902), 336.
[xiv] *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Harris Rackham (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1996), 1140b3-6, pg. 149.
[xv] *Ibid.*, 1253a20-21, pg. 4.
[xvi] *Politics*, 1280b40-1281a1, pg. 77.
[xvii] Aristotle, *Physics*, 2 vols., translated by P.H. Wicksteed and F.M. Cornford (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press and William Heinemann, Ltd., 1929), I, iii. See, Nathan Widder, "Singularly Aristotle," *Theory & Event* 1, no. 3 (1997) https://muse.jhu.edu/ (accessed April 13, 2018).
[xviii] *Politics*, 1253a8-19, pg. 4.

[xix] *Ibid.,* 1253a4, pg. 4.
[xx] *Ibid.,* 1253a23-9, pg. 5. This distinction is central to Jacques Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I.,* trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), see especially the "Thirteenth Session," 335-340.
[xxi] *NE,* 1134a1-2, pg. 76.
[xxii]*Politics,* 1260a7-14, pg. 22.
[xxiii] *Ibid.,* 1253a10-20, pg. 4.
[xxiv] *Ibid.,*1254b 17-20, pg. 8.
[xxv] *NE,* 1098a7. Quoted in Giorgio Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016), 4-5.
[xxvi] *Politics,* 1254a12-14, pg. 7.
[xxvii] As Agamben puts it: "*Energeia* and *chresis,* being-at-work and use, seem to be juxtaposed precisely as are *psyche* and *soma*, soul and body," *The Use of Bodies,* 5.
[xxviii] Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* 4.
[xxix] Dick Howard, *The Primacy of the Political: A History of Political Thought from the Greeks to the French & American Revolutions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 21-85.
[xxx] *Politics,* 1332a39-40, pg. 210. See also: "for there is a kind of harvest in the generations of men as in what grows on the land, and sometimes, if the stock is good, outstanding men continue to be born into the family, and then again it falls off. Originally good stock [often] degenerates into rather demented forms of character," in *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse,* trans. George A. Kennedy (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1390b19-31, pg. 154. For a claim that Aristotle models his theory of virtue after Plato's *Cratylus,* in which *genos* determines character more than descent, see Rachana Kamtekar, "Distinction Without a Difference? Race and Genos in Plato," in *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays,* eds. Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 1-13.
[xxxi] *NE,* 1106a10. See Brady Thomas Heiner's interpretation: "habit is also that which provides the most unmediated access to the self beneath the array of appearances and pretentious comportments. For habit itself *is* character or mental constitution. In this sense, Aristotle defines ethical virtue as neither more nor less than a habit or state of character (*hexis*)," in "Reinhabiting the Body Politic: Habit and the Roots of the Human," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies,* 20, nos. 2 & 3 (2009): 73-102, 78. *Nicomachean* 1106a10).
[xxxii] *NE*: "Our proper course with this subject as with others will be to present the various views about it, and then, after first reviewing the difficulties they involve, finally to establish if possible all or, if not all, the greater part and the most important of the opinions generally held with respect to these states of mind; since if the discrepancies can be solved, and a residuum of current opinion left standing, the true view will have been sufficiently established," 1145b5-10, pg. 171-2. See Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* 8, where he gives a brief of the work of Victor Goldschmidt on this methodological inversion; Goldschmidt, "La Théorie Aristotélicienne de l'Escalvage et Sa Méthode," in *Zetesis: Album Amicorum E. de Stryker* (Antwerp: Devijver, 1973). See also, Eugene Garver: "The nature of slavery is determined by examining good men and good peoples; the existence of slavery is determined by finding incomplete peoples. It is only after Aristotle shows the need for slaves that he goes on to prove the existence of people suited for a slavish life," in "Aristotle's Natural Slaves: Incomplete *Praxeis* and Incomplete Human Beings" *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 32, no. 2 (1994): 173-195; 180.
[xxxiii]*Politics,* 1253b20-23, pg. 6. For a reading of who these anonymous opponents might be, see Giuseppe Cambiano, "Aristotle and the Anonymous Opponents of Slavery," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 8, no. 1 (1987): 22-41. For an overview of the debate, see Tony Burns, *Aristotle and Natural Law* (New York: Continuum Books, 2001), 113-4; Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 75-77; P.A. Brunt, "Aristotle and Slavery," in *Studies in Greek History and Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 343-388; 351-356.
[xxxiv] *Politics,* 1255a15-16, pg. 9.
[xxxv] *Ibid.* There existed "a certain agreement (*nomos*) under which things conquered in war are said to belong to the conquerors," 1255a6-8, pg. 9.
[xxxvi] *Ibid.,* 1255a25-6, pg. 10.
[xxxvii] *Ibid.,* 1254a17-39, pg. 8-9.
[xxxviii] Ibid., 1255b2-4, pg. 10.
[xxxix] *Ibid.,* 1255b7-8, pg. 10. Bear in mind that, in other contexts, Aristotle writes that what is natural is "what occurs *as a general rule (epi to poly)* that is most in accord with the course of nature," in *Gen. An.* 1.19, 727b29-30. Quoted in G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 416.

[xl] *Politics* 1278b32-8, pg. 72.
[xli] *Ibid.,* 1255b11-13, pg. 11. See Robert Schlaifer: "For such a creature to be enslaved is of benefit to him as well as his master, for everything is benefited only by fulfilling its function, by reached the *energeia* in accordance with its own *arete.* No attention, therefore, is paid consciously to the good of the slave; the master looks out for himself alone, but the relation is so intimate that a harm to one must be a harm to the other and the good of one likewise a good for the other," in "Greek Theories of Slavery from Homer to Aristotle," *Slavery in Classical Antiquity,* ed. M. I. Finley (Cambridge: Heifer, 1960), 93-132; 96-97.
[xlii] The deduction of political life from Aristotle's conception of the human as a *speaking* animal is caught, as Jacques Rancière rightfully assesses, in a "vicious circle" and cannot account for the additional sign necessary to render speech legible. It is itself political to draw the line between a human speaking and an animal merely making sounds, in "Ten Theses on Politics," *Theory and Event* 5, no. 3 (2001), para 3. Other notable theorists who have detected this circle include Martin Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign*; and Jean-François Lyotard, "The Affect-Phrase (From a Supplement to *The Differend*)," in *The Lyotard Reader and Guide* [2000], ed. Keith Crome and James Williams (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 104–10. See also, Geoffrey Bennington: "What I'd like to suggest in conclusion is that this troublesome persistence of the rhetorical, as the specific feature of *logos* insofar as it distinguishes man among political animals, paradoxically complicates the very specificity it seemed to establish," in "Political Animals," *diacritics* 39, no. 2 (2009): 21-35; 34.
[xliii] *Politics,* 1254b22, pg. 8.
[xliv] This is Holt N. Parker's explicit assumption: "His real goal is to establish the different types of rule which he will examine in Book 3, and especially the despotic rule, which he will deem unjust. Aristotle recognizes that there is a potential problem: by ruling out tyranny…he might also as an accidental byproduct rule out mastership in the household and with it slavery. Accordingly Aristotle needs to create a group of people over whom it *is* just to exert a master's rule. Hence his invention of the slave by nature," in "Aristotle's Unanswered Questions: Women and Slaves in *Politics* 1252a-1260b," *Eugesta* 2 (2012): 71-122; 73.
[xlv] *Ibid.,* 1254b5-10, pg. 8. What one commentator has called a "battery of proportionate analogies" are paired in order to exemplify the "generic distinction" between ruled and ruler. Geoffrey E. R. Lloyd, *Aristotelian Explorations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 189.
[xlvi] *Politics,* 1295a16-18, pg. 114.
[xlvii] *Ibid.,* 1252a9-10, pg. 1. See also, 1255b17-19: "It is evident from these things as well that mastery and political rule are not the same thing and that all the sorts of rule are not the same as one another as some assert," pg. 11. On Aristotle's contention with Plato, see Robert Mayhew, *Aristotle's Criticism of Plato's Republic* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997); Eckart Schütrumpf, "Aristotle's Theory of Slavery—A Platonic Dilemma," *Ancient Philosophy* 13 (1993): 111-123; and Dick Howard, *The Primacy of the Political*, 60-2. The virtuous political self-mastership of democratic rule is not divorced from slavery because its citizens retain their power as *arche despotic* in the home. *Politics*: "Now the basic premise of the democratic sort of regime is freedom…One aspect of freedom is being ruled and ruling in turn," 1317a40-1317b3, pg. 172-3. See also his argument that "In most political offices, it is true, there is an alternation of ruler and ruled, since they tend by their nature to be on an equal footing and to differ in nothing," 1259b4-6, pg. 21. Mary Nyquist characterizes this dynamic of self-rule as "in essence, rule by *isonomia* within the *polis*: mastership *without* a master," *Arbitrary Rule: Slavery, Tyranny, and the Power of Life and Death* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 22.
[xlviii] *Politics,* 1287b37-41, pg. 94.
[xlix] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 23.
[l] On Aristotle and slavery's ambivalence more generally see Donald L. Ross, "Aristotle's Ambivalence on Slavery," *Hermathena* 184 (2008): 53-67; Darrell Dobbs, "Natural Right and the Problem of Aristotle's Defense of Slavery," *The Journal of Politics* 56, no. 1 (1994): 69-94.
[li] Holt N. Parker, "Aristotle's Unanswered Questions," 112. Earlier he insists that "Aristotle critically argues that the status quo is identical with nature's way, otherwise, the status quo might disappear," 93. See Aristotle's establishment of the political community in *Politics,* 1252a24-5, pg. 2.
[lii] *Slavery and Social Death,* 342. As Marx (apologetically or not) wrote, "In the development of the richness of human nature as an end in itself…at first the development of the capacities of the human species takes place at the cost of the majority of human individuals and even classes...; the higher development of individuality is thus only achieved by a historical process during which individuals are sacrificed," *Theories of Surplus Value* III [1863] (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1972), 118. See also, David Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, *Savage Economics: Wealth, Poverty, and the Temporal Walls of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 143-4.
[liii] *Politics,* 1260a5, pg. 22.

[liv] Paul Cartledge, "'Like a Worm I' the Bud?' A Heterology of Classical Greek Slavery," *Greece & Rome* 40 (1993): 163-180; 170-171.
[lv] *Politics,* 1254b22-24, pg. 8, emphasis added.
[lvi] *Ibid.*, 1285a20–22, pg. 88. See also, his overview in 1327b23-33, pg. 199. Julie Ward has identified echoes in earlier works "to an earlier treatise in the medical tradition, as well as a brief reference associating climate to character in Plato's *Republic* IV (435e–36a). The fifth-century Hippocratic work, *Airs, Waters, Places*, which appears to be Aristotle's model, gives a scientific, naturalistic account of the effect of climate and geography on human traits, including physical and moral features. Another original connection to Aristotle's account may be Sophistic sources, some of which are associated with the climate theory of national character as well," in "*Ethnos* in the *Politics*: Aristotle and Race," in *Philosophers on Race,* 14-37; 20.
[lvii] *Politics,* 1252b5-7, pg. 2.
[lviii] *Ibid.*, 1255a25-32, pg. 10.
[lix] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 28.
[lx] Vincent J. Rosivach argues that "Much of the scholarly confusion over what Aristotle meant by slaves-by-nature and slaves-according-to-convention can be traced to a failure to place Aristotle's text in this, its proper historical setting," in "Enslaving 'Barbaroi' and the Athenian Ideology of Slavery," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 48, no. 2 (1999): 129-157; 145n66.
[lxi] Parker, "Aristotle's logical move is the exact opposite of what Plato demanded: Plato moved from virtue to role. Aristotle is moving from role to virtue. Since the 'difference in role' (the subordination of women and slaves) must be preserved, it is necessary to find or create a 'difference in nature or capacity'…Plato maintained that since there is no *relevant* physical difference between men and women, there should be no difference in social roles (*Rep*. 5.451c-56b). That is, the same virtue implies the same role. Aristotle stands Plato's argument on its head: the differences in social roles imply a different virtue, and the different virtues, as attributes, imply different natures," in "Aristotle's Unanswered Questions," 78-80.
[lxii] Jonathan Lear, *Aristotle: The Desire to Understand* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 43-54. See also, Wayne Ambler, "Aristotle on Nature and Politics: The Case of Slavery," *Political Theory* 15 (1987): 390-410, 404; and Jeff Chuska, *Aristotle's Best Regime: A Reading of Aristotle's Politics, VII. 1-10* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 289-310.
[lxiii] See Peter L. Phillips Simpson, *A Philosophical Commentary on The Politics of Aristotle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 31-44. See also, Schütrumpf: "The *slave by nature* that Aristotle describes in *Politics* i is different from the *actual slave* he deals with in other parts of this work. It is true that there was a conservative ideal to limit citizenship to those who did not have to earn their living through work, but this did not reduce those who were excluded from citizenship to slavery. They were still part of the free population, whereas according to *Politics* i they would be slaves. Aristotle's theory of slavery is not a justification of the institution as he found it in the majority of Greek states. If one were to apply Aristotle's criterion for slavery used in *Politics* i, the portion of the population falling under slavery would have to be increased considerably so as to include all who perform menial tasks," in "Aristotle's Theory of Slavery," 121.
[lxiv] *NE,* 1134b31-3, pg. 78.
[lxv] A strong advocate of this position is Jill Frank, "Citizens, Slaves, and Foreigners: Aristotle on Human Nature," *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 1 (2004): 91-104.
[lxvi] *Politics,* trans. Benjamin Jowett (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1885), 1277b5-7, pg. 108. On slavery as "equal opportunity," see Keith R. Bradley, *Apuleius and Antonine Rome: Historical Essays* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 62.
[lxvii] See Mary Pollingue Nichols, who writes that "Since slavery makes politics and philosophy possible, the question implicitly arises whether politics and philosophy can relieve man of his unnatural slavery to nature," in "The Good Life, Slavery, and Acquisition: Aristotle's Introduction to Politics," *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy* 11, no. 2 (1983): 171-185; 176.
[lxviii] He writes: "In what manner slaves should be treated, and why it is better to hold out freedom as a reward for all slaves, we will speak of later," although this further discussion never actually takes place, *Politics,* 1330a33-34, pg. 205.
[lxix] Dick Howard, *The Primacy of the Political,* 69.
[lxx] *Politics,* 1255b37, pg. 12. In a later passage, Aristotle points out the potential for abolition with the advent of machines: "…if each of the instruments were able to perform its function on command or by anticipation…so that shuttles would weave themselves and picks play the lyre, master craftsmen would no longer have a need for subordinates, or masters for slaves," 1253b34-1254a1, pg. 6. See Schütrumpf, "Aristotle's Theory of Slavery," 112; and Agamben's comments on the slavery and technology in *The Use of Bodies,* 77-8.

[lxxi] Julie Ward argues that "The climate account of character differences in VII. 7, then, has to be balanced with a more thorough account of the way in which Aristotle finds political institutions produce different character traits," "*Ethnos* in the *Politics*," 29.
[lxxii] *Politics*, 1327b27, pg. 199.
[lxxiii] *Ibid.*,1327b34-39, pg. 199.
[lxxiv] F.D. Harvey has documented these lines of thought through Herodotus and Plato in "Herodotus and the Man-Footed Creature," in *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour*, ed. Léonie Archer (London: Routledge, 1988), 42-52.
[lxxv] Garver, "Aristotle's Natural Slaves," 193.
[lxxvi] See Harvey C. Mansfield Jr.: "every society has to decide, arbitrarily, who should be free and who slave. Such a decision was political; it was based on an opinion as to who should rule rather than derived from an analysis of what a commodity is," in "On the Political Character of Property in Locke" in *Powers, Possessions and Freedom: Essays in Honour of C.B. Macpherson*, ed. Alkis Kontos (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 23-38.
[lxxvii] Page duBois provides an example of overstating the important of natural slavery as "sustained in Roman practices and in Roman law," in *Slavery: Antiquity and Its Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 75.
[lxxviii] See François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of The Other in the Writing of History*, trans. Janet A. Lloyd (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), esp. 213-59; Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). Greek sources on barbarians are themselves very double-edged, involving both praise and criticism. See Steven Hirsch, *The Friendship of the Barbarians: Xenophon and the Persian Empire* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1985).
[lxxix] See P.M. Fraser, *Greek Ethnic Terminology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Thomas Wiedemann and Jane Gardner, "Introduction," in *Representing the Body of the Slave*, eds. Weidemann and Gardner (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 1-10; 2. See also, Ingomar Weiler's "Inverted *Kalokagathia*" in the same volume.
[lxxx] James H. Dee writes "Even though there are some positive connotations for both albus and candidus and negative ones for ater and niger, the Latin dictionaries have nothing remotely comparable to the devastating sets of definitions and connotations" now associated with whiteness and blackness and "it is one of the little curiosities of Romance philology that the inherited words for the fundamental colors black, red, green—as well as yellow and purple—have obvious classical origins, whereas the principal word for white in Italian, Spanish, and French is a Germanic latecomer (bianco, blanco, blanc), with albus surviving primarily in a specialized feminine form meaning 'dawn,'" in "Black Odysseus, White Caesar: When Did 'White People' Become 'White'?," *The Classical Journal* 99, no. 2 (2003-2004): 157-167; 163, 160. See also, Ward, "*Ethnos* in the *Politics*," 15-6.
[lxxxi] Quoted in Tristan Samuels, "Herodotus and the Black Body: A Critical Race Theory Analysis" 46, no. 7 (2015): 723-741; 733.
[lxxxii] Grace Hadley Beardsley commences her early study of *The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilization* with the preface that "no barbarian race held as continuous interest for the Greek and Roman artist as the Ethiopian," Grace Hadley Beardsley, *The Negro in Greek and Roman Civilization: A Study of the Ethiopian Type* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1929), ix. Lloyd Thompson, in turn, has written that "a certain air of indifference is suggested by the very nature of much of the written evidence, in which blacks receive only coincidental notice and are not treated as social objects attracting the writer's interest of concern *qua* blacks. To the indifferent, an *Aethiops* was just a humble slave, a musician, an *auriga*, and so on, meriting no more attention than was ordinarily deserved by persons of such a social station—that is to say, little or none. This indifference did not, to be sure, extend to learned blacks like Memnon or to foreign black dignitaries like the Kushite royal treasurer mentioned in the *Acts of the Apostles*," in *Romans and Blacks* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 160. Julie Ward writes "In the archaic period, when Greeks write about non-Greeks, specifically about people from Africa, they reveal little or no inherited cultural or racial prejudice. Even in the fifth century, the historian Herodotus reveals little, if any, bias against Africans, and demonstrates throughout his work great interest in the history of the Egyptians.8 He also reports favorably on 'Ethiopians,' a term referring to those peoples from Libya and Egypt (*Histories*, 7. 69–70). He explicitly describes Libyan Ethiopians as a dark-skinned, curly-haired, long-lived people (*Histories*, 7. 70, 3. 17), and in addition to reporting on their weapons and clothing, he remarks that 'the Ethiopians in question…are said to be the tallest and most attractive people in the world' (*Histories*, 3. 20). Herodotus seems to reflect the more complex, cosmopolitan attitude towards non-Greeks found elsewhere in archaic literature, as in Homer, who idealizes 'Ethiopians' (*Odyssey*, I. 22–4, *Iliad*, I. 423)," in "*Ethnos* in the *Politics*," 16. Tim Whitmarsh proposes that "whatever might have been the case in earlier Greece, the notion of 'Greekness' was not by now coterminous with ethnicity: it was a socially constructed style, one strand in a skein of valorized concepts (civilization, intelligence, manliness) which could not be disentangled meaningfully," in "'Greece is the World,'" in *Being Greek Under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic, and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 273. For an informative overview on

debates concerning race and ethnicity as they pertain to the Ancients, see Erich Gruen, "Did Ancient Identity Depend on Ethnicity?: A Preliminary Probe," *Phoenix* 67, no. 1-2 (2013): 1-22. See also, Ivan Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1996); Adrian Nicholas Sherwin-White, *Racial Prejudice in Imperial Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967); Frank M. Snowden, Jr. *Before Color Prejudice: The Ancient View of Blacks* (Cambridge, NY: Harvard University Press, 1983); Jonathan Hall, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Marek D. Steedman, *Jim Crow Citizenship: Liberalism and the Southern Defense of Racial Hierarchy* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 33. Even dissenting opinions are equivocal: "To be sure, the developed models of our time cannot simply be imported into the ancient world; however, the division of peoples along racial and/or ethnic lines is not an innovation of modernity," Eric D. Barreto, *Ethnic Negotiations: The Function of Race and Ethnicity in Acts 16* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 13. For further dissent, see Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). For an attempt to complicate this picture from the middle ages, see Geraldine Heng's two-part series "The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages I: Race Studies, Modernity, and the Middle Ages" and "The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race" in *Literature Compass* 8, no. 5 (2011): 258-74 and 275-93.

[lxxxiii] On this argument see Geoffrey E. Maurice de Ste. Croix, "Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour," *Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour,* 19-32 and de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in The Ancient Greek World,* 417-425. See also Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 40, where he cites Polybius and Cicero, and James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 26-7. Moses Finley argues that "Aristotle offered no more than learned embroidery to the main argument, which rested on Scripture" *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: The Viking Press, 1980), 86. On the Stoics, see Marcia L. Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 1985) vol. I, 36-7l; Thomas E. J. Wiedemann, *Greek and Roman Slavery* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 224-51; and Miriam T. Griffin, *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 257, 459-60.

[lxxxiv] See Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 40.

[lxxxv] See Moses Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,* 67-92; 82.

[lxxxvi] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death,* 113.

[lxxxvii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 7. See also, Kelly Wrenhaven's dating of "the importation of foreign slaves to Greek city-states" to "at least as far back as Homer. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* provide several examples of Trojans taken as war captives and either sold off soon after their capture or conveyed home as war prizes," in "Barbarians at the Gate: Foreign Slaves in Greek City-States," *Electryone* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-17.

[lxxxviii] *Politics,* 1256b22-25, pg. 14. See Mary Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule*, 25-6, and Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery,* 110-115.

[lxxxix] Wrenhaven, "Barbarians at the Gate," 5. See also, Vincent J. Rosivach: "And yet, despite the general impression that Athenian slavery was based on the wholesale enslavement of non-Greeks, current orthodoxy, it is fair to say, holds that a significant part of the slave population in Greece, including Athens, was made up of Greeks enslaved by other Greeks in their frequent wars, and indeed that it was such regular practice for Greeks to enslave other Greeks whom they had defeated in battle, that we should assume it happened even on those occasions when the literary accounts do not mention it," in "Enslaving 'Barbaroi,'" 130.

[xc] See Alexander Gourevitch, *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 24-5; Moses Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 41; Finley, "Between Slavery and Freedom," *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 6, no. 3 (1964): 233-249; 239; Yvon Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece,* trans. Janet Lloyd (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 87; William Fitzgerald, *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 69-86; and Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery,* 1-9.

[xci] Murray Bookchin, *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2005), 305; 385.

[xcii] The slave's virtue is in assisting the master "so that he needs only a small amount of virtue" in his own tasks but do artisans also need virtue "under a special sort of slavery," *Politics,* 1260a35, 1260b1, pg. 23; Schütrumpf, "Aristotle's Theory of Slavery," 121. Kostas Vlassopoulos argues that "claims that a certain slave was actually a freedman, or that a certain free person was actually a slave, were believable because of a wider background of contested claims of status. Slave owners were certainly able to manipulate the status of slaves and freedmen because there was inequality of power. But the process may have had a number of different sides, one of which was the exact opposite: slaves and freedmen could manipulate this state of uncertainty for their own benefit," in "Slavery, Freedom

and Citizenship in Classical Athens: Beyond a Legalistic Approach," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 16, no. 3 (2009): 347-363; 350.

[xciii] de Ste. Croix has led the charge in this argument, "by conducting the investigation in terms not merely of slavery in the narrow sense ('chattel slavery') but of *unfree labour,* in its different forms, of which slavery in the strict sense is only one, and not always the most important in the sphere of actual production," *The Class Struggle in the Ancient World,* 133.

[xciv] For a good Marxist reading of these debates that returns to class as a category of analysis, see Michael Lazarus's "Marx's Concept of Class and the Athenian Polis," *Eras Journal* 18, no. 1 (2016): 21-37.

[xcv] Wood, *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 272-3. Pertinent to my purposes, Wood argues elsewhere that the influence of the slavery base mode of production extends to political philosophers likes Hannah Arendt, *Peasant-Citizen and Slave: The Foundations of Athenian Democracy* (London: Verso, 1988), 40.

[xcvi] Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture, Vol. 1* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 74. See also, Josiah Ober: "The bonds of mutual interdependence between citizens were now based on an assumption of political equality. This assumption tended to weaken the old bonds of deference which had been based on class and status inequality, because the new ties cut across the horizontal strata of birth and wealth," in *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, and the Power of the People* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 70.

[xcvii] See Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* 19.

[xcviii] Marx, *Capital,* 152.

[xcix] Marx, *Grundrisse,* 513. See also, Marx: "In encyclopedias of classical antiquity one can read such nonsense as this: In the ancient world capital was fully developed, 'except for the absence of the free worker and of a system of credit'. Mommsen too, in his History of Rome, commits one blunder after another in this respect," *Capital,* 271n2.

[c] Aristotle Politics 1257b39-1258a2, pg. 17. See also, *NE,* Book 5.

[ci] Wood, *Peasant-Citizen and Slave,* 9. New social formations at the time did exert influence on thought. See Sohn-Rethel's argument that the pure formalism of Greek geometry and philosophy—the "first historical manifestations of the separation of head and hand"—was a product of the "generalisation intrinsic in the monetary commensuration of commodity values promoted by coinage," in *Intellectual and Manual Labour,* 66-7. See also Richard Seaford, in *Money and the Greek Mind: Homer, Philosophy, Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); David Black, *The Philosophical Roots of Anti-Capitalism: Essays on History, Culture, and Dialectical Thought* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013). But, as many have maintained, Sohn-Rethel's prioritizing exchange over production misses the centrality of labor as the mediator. It is abstract labor, not exchange-value, that relocates and transforms relations of immediacy. Moishe Postone writes that Sohn-Rethel "does not distinguish between a situation such as that in fifth-century Attica, where commodity production was widespread but by no means the dominant form of production, and capitalism, a situation in which the commodity form is totalizing," and that "his emphasis on exchange, which excludes any examination of the implications of the commodity form for labor, restricts his social epistemology to a consideration of form of static, abstract mechanical thought. This necessarily excludes many forms of modern thought from the purview of his critical social epistemology," *Time, Labour, and Social Domination,* 156n and 179. Georg Lukács is also often cited in this line of critique, for his argument that "Greek philosophy was no stranger to certain aspects of reification, without having experienced them, however, as universal forms of existence; it had one foot in the world of reification while the other remained in a 'natural' society," *History and Class Consciousness* (London: Merlin, 1971), 111. See also, David Black, *The Philosophical Roots of Anti-Capitalism,* 25-6; Anslem Jappe, "Sohn-Rethel and the Origin of 'Real Abstraction': A Critique of Production of a Critique of Circulation," *Historical Materialism* 21, no. 1 (2013): 2-14. Aristotle's advantage argument does bespeak some insight into the equalization element of time, labor, and value: "…there are great differences in human ways of life. The idealist are nomads: they derive sustenance from tame animals without labor and amid leisure," *Politics,* 1256a30, pg. 13. But Aristotle does not provide a labor theory of value because the activity of labor remains conceptually and materially intertwined with their use-value. And it is this production for use which equalizes the artisan and workman, the farmer and the slave. The political question is how bodily use gets apportioned.

[cii] Patterson, *Freedom,* 79.

[ciii] Robin Osborne concludes that "what was in theory a direct democracy was in practice a subtle representational one," in *Freedom,* 75.

[civ] Wood argues "And it is no accident that when conservative, anti-democratic Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle depicted their ideal states, they very consciously and explicitly reinstated the principle of division between rulers and producers, a principle whose violation they clearly regarded as essential to Athenian democracy," in "Capitalism and Human Emancipation," *New Left Review* 167 (1988): 3-20.

[cv] Finley, drawing from Wallerstein, designates Graeco-Roman slavery as developing within a "world empire," not a "world-system": "a structure in which different labour-regimes and modes of production co-existed and were tied together politically rather than economically." Consequently, "What we accept as a political unit, and in a sense a cultural unit, was not *ipso facto* an economic or social unity," *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,* 79. See also Ober's conclusions more generally: "While the Athenian constitution may be seen as an attempt to employ political equality as a counterweight to social advantages, the Athenians never achieved nor did they ever attempt, a final constitutional resolution of the dissonance between the relative social and political standing of masses and elites. The Athenian masses were not willing to compromise the principle of political equality in ways that might satisfy the ambitions of the elite, nor were the members of the elite willing to part peacefully with the conditions of their superiority in order to alleviate the apprehensions of the masses. the use of political power by political equals to counterbalance various social inequalities—especially the unequal distribution of wealth," *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens,* 295.

[cvi] Marx, *Capital, Vol. III* (London: Penguin Books, 1978), 970. See David Black's analysis in *The Philosophical Roots of Anti-Capitalism,* 26-7.

[cvii] See Mansfield, "To Aristotle, men exchange on the basis of their needs in accordance with their dependence on bodies that make unrelenting demands on them and then die anyway. He does not hold 'exclusively' by use value, but in contra distinction to Marx, use value remains, even in exchange, the intrinsic value," "Marx on Aristotle," 356. See *Politics,* 1257a6-34, pg. 15-7. See also, Jean-Pierre Vernant, "The Class Struggle," *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece* (New York: Zone Books, 1980), 7-28; Maurice Godelier, *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

[cviii] Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1,* 283.

[cix] *Ibid.,* 284. In *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, this distinction is the capacity to create "in accordance with the laws of beauty," ed. Dirk Struik; trans. Martin Milligan (New York: International Publishers, 1964), 114.

[cx] Groff, "On the Ethical Contours of Thin Aristotelian Marxism," 324.

[cxi] For additional meditations on the relationship between Marx and Aristotle, and most notably see Marxist ethics to be a "species of Aristotelianism," see Ruth Groff, "On the Ethical Contours of Thin Aristotelian Marxism," 313. There is a recent growth in literature on the overlap: Harvey C. Mansfield Jr., "Marx on Aristotle: Freedom, Money, and Politics," *The Review of Metaphysics* 34, no. 2 (1980): 351-367; Tony Burns, "Whose Aristotle? Which Marx?: Ethics, Law and Justice in Aristotle and in Marx," *Imprints* 8, no. 2 (2005): 125-55; Ruth Groff, "Aristotelian Marxism/Marxist Aristotelianism: MacIntyre, Marx, and the Analysis of Abstraction," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 38 (2012): 775-92; George E. McCarthy, *Marx and the Ancients: Classical Ethics, Social Justice, and Nineteenth-Century Political Economy* (Savage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990); George E. McCarthy, ed. *Marx and Aristotle: Nineteenth-Century German Social Theory and Classical Antiquity* (Savage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1989); George E. McCarthy, "Karl Marx and Classical Antiquity: A Bibliographic Introduction," *Helios* 26, no. 2 (1999); Neville Morley, "Marx and the Failure of Antiquity," *Helios* 26, no. 2 (1999); David Depew, "Aristotle's De Anima and Marx's Theory of Man," in *Marx,* ed. Scott Meikle (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 195–249; Henry Pickford, "Poiesis, Praxis, Aisthesis: Remarks on Aristotle and Marx," in *Aesthetic Marx,* eds. Samir Gandesha and Johan Hartle (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 23-48; Jonathan E. Pike, *From Aristotle to Marx: Aristotelianism in Marxist Social Ontology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999). I disagree with the thrust of Richard W. Miller's argument that, when comparing Marx and Aristotle, "an amazing similarity emerges, uniting the great opponent of exploitation with the most celebrated defender of slavery," in *Marxist Theory,* ed. Alex Callinicos (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 178.

[cxii] Aristotle, *Politics,* 1257b34-5, pg. 17.

[cxiii] Evgeny Pashukanis, *Law and Marxism: A General Theory,* trans. Barbara Einhorn (London: Ink Links, 1978), 169.

[cxiv] Aristotle, *Ethics,* trans. J Warrington (1963), 1130b18-1131a6. See Eric Engle, "The General Principle of Proportionality and Aristotle," in *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Law: Theory Practice, and Justice* eds. Liesbeth Huppes-Cluysenaer and Nuno M.M.S. Coelho (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013), 265-275.

[cxv] Pashukanis, "For it to be possible for the idea to emerge that one could make recompense for an offence with a piece of abstract freedom determined in advance, it was necessary for all concrete forms of social wealth to be reduced to the most abstract and simple form, to human labour measured in time," *Law and Marxism,* 168.

[cxvi] Ernest Baker, *The Politics of Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 363. See Sarah Tischler: "There may exist a concern, in instances of murder, as to how a system of justice can determine the correct course of action when faced with the task of restoration of balance between two agents, one of whom is dead," in "Just Violence: An Aristotelian Justification of Capital Punishment," *Dialogue* 49, no. 2-3 (2007): 80-88.

[cxvii] Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,* 161.
[cxviii] Patterson writes, "the slave's alienness enhanced the value of the freeman's nativeness," *Freedom,* 78. Peter Hunt: "On the ideological level, slaves were a group against which all Athenians could define themselves as a unity," *Slaves, Warfare, and Ideology in the Greek Historians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3; Peter Cartledge, "Fear of enslavement...was an ever-pressing motive for 'othering' the barbarian for the majority of ordinary free, citizen Greeks," *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 41-42.
[cxix] See Bradley, "Chapter Four: Animalizing the Slave: The Truth of Fiction," *Apuleius and Antonine Rome,* 59-78.
[cxx] 1252b7, pg. 2; 1327b34-5, pg. 199. Indeed, historically, "Greeks were sometimes also on the losing side in warfare and were subsequently enslaved by their foes, Greek or non-Greek. It is noteworthy that in matters of war, particularly the lengthy and especially violent Peloponnesian War, the Greeks seem to have acted just as harshly towards each other as towards barbarians. There is evidence that, despite their apparent distaste for enslaving their own countrymen, it was certainly not unheard of," Wrenhaven, "Barbarians at the Gates," 4-5.
[cxxi] Quoted in de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World,* 137. See Wrenhaven, "Barbarians at the Gate," 2; Patterson, *Freedom,* 78-79. Edward M. Harris contests this general consensus, arguing that Solon abolished enslavement for debt, not debt-bondage in "Did Solon Abolish Debt-Bondage?" *The Classical Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (2002): 415-430. On contractual slavery in the Roman context, see Morris Silver, "Contractual Slavery in the Roman Economy," *AHB* 25 (2011): 73-132.
[cxxii] Josiah Ober: "Yet this reform might potentially serve to worsen the lower-class citizen's economic position in the long run by reducing his 'capital.' He lost his ability to use his person as collateral, to trade his freedom for the minimal economic security enjoyed (as it were) by the slave. The poorest citizens had exchanged potential economic advantage for status security, their personal position for a position in society. The status-reform legislation which defined certain minimal rights as inherent in citizen birth was presumably enacted in part because of agitation by the lower classes themselves. Whether or not they saw clearly the consequences of giving up their bodily 'capital,' apparently the lower-class Athenian citizens desired to have the distinction between themselves and the slaves clarified and legalized," in *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens*, 61-2. For Moses Finley, this dearth in enslavable populations meant Athenians had to find other means of readily exploiting labor; the demand for slaves, that is, precedes the supply, pushing Athenians, in the absence of readily exploitable labor to more quickly turn to the procurement of slaves. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,* 86. See also, de Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World,* 141-144; Wood, *Peasant-Citizen and Slave,* 110-115. Others have contended that, in the absence of documented evidence of causality, it may easily be the other way around, as some have argued, in which "the increasing number of slaves led free citizens to look upon labor for others as demeaning because such work was being done more and more by slaves," Vincent Rosivach, "Enslaving 'Barbaroi,'" 142.
[cxxiii] See Kostas Vlassopoulos: "While there was a categorical and simple division between slave and free in Athenian law, in social practice the situation was very complicated. In many cases it is simply impossible to tell whether the individual involved was free or slave; even more, there are cases in which citizens are accused of being slaves or the children of slaves. This blurring of identities was recognised by contemporaries themselves as a significant phenomenon," in "Slavery, Freedom and Citizenship," 348.
[cxxiv] Pseudo-Xenophon: "Now among the slaves and metics at Athens there is the greatest uncontrolled wantonness; you can't hit them there, and a slave will not stand aside for you. I shall point out why this is their native practice: if it were customary for a slave (or metic or freedman) to be struck by one who is free, you would often hit an Athenian citizen by mistake on the assumption that he was a slave," in *Constitution of the Athenians***,** eds. and trans. E. C. Marchant and Glen W. Bowersock, *Xenophon*, vol. 7 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 10.1.
[cxxv] See Seneca, *On Clemency,* 1.24.1, and Keith R. Bradley, "Seneca and Slavery," in *Oxford Readings in Seneca,* ed. J.G. Fitch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 335-347.
[cxxvi] Vlassopoulos, "Slavery, Freedom and Citizenship," 357.
[cxxvii] Thomas E. J. Wiedemann, *Greek and Roman Slavery*, 2-5, 50; Wiedemann and Gardner "Introduction," in *Representing the Body of the Slave*, 2-3; Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz, "Freed Slaves, Their Status and State Control in Ancient Greece," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 16, no. 3 (2009): 303-318; Morris Silver, "*Macula Servitutis:* The Selective Stain of Roman Slavery," *Hephaistos* 30 (2013): 53-61; Dale B. Martin, *Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 1-49; Fitzgerald, *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination,* 87-114; and Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery,* 97-101. As Finley writes, "Greco-Roman manumission, in other words, reveals in the sharpest way the ambiguity inherent in slavery, in the reduction of human beings to the category of property," *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,* 97.
[cxxviii] I am not here attempting to make a value judgment by arguing that ancient slavery was "not bad," but simply that it was not as totalizing. The turn to reestablish the badness of Greco-Roman slavery in light of the work of Keith Bradley and Orlando Patterson (as seen in New Perspectives on Paul) establishes a moral continuity between then and

now that has little to do with the relationship between slavery, history, and totality. These insights (and the Pauline inheritance of a moral judgment on slavery) will be developed further in my chapter on spiritual slavery, for my book-length project.

[cxxix] Garver, "Aristotle's Natural Slaves," 194.

[cxxx] Aristotle, *Ethics,* 1130b18-1131a6. See also Raymond Koen, "Pashukanis on Crime and Punishment," *De Jure* 25 (2013): 486-509.

[cxxxi] On the middle-class, see Howard, *The Primacy of the Political,* 77-9.

[cxxxii] Vitoria, "On the American Indians," in *Political Writings,* eds. Anthony Pagden and Jeremy Lawrance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 231-293.

[cxxxiii] de. Ste. Croix, "Slavery and Other Forms of Unfree Labour," 29. See also, Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); John Francis Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church: The History of Catholic Teaching Concerning the Moral Legitimacy of the Institution of Slavery* (Chichester: Barry Rose Publishers, 1975), 44-79. For critical commentary drawing from the insights of black studies, see Ronald A. T. Judy, *DisForming the American Canon: African-Arabic Slave Narratives and the Vernacular* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 79-84; Frank Wilderson, *Red, White and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 47-53. To fully grapple with this historiography, one would also have to trace Islamic appropriations of natural slavery, starting, perhaps, with Abū 'Alī Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) (d. 1041). See Paul-A. Hardy's "Medieval Muslim Philosophers on Race," in *Philosophers on Race,* 38-62, as well as the forthcoming work by Parisa Vaziri.

[cxxxiv] Tzvetan Todorov. *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (NY: Harper & Row, 1984), 175-6.

[cxxxv] Lewis Hanke, "The Dawn of Conscience in America: Spanish Experiments and Experiences with Indians in the New World," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 107 (1963): 83-9; Lewis Hanke, *All Mankind are One: A Study of the Disputation Between Bartolome de Las Casas and Juan Gines de Sepulveda in 1550 on the Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians* (De Kalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1974).

[cxxxvi] Although, as Anthony John R. Russell-Wood notes, it was central to the informal network of letters, "Iberian Expansion and the Issue of Black Slavery: Changing Portuguese Attitudes, 1440-1770," *The American Historical Review* 83, no. 1 (1978): 16-42. Writes Hanke: "Spaniards never fought…as hard or as consistently against Negro slavery as they did on behalf of the Indians," *Aristotle and the American Indians: A Study in Race Prejudice in the Modern World* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1970), 9.

[cxxxvii] Vitoria, "Appendix A: Letter 2," in *Political Writings,* 334-5. See Richard Tuck's argument that situates Vitoria's ambiguity in the context of the debate on voluntary slavery in *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 49.

[cxxxviii] See Terence Irwin, "The Good of Political Activity," in *Aristotle's 'Politike',* ed. Günther Patzig (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 73-98; 95-96.

[cxxxix] As Garver concludes, "The question of the naturalness of slavery then becomes the more fundamental political question of the naturalness of the *polis,* and hence of practical life overall," in "Aristotle's Natural Slaves," 195.

[cxl] See Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,*127-8.

[cxli] See Aristotle: "Currency, then, by making things commensurate as a measure does, equalizes them; for there would be no community without exchange, no exchange without equality, no equality without commensuration. And so, though things so different cannot become commensurate in reality, they can become commensurate enough in relation to our needs," *NE,* 1133b16-20, pg. 76.

[cxlii] Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1*, 166.

[cxliii] Parker, "Aristotle's Unanswered Questions," 89.

[cxliv] Lewis Gordon, *Her Majesty's Children: Sketches of Racism from a Neocolonial Age* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), 76.

[cxlv] *Ibid.* It is worth noting that Gordon goes on to argue that "a lot has changed since Aristotle's time…gender has begun to function like race. Consequently, the genderless designation has become a goal similar to the racial designation," 77.

[cxlvi] Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, NY: Harvard University Press, 1990), 28.

[cxlvii] Laqueur, *Making Sex*, 41; Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 33. Earlier, Laqueur writes: "Aristotle's primary commitment was not to anatomy itself, and certainly not to anatomy as the foundation for opposite sexes, as much as it was to greater truths that could be impressionistically illustrated by certain features of the body," *Making Sex,* 33; see 28-58 more broadly. See also,

Elizabeth V. Spelman, who writes of Aristotle that "being male is not a sufficient condition of being human, while being masculine is," in *Inessential Woman: Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1988), 55.

[cxlviii] See Marguerite Deslauriers, "The Virtues of Women and Slaves," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 25 (2003): 213-231; Parker, "Aristotle's Unanswered Questions."

[cxlix] Laqueur, *Making Sex,* 29. Jeff Chuska, *Aristotle's Best Regime: A Reading of Aristotle's Politics, VII. 1-10* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 289-95; Charlotte Witt, "Form, Normativity, and Gender in Aristotle: A Feminist Perspective," in *Feminist Interpretations of Aristotle*, ed. Cynthia A. Freeland (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1998), 118-37.

[cl] See Aristotle's *De Generatione Animalium:* "by a male animal we mean that which generates in another, and by a female that which generates in itself," in *The Works of Aristotle,* Vol. 5, 1.2.13-15, pg. 716a.

[cli] See Vicky Spellman: "A 'woman' is a female who is free; a 'man' is a male who is a citizen; a slave is a person whose sexual identity does not matter," quoted in Laqueur's *Making Sex,* 54. Laqueur goes on to say that "slaves are without sex because their gender does not matter politically." Aristotle argues early on that the barbarians "have the same arrangement for female and slave. The reason for this is that they have no naturally ruling element; with them, the community of man and woman is that of female slave and male slave," 1252b5-7, pg. 2. See Parker, "Aristotle's Unanswered Questions," 76.

[clii] Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," in *Black, White, and in Color*, 203-229; 206.

[cliii] Ibid., 215.

[cliv] Saidiya Hartman, "The Belly of the World: A Note on Black Women's Labors," *Souls* 18, no. 1 (2016): 166-173; 169. See also, Christina Sharpe, "In the Wake," *The Black Scholar* 44 no. 2 (2014): 59-69.

[clv] Hartman, "The Belly of the World," 169.

[clvi] *Ibid.*, 166.

[clvii] See Leopoldina Fortunati, *The Arcane of Reproduction: Housework, Prostitution, Labor, and Capital,* trans. Hilary Creek (New York: Autonomedia, 1995).

[clviii] Hartman, quoted in Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 103. See also, Christina Sharpe, *Monstrous Intimacies: Making Post-Slavery Subjects* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 27-66.

[clix] Jackson, "Losing Manhood: Animality and Plasticity in the (Neo) Slave Narrative," *Qui Parle* 25, nos. 1-2 (2016): 95-136; 98. See also, her "Waking Nightmares—On David Marriott": "The negation of blackness is the foundation of ethics and politics, even of modern sociality itself; this negation overdetermines black practices as criminal, queer, nationally polluting, and pathological," in *GLQ* 17, no. 2-3 (2011): 357-363.

[clx] On slavery as a problem for thought, see Nahum Chandler's *X—The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), especially 11-67. On race as an "empty signifier," see Utz McKnight's commentary in *Everyday Practice of Race in America: Ambiguous Privilege* (London: Routledge, 2010), 14.

[clxi] Spillers, "Interstices: A Small Drama of Words," in *Black, White and in Color,* 152-75; 155.

[clxii] Frederic Jameson, "The Antinomies of Postmodernity," in *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983-1998* (London: Verso, 1998), 50-72; 68.

[clxiii] Wood, *Peasant-Citizen and Slave,* Chapter One.

[clxiv] Wood, *Citizens to Lords: A Social History of Western Political Thought From Antiquity to the Late Middle Ages* (London: Verso, 2008), 64fn16.

[clxv] Of the historiography on Haiti and revolution, W.E.B. Du Bois's is one of the most interesting, "Africa and the French Revolution," in *The Negro in the French Revolution* (Lagos, Nigeria: Mediga Printers and Publishers, 1962), 5-20. See, of course, C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989 [1938]).

[clxvi] The same can be said, as I will show in the concluding section, for contemporary theorists of the political who lift off from Aristotle via the presupposition of historial reality of the freedom/slavery dialectic.

[clxvii] Patterson, *Freedom,* 77.

[clxviii] *Ibid.*

[clxix] In a footnote in *Social Death* (392n115), Patterson refers us to Jean Hyppolite's *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit,* trans. Samuel Cherniak and John Heckman (Evanston, IL.: Northwestern University Press, 1974). See "Slavery" where he writes that "students concerned with the structural causes of slavery neglect the issue of the evolutionary origins of the institution," 433. See also, Orlando Patterson "Culture and Continuity: Causal Structures in Socio-Cultural Persistence" in *Matters of Culture: Cultural Sociology in Practice*, eds. John W. Mohr and Roger Fiedland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Orlando Patterson "The Mechanisms of Cultural Reproduction: Explaining the Puzzle of Persistence" in *Handbook of Cultural Sociology,* eds. John R. Hall, Laura

Grindstaff, and Ming-Cheng Lo (New York: Routledge, 2010), 139-151. On the philosophical problem of Genesis and Structure, see also, Jacques Derrida, "'Genesis' and 'Structure' and Phenomenology" in *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge, 1978). To continue to press on the philosophical pertinence of these persistent tensions in Patterson's long project, his thinking should be parsed as not only proximate but responsive to the templates undergirding a series of "transition" debates. Patterson's subterranean engagement with the question of the continuity (or not) of the historical infrastructure of ancient, medieval, and modern slavery gestures to, but suppresses, the question of blackness in the supersessionist periodizations of slavery and secularization, slavery and statehood, and slavery and capitalism.

[clxx] Whereas in 1982, Patterson affirmatively quotes Ali Abd Elwahed's early work: "all the situations which created slavery were those which commonly would have resulted, either from natural or social laws, in the death of the individual," *Slavery and Social Death*, 5, in Patterson's 1977 "Slavery," just five years prior, he is more cautiously contextual, scaling back from Elwahed's "wholly unoriginal idea," to the fresher insights of positivist and comparative ethnologists at the turn of the twentieth century. See Ali Abd Elwahed, *Contribution à une théorie sociologique de l'esclavage* (Paris: Mechelinck, 1931), 243. Patterson is also interested in the work of Leonard Trelawny Hobhouse, Gerald Clair Wheeler, and Morris Ginsberg, *The Material and Social Institutions of the Simpler Peoples* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1930); Edvard Westermark, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas, Vol. 1*. (New York: Macmillan, 1908); Richard Thurnwald, *Economics in Primitive Communities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932); and Thurnwald and Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Sociology* (New York: Appleton, 1893).

[clxxi] Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, 152; 67.

[clxxii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule*, 52.

[clxxiii] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 170. Patterson draws largely from Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

[clxxiv] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 105-115; 148-166; 169-171.

[clxxv] Patterson, *Freedom*, 72.

[clxxvi] See Kostas Vlassopoulos's historical account of discipline formation: "These assumptions were first challenged in the 1970s by the path-breaking studies of Blassingame and Genovese. On the one hand, they substituted the unilateralist perspective with an alternative conception of slavery as an asymmetrical negotiation of power. Slavery was not merely what the masters wanted it to be, but a historically changing relationship that was also shaped, if asymmetrically, by the slaves' wishes, strategies and identities," in "Does Slavery Have a History?: The Consequences of a Global Approach," *Journal of Global Slavery* 1 (2016): 5-27; 12.

[clxxvii] Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 21.

[clxxviii] *Ibid.*, 46.

[clxxix] *Ibid.*, 8.

[clxxx] *Ibid.*, 42.

[clxxxi] *Ibid.*, 29.

[clxxxii] *Ibid.*, 199n11. David Brion Davis stands in for the wide and complex range of theorization on this issue, taking "race as the distinguishing aspect of, not context for, slavery in the Americas."

[clxxxiii] *Ibid.*, 15.

[clxxxiv] Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830*. (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), xxi.

[clxxxv] Miller argues that the traffic in slaves linked northern Europe, which had a "capacity for material production [in excess] of its home market's ability to consume," and west central Africa, where "children [were born] at rates that exceeded the long term capacity of...agriculture to feed," *Way of Death*, 674. He particularly singles out textile production, as "apparel constituted western central Africa's greatest single underdeveloped technology relative to its population's needs and desires," and proceeds to catalog the inability of African technology alone to clothe the population properly, 79. These inefficiencies created a market for foreign goods—primarily cloth, alcohol and weapons—that ambitious rulers could tap for slaves to sell to foreigners or to build up their own followings, thus promoting further dependency as well as undermining local industry. John Thornton challenges Miller and related authors by specifying productivity not as an abundance of proliferating technologies but as "a measure of the quantity of output of a particular commodity per unit of input of labor," which in pre-industrial societies is virtually immeasurable, in "Precolonial African Industry and the Atlantic Trade, 1500-1800," *African Economic History* no. 19 (1990): 1-19; 5. The impulse to equate the presence or absence of technology (for example, the absence of a plow, but the presence of a hoe, or more importantly given Miller's emphasis on clothing the absence of a power loom, that center-piece of industrial pride) with efficiency and productivity is an anxious response whose aim is to resolve this immeasurability. Thornton writes, and this is obvious, but suspiciously underdeveloped in Miller, that goods like

textiles appealed not to needs but to desires, to "taste, style, status, sophistication, and wealth…to display small gradients of wealth and status," 18. See also, Ferdinand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century: The Wheels of Commerce* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 311-33. We can press Miller further along this line, asking why European production was in excess of consumption rates, if this excess was not tied to certain linkages of desire with production, property and ultimately, personhood? Miller's approach effectively standardizes present expectations into the liberal mold he earlier decries, and in turn diagnoses all alternatives as backwards. It assumes "that every society seeks autarky," that the quality of being self-sufficient and self-contained is a universal ideal, Thornton, "Precolonial African Industry," 17. But why does Miller need the presumption of autarky as *the* generating mechanism for a discussion of slavery? An answer to this question can only be found in evaluating again his self-proclaimed "hole" in his edifice, a theoretical structure.

[clxxxvi] Miller, *Problem of Slavery as History,* 29.

[clxxxvii] A phrase found in both *Rituals of Blood,* 26; and Patterson, *Freedom,* 10.

[clxxxviii] Patterson, *Social Death,* 13.

[clxxxix] *Ibid.,* 296.

[cxc] *Ibid.,* 332.

[cxci] *Ibid.,* 334.

[cxcii] Patterson, "Mechanisms of Cultural Reproduction,"139. In a reflection on his earlier work, Patterson identifies three methods in his trajectory—quantitative positivism, the comparative utilization of ideal-types, and the interpretive sociological essay (concerned with literary and mythic archetypes)—each suited to their respective objects: "certain aspects of the social world are best understood and articulated in certain ways…attempts to analyze and talk about them with inappropriate methods only end up doing violence to the subject." Clearly, the second methodology, a purposeful Weberian nomothetic unreality (triangulated with classicist Moses Finley), is central to *Social Death*. Orlando Patterson, *Rituals of Blood: The Consequences of Slavery in Two American Centuries* (Washington, D.C.: Civitas, 1998), xviii-xix. Similarly, in a response to an interview question about method, he says "You know, I don't know if I self-consciously think about this, but I do think that some kinds of issues are best settled empirically, and some kinds of issues are essentially moral and can only be resolved ultimately in moral terms. What most academics try to do is to claim that they can separate the two completely. I don't think that that's possible. I think it's important to bear in mind the differences and to use arguments that are appropriate to the issues. My general strategy is that where certain issues are unambiguously empirical, you use the appropriate data. But there are many issues where it's very hard to do that and you just have to, as skillfully as you can, shift from one orientation to the other" in Scott, "Paradox of Freedom: An Interview with Orlando Patterson," *small axe* 17, no.1 (2013): 96-242; 237.

[cxciii] Patterson, "On Slavery and Slave Formations," *New Left Review* 117 (1979): 31-67; 47. As the heuristic terms of Social Death are always negotiated in the complex dialectic of "the social formation," natal alienation, gratuitous violence and general dishonor do not necessarily presume to name the totalizing triumph of power, but a kind of fantasy situated less in an individual thinker's tool-kit, and more in the dense social imagining necessary for slavery's reproduction.

[cxciv] Patterson, *Social Death,* 7.

[cxcv] Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 220. See, by way of contrast, Paul Lovejoy's definitional enterprise, published a year after Patterson, singling out the "special case of slavery in the Americas," "unique in…the manipulation of race as a means of controlling the slave population and the extent of the system's economic rationalization" in *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 8.

[cxcvi] See, for the latter, Sara Eigen and Mark Larimore, eds. *The German Invention of Race* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

[cxcvii] Patterson, *Social Death,* 171.

[cxcviii] *Ibid.,* 7.

[cxcix] *Ibid.,* 164, emphasis added.

[cc] Patterson, *Sociology of Slavery,* 29.

[cci] Miller, *Problem of Slavery,* 126.

[ccii] *Ibid.*

[cciii] *Ibid*.

[cciv] *Ibid.,* 129.

[ccv] *Ibid.,* 127.

[ccvi] Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe," 205.

[ccvii] Sandro Mezzadra, "The Topicality of Prehistory: A New Reading of Marx's Analysis of 'So-called Primitive Accumulation'" *Rethinking Marxism* 23, no 3 (2011): 302-321; 304.

[ccviii] Patrick Murray, "Marx's 'Truly Social' Labour Theory of Value. Part I, Abstract Labour in Marxian Value Theory," *Historical Materialism* 6 (2000): 27-65. See a similar attempt to specify labor variants (if to a different end) in David L. Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah's *Savage Economics: Wealth, Poverty, and the Temporal Walls of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 145-179.
[ccix] Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1,* 290.
[ccx] *Ibid.*, 173-4
[ccxi] E.V. Ilyenkov, *Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Marx's Capital* [1960], trans. Sergei Syrovatkin (Delhi: Aakar Books, 2008), 97. See also, Pepperell, *Disassembling Capital,* 55-58.
[ccxii] Marx, *Grundrisse,* 161.
[ccxiii] Murray's tripartite refracts the labor-schema as it necessarily complicates the category of labor itself, yet the process of translating the value-form of labor through social death—where slaves are gratuitously *and* functionally posited as so-many quantum of pure, affectable quantity—is itself a process that will itself be theorized as a real abstraction in "The Wage Slave."
[ccxiv] Toscano, "Open Secret," 275.
[ccxv] Patterson, "Slavery," The *Annual Review of Sociology* 3 (1977): 407-449.
[ccxvi] *Ibid.*, 430.
[ccxvii] Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 219-220.
[ccxviii] Patterson cites three texts of Claude Meillassoux's: "Introduction" in *The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa,* ed. Meillassoux (London: Oxford University Press, 1971); Meillassoux, *L'Esclavage en Afrique Précoloniale* (Paris: Maspero, 1975); and Meillassoux "Historical Modalities of the Exploitation and Overexploitation of Labour," *Critique of Anthropology* 4 (1979): 7-16. A later work of Meillassoux's is also essential reading: *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold* [1986], trans. Alide Dasnoise (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[ccxix] Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 220.
[ccxx] Orlando Patterson, "Slavery and Slave Revolts: A Socio-historical Analysis of the First Maroon War, Jamaica, 1655—1740," *Social and Economic Studies* 19, no. 3 (1970): 289-325; reprinted in Richard Price, ed., *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (New York: Anchor, 1973), 246-92; and Orlando Patterson, "Toward a Future That Has No Past," *Public Interest* 27 (1972): 25-62. See his contextualizing of these early articles in "Paradox of Freedom," 216.
[ccxxi] Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 221.
[ccxxii] *Ibid.*, 39-40.
[ccxxiii] Patterson, "Frantz Fanon: My Hope and Hero," *New World Quarterly*, 2, nos. 3 & 4 (1966): 93-5; Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1993).
[ccxxiv] Patterson, as Scott points out, does not ever directly refer to the "Black Power movement," in "Paradox of Freedom," 239. Patterson, *Ethnic Chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse* (Briarcliff Manor, NY: Stein and Day, 1977).
[ccxxv] Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 193, 216. See page 204 of this interview too for his discussion of the very critical black American responses to *Ethnic Chauvinism*.
[ccxxvi] Patterson, *Social Death,* 3.
[ccxxvii] See Christopher J. Arthur, "The Practical Truth of Abstract Labour," in *In Marx's Laboratory: Critical Interpretations of the 'Grundrisse,'* eds. Richard Bellofiore, Guido Starosta, and Peter D. Thomas (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 101-120.
[ccxxviii] In Patterson, *Social Death,* 17. A different translation is in Marx, *Capital, Vol. 1,* 168.
[ccxxix] Patterson, *Social Death,* 28.
[ccxxx] *Ibid.*, 29. See too a subterranean conversation between Finley, who in his *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* declares that "as a commodity, the slave is property," 73, and footnotes a contention with Patterson's 1977 "The Study of Slavery," with which Patterson, in *Social Death,* attempts to reconcile, 369n21.
[ccxxxi] Patterson, *Social Death,* 32. See a similar logic in Stephanie Smallwood, but one with a different historical ground: "I am less interested, then, in how ideas about property shaped debates over slavery than in how the presence of half a million slaves shaped understandings of property in the American republic" in "Commodified Freedom: Interrogating the Limits of Anti-Slavery Ideology in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 24, no. 2 (2004): 289-98; 297.
[ccxxxii] Patterson, *Social Death,* 20-21.
[ccxxxiii] Patterson, *Freedom,* xii.
[ccxxxiv] *Ibid.*, 376.
[ccxxxv] *Ibid.*, 377.
[ccxxxvi] *Ibid.*

[ccxxxvii] Patterson, "Ancient and Medieval Origins of Modern Freedom," 59-60.
[ccxxxviii] See Patterson's "Commentary," in *Roots and Branches,* when he notes that though it may be possible to "arrive at a typology of *orders* of slavery," slavery is generally defined as an "order of power." More definitively, he writes, "in twelve years of diligent searching I have not found a slave mode of production. It does not exist," 289.
[ccxxxix] Patterson, "The Ancient and Medieval Origins of Modern Freedom," in *The Problem of Evil*, eds. John Stouffer and Steven Mintz (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006), 60.
[ccxl] See the latter in Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 203.
[ccxli] Patterson, *Rituals of Blood*, xxii. Sanitizing the revalorization of "radical blackness" in the Black Aesthetic, Black Arts and Black Studies Movements that Sylvia Wynter finds an ethical explosion of our present order of knowledge, Patterson surmises instead that "Blacks have *exhausted* the constructive possibilities of ethnicity and that a continued commitment to ethnicity not only legitimizes the reactionary ethnic revival…but more importantly reinforces styles and orientations which are dysfunctional for the group in its attempt to seek an equal place in that society." Patterson, "Language, Ethnicity and Change*," Journal of Basic Writing* 3, no. 1 (1980): 62-73. See Sylvia Wynter, "On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory."
[ccxlii] Patterson, "Slavery," 439.
[ccxliii] Patterson, "Ecumenical America: Global Culture and the American Cosmos," *World Policy Journal* 11, no. 2 (1994): 103-17; 114.
[ccxliv] See Jared Sexton, *Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiracialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).
[ccxlv] See Lisa Marie Cacho, *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); Lisa Guenther, *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and its Afterlives* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2013); and Jared Sexton's critique of Mbembe's "Necropolitics" in "People-of-Color-Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery," *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (2010): 31–56
[ccxlvi] See Patterson, *Social Death,* 20-8.
[ccxlvii] *Ibid.*, 97.
[ccxlviii] *Ibid.*, 214; Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, trans. Anthony Bower (New York: Vintage, 1991), 13. See Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 96-8; 138-141.
[ccxlix] We can find it throughout his career, in his vexed relationship to the conservative logics of Daniel Patrick Moynihan, without even Moynihan's minimal political programmatics, as well as in all his more recent publications, in which Patterson displaces race and racism by prioritizing problems of class and domestic pathology. Patterson protests this as a "caricature" in Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 240. Patterson elsewhere has proudly confessed to being a key participant in neo-conservative "ethnicity sessions," in "A Meeting with Gerald Ford," New York Times, January 6, 2007. For a stinging critique of Moynihan see Stephen Steinberg, "The Liberal Retreat from Race," *New Politics* 5, no. 1 (1994): 30-51; and Eric Foner, "The Crisis Within," *New York Times Book Review,* February 14, 1999. See also, Martin Kilson's reading of Patterson through E. Franklin Frazier: "Critique of Orlando Patterson's Blaming-the-Victim Rituals" *Souls* (2001): 91-106. Kilson persuasively demonstrates how Patterson has rhetorically shifted his positionality (specifically from the 1993 essay "Blacklash: The Crisis of Gender Relations Among African Americans" (in *Transitions,* No. 62 (1993)) to its extended version as "Broken Bloodlines" in *Rituals,* from "within" to "without" an American-American perspective and the public stance has progressively, "normative thrust and calibrating tone," become "black-rejectionist" if not "negrophobic," 95. His thesis of *Rituals of Blood,* that the problems in the black community extend from the patriarchy in the black family, has been repeated in numerous NYT articles: see "Race by the Numbers" or "Poverty of the Mind." Meanwhile, his own centralization of the essay "Toward a Future That Has No Past" (published alongside Moynihan in *Public Interest*) details an increasing tendency to "lumpenization," through which emerges a "universal cultural of poverty." In this text, salvation is found in the choice Black Americans have to think "Beyond Blackness," staged not as a multidimensional option but as an imperative: for blacks to engage in "de-ethnicating" and act "in concert with natural class-allies—those poor Whites, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, and downwardly mobile Latins," the "black masses" must "cease to interpret the situation in racial terms and must begin to take account of the underlying class realities." Patterson, "Toward a Future That Has No Past," *Public Interest* 27 (1972): 25–62; 60. See his comments on this essay in Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 169; 192-5; 216. Another of his early essays advocates a wholesale rejection of "ethnicity and parochialism" (and "race" more strongly still) in favor of a "cosmopolitan ideal," thus rejecting the whole field of problem of naming and organizing in tension with the force of the fiction of race, taken up so carefully by thinkers since W. E. B. Du Bois. Patterson, "On Guilt, Relativism, and Black-White Relations," *American Scholar* 43, no. 1 (1973): 132. On Du Bois, see "The Concept of Race" in *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept,* ed. Herbert Aptheker (Millwood, NY: Kraus-Thomson Organization, 1975). Nahum Chandler's discussion is, as always, invaluable: "Du Bois never seemed to *assume* the possibility of simply stepping outside or beyond systems of racial

distinction. Which is not to say that one cannot fundamentally challenge them," "The Figure of the X: An Elaboration of the Autobiographical Example in the Thought of W. E. B. Du Bois" [1996], in *X*, 222n34. In *Ethnic Chauvinism,* Patterson gives ultimate value to a "truly modern and developed society" which, to him, any claim to ethnicity "works against" by rejecting statehood, lacking commitment to change, and being, overall, "particularistic, self-deluding, and ultimately counterrevolutionary," 194.

[ccl] See Moten for a profound critique of the "racialized responsibility for de-racialization, an externality imposed upon those who desire, as well as those who disavow, the sovereign's impossibility, now often passes as a critique of blackness leveled from a vast range of colonial outposts that have been and remain man's staging area and theater of operations," "Notes on Passage (The New International of Sovereign Feelings," *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* 3, no. 1 (2014): 51-74; 53.

[ccli] Scott, "Paradox of Freedom," 225.

[cclii] Patterson, "Black Americans," *Understanding America: The Anatomy of an Exceptional Nation,* eds. Peter H. Schuck and James Q. Wilson (New York: Public Affairs, 2008), 383.

[ccliii] *Ibid.,* 409.

[ccliv] *Ibid.,* 410.

[cclv] *Ibid.*

[cclvi] Jared Sexton, "The Social Life of Social Death: On Afro-Pessimism and Black Optimism," *InTensions* 5 (2011): 1-47; 21.

[cclvii] Sexton "People-Of-Color-Blindness," 47.

[cclviii] Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (2013): 738-780; 749.

[cclix] Sexton, "The Social Life of Social Death," 21. See Sexton's theorization, in conversation with Albert Memmi, on "the complex interaction between the general and restricted economies of white supremacy and antiblackness—that is, an interaction through which the general is both productive of *and* dependent upon the restricted or particular" in *Amalgamation Schemes,* 28.

[cclx] Sexton, "'The Curtain of the Sky': An Introduction," *Critical Sociology* 36, no. 1 (2010): 11-24; 15.

[cclxi] Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness," 739.

[cclxii] Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1963), 71.

[cclxiii] As Tapji Garba has pointed out, this analysis could also extend to Jacques Derrida's *The Beast and the Sovereign.*

[cclxiv] See David Pan's argument on the cultural specification of bare life: "But if the sovereign declares life to be bare life in the same action that establishes sovereignty, then there are by definition no limits on sovereign power from the side of the subject and its commitments. The sovereign decision is an unmediated and violent act for Agamben that is sufficient for defining order prior to any cultural mediation. The lack of any notion of a cultural mediation of politics in Agamben's analysis means that there is only pure violence, and biopolitics becomes a matter of cause-and-effect, instrumental calculations divorced from any sense of ethical principles. Though Agamben is critical of this situation, his theory implies that there is no escape from it," in "Against Biopolitics," *The German Quarterly* 82, no. 1 (2009): 42-62; 52.

[cclxv] Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

[cclxvi] *Ibid.,* 246-7; 7-8.

[cclxvii] *Ibid.,* 246.

[cclxviii] *Ibid.,* 247.

[cclxix] *Ibid.,* 176.

[cclxx] Necessity means to "follow the law of mortality," the "law of a life spent between birth and death," which would "inevitably carry everything human to ruin and destruction if it were not for the faculty of interrupting it and beginning something new," *ibid.,* 246. On this paradox, see Robert Bernasconi's "The Double Face of the Political and the Social: Hannah Arendt and America's Racial Divisions," *Research in Phenomenology* 26 (1996): 3–24, 7; and Étienne Balibar, "(De)Constructing the Human as Human Institution: A Reflection on the Coherence of Hannah Arendt's Practical Philosophy," *Social Research* 74, no. 3 (2007): 727–38, 733. See also the brief on the influence of *Nicomachean Ethics* for Arendt's interpretation of action in Rodolphe Gasché's *Persuasion, Reflection, Judgment: Ancillae Vitae* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 221.

[cclxxi] *The Human Condition,* 213.

[cclxxii] It will be instructive for my future theorization of secularization to point out to Arendt's argument that "The victory of the *animal laborans* would never have been complete had not the process of secularization, the modern loss of faith inevitably arising from Cartesian doubt, deprived individual life of its immortality, or at least the certainty of its mortality," 320.

[cclxxiii] *Ibid.,* 31.

[cclxxiv] *Ibid*: "Society is the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assumes public significance and where the activities concerned with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public," 46. See Seyla Benhabib's account of the overlap between this dimension of Arendt and critiques of emergent commodity exchange in Hegel's "system of needs," Marx's critique of bourgeoisie society, and Karl Polyani's "disembedded economy" in *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996), 24-5.

[cclxxv] Toy T. Tsao argues in "Arendt Against Athens: Rereading *The Human Condition*" that "Eschewing the former's metaphysical ambition, [Arendt] instead adopts what is in effect a loosely Kantian strategy of transcendental argument, whose aim is to arrive at universal truths about the world solely from the necessary(i.e., transcendental) conditions of our experience of that world, without any appeal to the nature of the world as it might be 'in itself,'" *Political Theory* 30, no. 1 (2002): 97-123, 102. This despite Arendt's claim that "the danger and advantage inherent in all bodies politic that rely on contracts and treaties is that they, unlike those that rely on rule and sovereignty, leave the unpredictability of human affairs and the unreliability of man as they are, using them merely as the medium, as it were, into which certain islands of predictability are thrown and in which certain guideposts of reliability are created," *The Human Condition,* 244. See also Benhabib's critique of Arendt's "phenomenological essentialism" and her attempt to "salvage" the otherwise untenable social-political distinction in *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt,* 123-171, as well as Patricia Owens, "The Ethic of Reality in Hannah Arendt," in *Political Thought and International Relations: Variations on a Realist Theme,* ed. Duncan Bell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 105-21.

[cclxxvi] She presupposes the Greek self-conception of the "good life" as an achievement of the citizen, accomplished by risking one's life to "leave the household…and later simply to devote one's life to the affairs of the city," and thus becoming "of an altogether different quality" than that, say, of ordinary peasant, in *The Human Condition.,* 36-7. See Benhabib on how this is a betrayal of Arendt's more fragmentary Benjaminian method of history in *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt,* 95.

[cclxxvii] Wood writes that Arendt proceeds on "the mistaken assumption that Aristotle's 'theory corresponds closely to reality' when he suggests that those who provide the material needs of the polis, including artisans and peasants, cannot be citizens," *Peasant-Citizen and Slave,* 40. Arendt confirms Wood's argument by writing that it is "a prejudice of modern historians" to derive the castigation of work in antiquity on its association with slaveness because, according to Arendt's version of reality, the ancients instead "reasoned the other way around and felt it necessary to possess slaves because of the slavish nature of all occupations that served the needs for the maintenance of life," *The Human Condition,* 83. See also, Lazarus's critique: "With little correlation to the basis of material production, Arendt constructs a politics that elevates Athens to an unreal position," in "Marx's Concept of Class and the Athenian Polis," 33.

[cclxxviii] Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution,* 55, 56, 71-2.

[cclxxix] This identification of invisibility was lifted from John Adam's description of the poor as "unseen and unacknowledged," *On Revolution,* 68-9; 72. See Kathryn T. Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 61-64; Aziz Rana, *The Two Faces of American Freedom* (Cambridge, NY: Harvard University Press, 2010), 20-2. See also Patricia Owens survey of debates on the status of these passages in "Racism in the Theory Canon: Hannah Arendt and 'the one great crime in which America was never involved,'" *Millennium* 45, no. 3: 403-424.

[cclxxx] Arendt, *On Revolution,* 71.

[cclxxxi] *Ibid.* She further abdicates responsibility by generalizing seeming indifference as "not peculiar to Americans and hence must be blamed on slavery rather than on any perversion of the heart or upon the dominance of self-interest." The stakes of this contradiction thesis will be explored further in the following chapter.

[cclxxxii] As Arendt herself puts it: "What all Greek philosophers, no matter how opposed to polis life took for granted is that freedom is exclusively located in the political realm, that necessity is primarily a prepolitical phenomenon, characteristic of the private household organization, and that force and violence are justified in this sphere because they are the only means to master necessity – for instance, by ruling over slaves – and to become free. Because all human beings are subject to necessity, they are entitled to violence toward others; violence is the prepolitical act of liberating oneself from the necessity of life for the freedom of world," *The Human Condition,* 31.

[cclxxxiii] *Ibid.,* 36.

[cclxxxiv] *Ibid.,* 36n30. Arendt also confirms historiographical analysis of Greek slaves often being of "the same nationality as their masters."

[cclxxxv] Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery*, 74.

[cclxxxvi] See Carlo Galli's insight: "The enemy, is nonetheless never fully alien: it is never the bearer of a dissimilarity so radical that, through its mere existence, it could strengthen the identity of the Us from the outside," in "On War and on the Enemy," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 9, no. 2 (2009): 195-219.

[cclxxxvii] Vitoria, "Appendix A: Letter 2," 334-5.
[cclxxxviii] *Ibid.*, 335.
[cclxxxix] Hortense Spillers, "Interstices," 155.
[ccxc] Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harvest/HBJ Publishing, 1951). On the connection between *The Human Connection* and *Origins,* see André Duarte's argument that "the notion of biopolitics, which is not an Arendtian one, would be the missing link that fully articulates Arendt's reflections concerning the tragic contemporary shifts of the political, in *The Human Condition*, with her close analysis of totalitarian regimes, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism,"* in "Biopolitics and the Dissemination of Violence: the Arendtian Critique of the Present," http://www.hannaharendt.net/index.php/han/article/view/69/102, Final version, April 27, 2005.
[ccxci] Arendt, *Origins*, 183.
[ccxcii] Arendt asserts that although slavery was "actually established on a strict racial basis, [it] did not make the slave-holding peoples race-conscious before the nineteenth century. Throughout the eighteenth century, American slave-holders themselves considered it a temporary institution and wanted to abolish it gradually," *ibid.,* 177. To this, Bernasconi quips, "By focusing on imperialism [Arendt] seems to have started her study of anti-black racism too late," in "The Double Face of the Political and the Social," 9. Richard King, likewise, writes, "The idea that there were biological differences among peoples that justified slavery and made extermination easier had clearly emerged in the Western hemisphere by the seventeenth century, much earlier than Arendt's focus on the 'second' imperialism of the late nineteenth century would suggest…Arendt was essentially correct to make a strong connection between racism and European expansion, but hierarchical racism, as opposed to horizontal race-thinking, emerged much earlier and much more decisively than she allowed," *Race, Culture, and the Intellectuals: 1940–1970* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 112-113. This amounts, more profoundly, to the difference between what Silva calls the "sociologics of exclusion" and the "analytics of raciality": "For the reduction of racial signification to 'natural heredity', of the body as a thing without history and without science—which is consistent with the post-World War II move to ban the racial from modern vocabulary—only renders raciality a political matter, following the logic of exclusion, when racial difference is used to excuse personal and collective prejudices and agendas," in "No-Bodies: Law, Raciality and Violence," *Griffith Law Review* 18, no. 2 (2009): 212-236; 283.
[ccxciii] For an alternative, and much more radical, intellectual history of the linkages, see Aime Césaire's writing of the boomerang the little Hitlers of Europe that "before they were its victims, they were its accomplices; that they tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them, that they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because, until then, it had been applied only to non-European peoples," in *Discourse on Colonialism* [1955], trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972). See also *Dusk of Dawn: "*Hitler is the late and crude but logical exponent of white world race philosophy since the Conference of Berlin in 1884," in *Dusk of Dawn* in *Du Bois: Writings* The Library of America; 357-548; "The was no Nazi atrocity—concentration camps, wholesale maiming and murder, defilement of women or ghastly blasphemy of childhood—which the Christian civilization of Europe had not long been practicing against colored folk in all parts of the world in the name of and for the defense of a Superior Race born to rule the world," *The World and Africa* [1946] (Canada: International Publishers Co., Inc, 2003); and his earlier premonitions in "The African Roots of War," *The Atlantic Monthly* 115, no. 5 (1915): 707-714; and German Marxist Karl Korsch: "The novelty of totalitarian politics in this respect is simply that the Nazis have extended to 'civilized' European peoples the methods hitherto reserved for the 'natives' or 'savages' living outside so-called civilization," in "Notes on History: The Ambiguities of Totalitarian Ideologies," *New Essays* 6, no. 2 (1942), 3. On the "boomerang" more generally, see Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); and Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate All the Brutes: One Man's Odyssey Into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide* [1993] (New York: The New Press, 1996). For affirmative accounts of Arendt's critical potential, see Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence* (New York: The New Press, 2003); and Helmut Walser Smith, *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and Race Across the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Even Achille Mbembe takes this continuity for granted: "Necropolitics," trans. Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 11-40. For an overview of this continuity thesis and its critics, see Dirk Moses, "The German Colonial Imagination," *German History* 26, no. 2 (2008): 251–72; and "Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy of History," in *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History,* ed. A. Dirk Moses (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 3-54; 34-6.
[ccxciv] *Origins*, 125. On Arendt's indebtedness to the Marxist critique of imperialism, see Karuna Mantena's "Genealogies of Catastrophe: Arendt on the Logic and Legacy of Imperialism," in *Politics in Dark Times: Encounters with Hannah Arendt,* ed. Seyla Benhabib (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 83-112.
[ccxcv] *Origins*, 233-5. See also, the Holocaust "could not be explained by any utilitarian purpose; Jews had been murdered all over Europe, not only in the East, and their annihilation was not due to any desire to gain territory that

'could be used for colonialization by Germans," see Michael Rothberg, who details additional Holocaust scholars who begin with this non-utilitarian assumption, in *Multidirectional Memory*, 48-54.

[ccxcvi] *Origins,* 456.

[ccxcvii] *Ibid.*, 457.

[ccxcviii] The full quote is of interest: "The danger of the corpse factories and holes of oblivion is that today, with populations and homelessness everywhere on the increase, masses of people are continuously rendered superfluous if we continue to think of our world in utilitarian terms. Political, social, and economic events everywhere are in a silent conspiracy with totalitarian instruments devised for making men superfluous. The Nazis and the Bolsheviks can be sure that their factories of annihilation which demonstrate the swiftest solution to the problem of overpopulation, of economically superfluous and socially rootless human masses, are much of an attraction as a warning. Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political, social, or economic misery in a manner worth of man," *Ibid.*, 157.

[ccxcix] *Ibid.*, 291-2.

[ccc] *The Human Condition,* "The institution of slavery in antiquity, though not in later times, was not a device for cheap labor or an instrument of exploitation for profit but rather the attempt to exclude labor from the conditions of man's life," 84. Agamben gives an overview of this aspect of Arendt in *The Use of Bodies,* 20.

[ccci] *Origins,* 297.

[cccii] *Human Condition,* 84.

[ccciii] *Ibid.* See Patrice Douglass's argument on "the assumptive logic that there is nothing distinctive about the condition of the slave and the Human" which relies on a mutability of positionality. Not only can "the slave occupy the social and political realm of the Human, the Human can occupy the position of the slave. Not only does the racial nature of modern slavery prove this as false, experientially speaking, but this calculus has no way of apprehending a logic pertaining specifically to relationship between racial blackness and the slave and also racial blackness and the Human," in "The Claim of Right to Property: Social Violence and Political Right," *De Gruyter* 65, no. 2 (2017): 145-159; 153-4.

[ccciv] *Human Condition,* 84.

[cccv] Frederick Douglass invokes Patrick Henry's "Give me Liberty or Give me Death": "this saying was a sublime one, even for a freeman; but, incomparably more sublime, is the same sentiment when *practically* asserted by men accustomed to the lash and chain—men whose sensibilities must have become more or less deadened by their bondage." Russ Castronovo writes that the choice of death reflects "the struggle of liberalism to divest political vocabular of history," in *Necro Citizenship: Death, Eroticism, and the Public Sphere in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 114. See Mikko Tuhkanen, *The American Optic: Psychoanalysis, Critical Race Theory, and Richard Wright* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009), 153-164.

[cccvi] In Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 53.

[cccvii] See Ryan Balot, "Courage in the Democratic Polis," *Classical Quarterly* 54, no. 2 (2004): 406-23.

[cccviii] *Origins,* 177.

[cccix] *Ibid.*, 192. See Mbembe's uncritical reception of these passages in "Necropolitics," 24-5. For more critical takes, see Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory,* 56-8; Richard King, "On Race and Culture: Hannah Arendt and Her Contemporaries," in *Politics in Dark Times,* 113-136; Shiraz Dossa, "Human Status and Politics: Hannah Arendt on the Holocaust," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 13, no. 2 (1980): 309-323; Anne Norton, "Heart of Darkness: Africa and African Americans in the Writings of Hannah Arendt," in *Feminist Interpretations of Hannah Arendt,* ed. Bonnie Honig (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1995), 252-256.

[cccx] *Origins,* 206; Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory,* 65-66.

[cccxi] *Origins,* 176-77.

[cccxii] See Tsenay Serequeberhan's argument that "what she recognises in the European she fails to see in the non-European," in *The Hermeneutics of African Philosophy: Horizon and Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1994), 77; Michael Rothberg who writes "Rather than understanding the categories civilization and barbarism as a constellation, Arendt turns them into a progressive narrative, despite her own suspicion of that form" and interrogates her "conceptual slippage from Africa as the site of racialized violence to Africa as the origin of racial thinking and extreme violence," in *Multidirectional Memory,* 56-104; as well as Dirk Moses' position that "Far from proposing a 'boomerang' thesis about the corrosive effect of colonialism in African on the German and European metropole, Arendt was advancing an alternative continuity in service of a broader agenda about the *discontinuity* between what she called 'the Western tradition' and totalitarian crimes," in "Hannah Arendt, Imperialisms, and the Holocaust," in *Colonial (Dis)-Continuities: Race, Holocaust, and Postwar Germany,* eds. Volker Langbehn and Mohammed Salma (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 72-92; 73. See Benhabib: "Arendt was not sufficiently sensitive to distinctions between Greek slavery and the slavery of the black people, who were considered members of an inferior

race, at times judged to be barely human," *Reluctant Modernism,* 153. In terms of intellectual history, however, Arendt "discovers" the origins of Totalitarianism's singular *modus operandi* in a conceptual turn to South Africa and the conditions that serve to differentiate the Boer's irrationalism from the British, *Origins,* 194-7. Margaret Canovan summarizes Arendt's argument in this section of *Origins*, "South Africa showed that it is possible for a modern society to be organised on quite uneconomic principles along racial lines… [A]lthough in Arendt's account imperialism started from the subordination of politics to bourgeois economics, it culminated in the abandonment of economic imperatives, and the adoption instead of sheer violence by men who had discovered a new form of community, a chosen race," in *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); 38–39; Gail Presbey, "Critic of Boers or Africans? Arendt's Treatment of South Africa in The Origins of Totalitarianism," in *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reade*r, ed. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 162–80.

[cccxiii] See Neil Roberts' account of the disavowal of what "threaten[s] to shatter the Arendtian schema" in *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 36; Sibylle Fischer's overview of how the social/political distinction "self-deconstructs," *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 9l and Benhabib's critique of Arendt's desired co-existence of political equality and social discrimination, *Reluctant Modernism,* 151-2.

[cccxiv] See Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: A Harvest/HBJ Book, 1970) and Arendt's "Is America By Nature A Violent Society?" where she writes that "Negro violence" in America is only "political to the small extent that it is hoped to dramatize justified grievances, to serve as an unhappy substitute for organized power," in *New York Times Magazine*, 28 April 1968, 4; Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question,* 93-111.

[cccxv] Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Little Rock," *Dissent* 6, no. 1 (1959): 45-56. Arendt was roundly condemned by James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison: James Baldwin, "Letter from a Region in My Mind," *New Yorker* (November 17, 1962): 59-144, reprinted in *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Vintage International, 1963) and Ralph Ellison, "The World and the Jug," in his *Shadow and Act* (New York: Vintage International, 1964). See Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question,* 2-6, Chapters 1-3; Michael D. Burroughs, "Hannah Arendt, 'Reflections on Little Rock,' and White Ignorance," *Critical Philosophy of Race* 3, no. 1 (2015): 52-78; Bernasconi, "The Double Face of the Political and the Social," 16; Patricia Owens, "Racism in the Theory Canon"; Ross Posnock, "Ralph Ellison, Hannah Arendt, and the Meaning of Politics," in *Cambridge Companions Online* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Meili Steele, "Arendt versus Ellison on Little Rock: The Role of Language in Political Judgment," *Constellations* 9 (2002): 184-206; and James Bohman, "The Moral Costs of Political Pluralism: The Dilemmas of Difference and Equality in Arendt's 'Reflections on Little Rock,'" in *Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later,* eds. Larry May and Jerome Kohn (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 53-80.

[cccxvi] Joy James: "Arendt ignored the promise and pitfalls of radical antiracist organizations such as the Black Panthers, the American Indian Movement, the Young Lords, the Brown Berets, and the Independentistas," in "All Power to the People! Hannah Arendt's Theory of Communicative Power in a Racialized Democracy," *Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy,* eds. Robert Bernasconi and Sybol Cook (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 249-267; Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed,* 7-9.

[cccxvii] Calvin Warren, "Onticide: Afro-pessimism, Gay Nigger #1, and Surplus Violence," *GLQ* 23, no. 3 (2017): 291-418; 411.

[cccxviii] This also goes some way towards describing her limited view of Marxism. See Henry Pickford, "Poiesis, Praxis, Aisthesis," 29-32.

[cccxix] *Ibid.,* 47. See Sibylle Fischer, "In the case of Arendt, slaves disappear first in the disavowal attributed to European travelers and American revolutionaries, who did not 'see' the slaves that labored in the fields, and then again, conceptually, in the abyss between the social and the political," *Modernity Disavowed,* 32.

[cccxx] Saidiya Hartman, *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the African Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 45.

[cccxxi] Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 169-170. Patrice Douglass puts it well: "The Arendtian Human subject is able to carve out the right to have, or to mark the potential towards the possibility of, incongruent private and public lives specifically through the production of a being that stands before a different law constituted by rightlessness. The Human subject is guided by an ambivalent fetish and anxious phobia of slipping into blackness, where the zones of the social and political are unclear and where private and public life are structured by domination and coercion," in "The Claim of Right to Property," 154.

[cccxxii] See Arendt's account of the "paradox" of human generality: "the loss of human rights is that such loss coincides with the instant when a person becomes a human being in general—without a profession, without citizenship, without an opinion, without a deed with which to identify and specify himself—and different in general, representing nothing

but his own absolutely unique individuality which, deprived of expression within and action upon a common world, loses all significance," *Origins,* 302.

[cccxxiii] See Nahum Chandler's critique of systems along these lines in *X: The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 140-1.

[cccxxiv] On Arendt's influence on Agamben in particular, see "Biopolitics and the Rights of Man" in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* [1995], trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 126-135. Indeed, in canonical articulations since, even when in tension with Arendt, continue to centralize Nazi totalitarianism as biopolitics' paroxysmal summit, where self-preservation most definitively reveals itself as "mortification" and the drive towards immunization becomes "autoimmunity." See Eric L. Santner, *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008). Exceptions are few and far between: even Achille Mbembe's array of "death-worlds" only works to historically provincialize the biopolitical lens of totalitarianism (which in his intellectual history begins with Arendt and Agamben).

[cccxxv] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Vol. 1,* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 143.

[cccxxvi] *Homo Sacer*, 6-9.

[cccxxvii] *Ibid.,* "placing biological life at the center of its calculations, the modern State therefore does nothing other than to bring to light the secret tie uniting power and bare life, thereby reaffirming the bond…between modern power and the most immemorial of the *arcana imperii*," 6.

[cccxxviii] *Ibid.,* 10.

[cccxxix] *Ibid.,* 113.

[cccxxx] *Ibid.,* 115. See Agamben's attention to the internment of Japanese Americans in 1942 as the "most spectacular violation of civil rights" in the United States, in *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 22. See Sora Han's critique of this prioritization in "Strict Scrutiny: The Tragedy of Constitutional Law," *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death*, eds. Patricia Ticineto Clough and Craig Willse (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 106-136; 112.

[cccxxxi] Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 1999), 85.

[cccxxxii] Alexander Weheliye argues that "the Muselmann names not only the conditions of possibility for violent exclusions but also serves as the foundation for politicking the borders between bare life, life, and death. As a result, the pure organic essence borne of the biopolitics of racism is a form of racial classification and most definitely not its supersession. There can be no absolute biological substance, because in the history of modernity this field always already appears in the form of racializing assemblages," *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014), 65. See also Denise Ferreira da Silva: "This in/difference, which marks an ethical position, is always-already signified in the bodies and territories of the racial subaltern subject which social scientific instruments of racial truth write as expressions and producers of affectable subjects, those of human beings whose particularity/difference the formal (exterior/spatial) tools of racial knowledge produce as subject of *necessitas* (outer-determination) and not life (self-determination)," "No-Bodies," 232.

[cccxxxiii] Silva, "No-Bodies," 232-3. The act of stripping, instead, becomes the singular irrelational point, the "exception."

[cccxxxiv] *The Use of Bodies*, 20.

[cccxxxv] Instead, "use" is the level for reinterpretation: "one of the hypothesis of the current study is, by calling into question the centrality of action and making for the political, that of attempting to think use as a fundamental political category," *The Use of Bodies,* 23.

[cccxxxvi] *The Human Condition,* 7.

[cccxxxvii] *The Use of Bodies,* 68. This description bears some relationship to Mark Buchan's theorization of Marx's aesthetic object in "Marx's Aesthetics: Between Gift and Commodity Exchange," *Helios* 26, no. 2 (1999): 129-150. More work needs to be done to connect Agamben's version of "inoperability" in *The Use of Bodies* to his writing on Paul in *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans,* trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 93-107. There, Agamben translates Paul's use of katargein ("to bring to nought") in 1 Corinthians 1:28 as "inoperable." My analysis on this Pauline element to Agamben will feature in my upcoming chapter on spiritual slavery. For now, see Gert-Jan van der Heiden, "The Dialectics of Paul: On Exception, Grace, and Use in Badiou and Agamben," *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 77, no. 3 (2016): 171-190; 179-181, as well as Adam Kotsko, who writes that "if some terrible accident were to prevent The Use of Bodies from ever

making it into print, The Time That Remains may well serve as an adequate substitute—not because it contains or prefigures all the explicit content of the must longer Use of Bodies, but because it performs the same kind of operation on the Homo Sacer series, pointing out connections and consequences that might otherwise have remained unnoticed," "What Is To Be Done? The Endgame of the *Homo Sacer* Series," Presented at the American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference Seminar: Agamben, Capital, and the Homo Sacer Series: Economy, Poverty, People, Work New York University, March 2014, pg. 7.

[cccxxxviii] *Ibid.,* 15. "For this reason, in classical Greece, there does not exist a single great human function, called labor, which includes all trades, but rather a plurality of diverse trades, each of which defines a particular type of activity that produces its own work," Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, quoted in *The Use of Bodies,* 19.

[cccxxxix] *Ibid.,* 15.

[cccxl] *Ibid.,* 12.

[cccxli] *Ibid.,* 18.

[cccxlii] *Ibid.,* 17.

[cccxliii] *Ibid.,* 16.

[cccxliv] *Ibid.,* 18. Arendt writes that "Unlike the productivity of work, which adds new objects to the human artifice, the productivity of labor power produces objects only incidentally and is primarily concerned with the means of its own reproduction," *The Human Condition,* 88.

[cccxlv] *Ibid.,* 20.

[cccxlvi] *Ibid.*: "One can ask, however, whether mediating one's own relation with nature through the relation with another human being is not from the very beginning what is properly human and whether slavery does not contain a memory of this original anthropogenic operation. The perversion beings only when the reciprocal relation of use is appropriated and reified in juridical terms through the constitution of slavery as a social institution," 14. It is important to note that Agamben develops this analysis through a reading of Alfred Sohn-Rethel, Marxist thinker of "real abstraction."

[cccxlvii] *Ibid.,* 22.

[cccxlviii] *Ibid.,* 65.

[cccxlix] *Ibid.,* 20.

[cccl] *Ibid.,* 236.

[cccli] This phrase is repeated throughout Wilderson's work, but can be seen mobilized in "The Vengeance of Vertigo: Aphasia and Abjection in the Political Trials of Black Insurgents," *InTensions* 5 (2011), http://www.yorku.ca/intent/issue5/articles/pdfs/frankbwildersoniiiarticle.pdf.

[ccclii] *The Use of Bodies,* 7.

[ccccliii] *Ibid.,* 79.

[ccccliv] *Ibid.,* 78.

[ccclv] *Ibid.,* 7.

[ccclvi] *Ibid.,* 36.

[ccclvii] *Ibid.,* 108.

[ccclviii] *Ibid.,* 36. Indeed, the original intimacy of the paradigm of sadomasochism is forestalled by the invention of "property," which neutralizes what would otherwise be a scandalous sexual relationship into a non-issue.

[ccclix] See Patrice Douglass and Frank Wilderson, "The Violence of Presence: Metaphysics in a Blackened World," *The Black Scholar* 43, no. 4 (2013): 117-123.

[ccclx] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection,* 22.

[ccclxi] *Ibid.,* 89. See also, Sexton, *Amalgamation Schemes,* 83-152.

[ccclxii] Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* 129.

[ccclxiii] *Ibid.,* 111.

[ccclxiv] Ward, "*Ethnos* in the *Polis*," 15.

[ccclxv] Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* 23.

[ccclxvi] See Moten, "Notes on Passage," 71n10.

[ccclxvii] Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness," 740.

[ccclxviii] *Ibid.*

[ccclxix] See Moten's critique of an Afro-pessimist reading of "bare life" in "The Case of Blackness": "But something is left unattended in their invocation of Fanon, in their move toward equating objecthood with 'the domain of non-existence' or the interstitial space between life and death, something to be understood in its difference from and relation to what Giorgio Agamben calls naked life, something they call raw life, that moves—or more precisely cannot move—in its forgetful non-relation to that quickening, forgetive force that Agamben calls the form of life," 180. "There is a certain American reception of Agamben that fetishizes the bareness of it all without recognizing the severity of the critique he levels at movements of power/knowledge that would separate life from the form of life. The

critical obsession with bare life, seen in its own vexed relation with the possibility of another translation that substitutes naked for bare and perhaps has some implications, is tantamount to a kind of sumptuary law. The constant repetition of bare life bears the annoying, grating tone that one imagines must have been the most prominent feature of the voice of that kid who said the emperor has no clothes. It's not that one wants to devalue in any way the efficacy of such truth telling, such revelation; on the other hand, one must always be careful that a certain being positive, if not positivism, doesn't liquidate the possibility of political fantasy in its regulation of political delusion," *Criticism* 50, no. 2 (2008): 177-218; 216n6. Moten's explicit target in this critique is Jared Sexton and Huey Copeland's "Raw Life: An Introduction," *Qui Parle* 13, no. 2 (2003): 53.

[cccLxx] Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* 108.

[cccLxxi] Moten, quoted in Sexton, "The Social Life of Social Death," 6.

[cccLxxii] The difference bears some resemblance to the difference Daniel Barber proposes between Quentin Meillassoux and François Laruelle as "the difference between orthodox Christianity and what got interpellated as "Gnosticism." The former, like Meillassoux's philosophy, set forth a work of accessing (through Christ) the beyond, the divinity that was, back in its day, the great outdoors. The latter, like Laruelle, insisted that there was no need for access, that knowledge is unlearned—perhaps definitionally unpossessable—and so the very call for the work of accessing redemption had to be refused from the beginning, or before it even began (hence the logic of antecedence)," in "Is 'Non' Baseless? (*A Non-Philosophical Theory of Nature* Book Event)," for *An und für sich,* https://itself.blog/2014/04/05/is-non-baseless, April 5th, 2014.

[cccLxxiii] Fred Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness," 739. This is a rather complex continuation of the interlocution with Sexton and Afro-pessimism begun in "The Case of Blackness." As Sexton writes that Moten holds "the force of black agency to be logically and ontologically *prior* to the construction of a social order characterized by anti-blackness," Sexton, "Ante-Anti-Blackness." See Calvin Warren's critical analysis of the stakes of this intervention in "Black Mysticism: Fred Moten's Phenomenology of (Black) Spirit," *De Gruyter* 65, no. 2 (2017): 219-229. See also, Fred Moten, "Uplift and Criminality," in *Next to the Color Line: Gender, Sexuality and W.E.B. Du Bois,* eds. Susan Gillman and Alys Weinbaum (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 317-349; 318.

[cccLxxiv] Moten, "Black Op," 1746.

[cccLxxv] Ann duCille, "The Occult of True Black Womanhood: Critical Demeanor and Black Feminist Studies," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 19, no. 3 (Spring, 1994): 591-629; 600.

[cccLxxvi] *On Revolution,*71.

[cccLxxvii] Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, "Outer Worlds: The Persistence of Race in Movement 'Beyond the Human,'" *GLQ* 21, no. 2-3 (2015): 215-8; 217. See also, Diana Leong's analysis of how "The celebrated material body thus betrays a desire to harness the radical potential of black flesh without paying the social and historical costs of being black. In the new materialist formulation, pornotroping is revised as a radical interruption in the order of things, one that produces a material body without race," in "The Mattering of Black Lives: Octavia Butler's Hyperempathy and the Promise of the New Materialisms," *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 2, no. 2 (2016): 1-35.

CHAPTER TWO:
The Political Slave

> *The aporia of democracy and its governance of human beings—the identity of the governors and the governed, absolutely separated and yet to the same degree indissolubly united in an indivisible relation—is an ontological aporia, which concerns the constitution of the subject as such*.[1]
>
> *What if blackness is the refusal to defer to, given in the withdrawal from the eternal delay of, sovereignty?*[2]

Contemporary political theory speaks to slavery through the sign of contradiction. Extending from Aristotle to natural law theorists to the founding fathers, the problem is represented as Janus-faced: the embrace and elaboration of freedom (in theory, if not fact) while also contributing to the historical development of racial slavery. What David Brion Davis early in his career called European "dualisms in thought," Winthrop Jordan a "monstrous inconsistency," and Dominic Losurdo the "paradoxical tangle" is indeed damning, but its dimensions are not, as Eric Foner has claimed, "self-evident."[i] The integrity of "race" and "slavery" to the architectonic of early modern political thought remains cloudy and contested, recurrently sidelined by the more prominent paradigm of colonization and further stalled in what seem to be eternal epistemological, ethical, and ontological quagmires. For how tightly wound are theories with historical context? Is abstract thought an agent, with the constitutive force to blaze wholly new trails, or is it an artifact, wholly overdetermined by institutions and events of a circumscribed time? To what degree is philosophy responsible for practices that follow in its name? Is the liberty of the free and the consent of the citizen at the expense of, in abstraction from, or indifferent to the very evident bonds of racism and slavery? Can freedom even be thought, let alone realized, without slavery?[ii] Answering these

[1] Giorgio Agamben, *The Use of Bodies,* trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 106.
[2] Fred Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (2013): 737-780; 751.

questions, or even asking them, raises the specters of exclusive inclusion, false universalism, and unfree freedom, potentially putrefying tensions for the continued vitality of political formulations, liberalism and republicanism most pressingly, and the viability of American Atlantic constitutions in the broadest sense.

Scholars usually encircle what I will call the "contradiction thesis" with a form of biographical sleuthing, dredging up what in a thinker's intellectual biography might establish a concrete investment in the colonial enterprise. Since at least the formal abolition of slavery, the life of John Locke has been broadcast, along with Aristotle, as most richly expressing political theory's paradox and, given his influence on the American founding fathers, amplifying its historical stakes. M. NourbeSe Philip's take: "While John Locke argued for the freedom of man, he had no intellectual difficulty accepting that these freedoms could not and should not extend to African slaves."[iii] A series of facts pointing to such an absence of intellectual difficulty are relatively undisputed: through his patron Lord Ashley Cooper, the First Earl of Shaftesbury, Locke first entered the front lines of slavery; Locke penned portions of the Carolina Constitution and edited the proviso that provides freeman "absolute power and Authority" over "Negro slaves"; he owned and profited from shares in both the Royal Africa Company and the Bahama Adventures; and in his later years, Locke was a key member of the small but influential Board of Trade and Plantations, tasked with "inspecting and improving" his majesty's plantations.[iv] The puzzle proceeds from these bloody hands, seemingly so at odds with the rousing condemnation of slavery that opens his *Two Treatises of Government*—"so vile and miserable an Estate of Man, and so directly opposite to the generous Temper and Courage of our Nation."[v] How is it that Locke can seem, in one reading, to be an early, vibrant repudiator of slavery, and in another (as in David Brion Davis's influential assessment), the last theoretical defender of slavery?[vi] Commentators on

this famous thinker of liberal equality linger on the relative agency of his involvement—did Locke blithely follow the policies of the day or, as Robert Bernasconi and Anika Maaza Mann contest, were his actions more intentional? Should he be seen as a founding architect, an "innovator at a time when the practice of slavery had not yet found its dominant form"?[vii] The latter approach frames complicity as a contaminant—motive (if not weapon) discovered—unable to be sequestered from otherwise lofty ideals. A nearly identical charge is leveled against Aristotle by timeless interpretations of the natural slave.

While Aristotle registered natural slavery as a potentially defensible "problem for thought,"[viii] the trouble with Locke is that slavery is hardly capable of being defended at all. Certainly, Locke's evident lack of "intellectual difficulty" as powerful overseer of the trans-Atlantic trade does not translate into its textual defense, at least not one immediately legible to contemporary readers. In the 1600s, "race" as a biological-cultural discourse was gestational at best: fantastical but inchoate descriptions of alternative customs and habits gleaned from travelogues (of which Locke was a voracious reader) filtered into the more inductive investigations of natural history. By the middle of the century, science had only taken its first uneven steps toward a theory of reproduction more binding than suppositions of climate or custom, yet to formulate systematic empirical or normative hypothesis for human difference.[ix] Moreover, as with Spanish and Portuguese theology, it was the example of American Indians that most peppers the pages of natural law and becomes the cornerstone discovery for natural history. Africans and their captivity, meanwhile, fall away as a problem in need of explication; the black bond with slavery, undeniably undergirded by *some* concept of difference, appears so taken for granted that it is effaced.

Indeed, it is because early modern political theory is marked by an absence of consistent racist, or even racial, theories supportive of slavery that biography becomes both the stage to

illuminate the contradiction and the interpretative key to read between the lines. Locke's written body of work is again exemplary: though clearly advocating for the colonial project, threading the specificities of English property claims with the ideological and economic opening represented by the Americas, his *Two Treatises* contains no explicit endorsement of either the origins or practice of the slave trade in its Atlantic iteration. All references to non-white people are almost exclusively preoccupied with Native Americans.[x] The only un-coded hint of his involvement in the slave trade bubbles up in Locke's passing invocation of the "Planter in the *West Indies,*" which appears as an unquestioned fact; the justification, or even precondition, for this planter's power over "slaves bought with money" is not labored over theoretically.[xi] If Locke *is* legitimating racial slavery then, his defense is of the sort that, as Losurdo puts it, occurs "exclusively between the lines of the discourse celebrating English liberty."[xii] But this obfuscation, in itself, already puts pressure on the very constitution of a supposed contradiction: why did the brilliant political minds who would most have recourse to mobilize their brilliance in service of the trade not, from our vantage at least, appear to do so?[xiii]

For normative takes on Locke, the question ends here: biography does not heighten the stakes of the contradiction, it deflates and dissolves it, reducing the extra-textual to the circumstantial. A curiously small number of commentators have moved to consider the significance of Locke's long, early chapter, "Of Slavery" and how its legitimate form of slavery—"war slavery"—is positioned as a central conceptual node that disarticulates the indeterminacies of nature, war, violence, reason, and punishment by both inducing the reader's consent and by relaying specifically English debates over the constitution of and dissension from the Stuart monarch.[xiv] The consensus generally maintains that Locke's defense of slavery in war, the complexities of which this chapter will take up in closing, is a parochial addendum to his ahistoric

logic, of too limited an explanatory value and/or too specific a political purpose to positively accommodate the reality of American slavery (and, further, if applied to this context, may serve to *invalidate* its legitimacy).[xv] For this apologetic strain of interpretation, Locke's failure constitutes an "immoral evasion," residing instead in his conduct and character, not his theory.[xvi]

Not surprisingly, Patterson takes this tact. When his decades-long series of books and essays on the genealogy of freedom finally arrives at the early modern period, Patterson praises Locke and his natural law predecessor Thomas Hobbes for initiating the modern "reconception of freedom" through the language of "fundamental human rights," most fundamental among them being the right not to be a slave.[xvii] This universalism is achieved by attributing any impasse between the ideal and the real to individual lapses in morality and judgement, cemented by unfortunate circumstance: regrettably, neither Locke nor Hobbes "had the courage or the means to practice or even to encourage what they preached for real living slaves."[xviii] Patterson's bad faith decontextualization of political theory is echoed in his earlier, effusive *Ethnic Chauvinism*: "it should be clear that none of the major faults of the Enlightenment were intrinsic. They came mainly from carelessness, bourgeois selfishness, and the over enthusiasm of the intellectual frontiersman. They can all be easily corrected."[xix] After some non-essential adjustments, all that would be needed to most fully realize the promise of liberty and equality, in this common rendering, is the incorporation of voices and stories of the excluded, parochialized, and shackled. As Patterson imagines the problem, "it was the descendants of the very slaves in whose ancestors Locke had financially speculated with such extravagant contradiction who finally gave meaning to Locke's celebrated definition of freedom."[xx] Although framed as a critique of "of "dead, white, English males," Patterson favors a protectionism cast in the form of a future-oriented purification. With conduct as the singular culprit, the core of liberal definitions of freedom can remain unscathed,

expunged from the charge of more intrinsic contradictions.

Protectionist interpretations of this sort do double work in sustaining the legitimacy of the American founding, given that Locke's focus on the individual right, and even virtue, of autonomous, consenting property-owners was a key component in authorizing the American Revolution and shaping the character of the American constitution, not to mention its relationship to global capitalism.[xxi] This re-hashing of the Lockean debate, usually climaxing with Thomas Jefferson, has been made to expunge Constitutional compromises, made at the behest of special-interest factions—Southern planters, from irrevocably staining the Constitution.[xxii] But why did American revolutionaries in seeking to universalize liberty beyond even the scope of more than a century of anti-monarchal movements in England formulate their opposition to unchecked governmental power and reigning social hierarchies through image of slavery?[xxiii] If, as Bernard Bailyn proposes, racial slavery is situated on a continuum of power, as "only a more dramatic, more bizarre variation of the condition of all who had lost their self-determination," then the close correspondence between this language and the practice of slavery could function as a cautionary tale, "of what the loss of freedom could mean everywhere."[xxiv] Bailyn takes this protectionist argument further: the gradual realization of an "obvious discrepancy" between the rhetoric of political slavery and the reality of racial slavery engendered a revolutionary "spill-over effect," a "contagion" of liberty, that eventually spread to overcome parochial politics, making whites receptive to abolition and leading Northern black slaves to apply this emancipatory rhetoric to their own condition.[xxv] In fact, some interpretations maintain that key provisions in the constitution were intended to precipitate its demise.[xxvi]

These interpretations are united in their reduction of race to what Denise Ferreira da Silva calls a "(Moral) *matter* (namely, prejudices, beliefs, or merely evil)," whose strategic use has

having "nothing to offer to the *form* of the Political, which it identifies with the 'rational,' the civilized' (evolved or selected by evolution)."[xxvii] Rather than either tracing, ahistorically, how the mind is (rationally or irrationally) capable of compartmentalizing the ideal from the real or disaggregating the ideal with the infinity of empirically totalizing (and paradoxically atomized) history, I find more generative questions emerge when situating the paradox not, as some concrete exclusion but, as Lindon Barrett recommends, in the coalescing of race, history, *and* the political through the "formal structures of consciousness."[xxviii] If Aristotle becomes the founding father for the contradiction thesis, it is because natural law theorists, American revolutionaries, and their interpreters all remain invested in timeless versions of the natural slave. But what is needed is not the injection of history into timelessness, which would safely secure history (as historical events) from history (as a method of thought) and either render history random or purposeful, contingent or telic. The Marxist critique of real abstraction enables us to see how this approach, as Albert Toscano has shown with respect to the critique of religion, is "trapped by a fantasy of omnipotence, whereby the mental critique of abstractions, the impious mastery of ideas, sufficed to dispel them."[xxix] What a focus on abstract slavery, rather than abstract labor, will clarify in the next chapter is that the fantasy of omnipotence lingers in any telos that takes the laborer as a central subject. For now, I want to emphasize that the black slave is not an "actually existing" datum requiring ethical inclusion—it is a fantasy eruptive from how thought idealizes itself in relation to the construct of its history. As such, Patterson's blithe incrimination of insubstantial voluntarism may only be the flip side of more critical attempts to pose biography as a containment and freedom as an alibi. Apologists and critics' shared charge of hypocrisy—differing only relative to the weight given to the practice of slavery in the theory of freedom—imagines a mastery over textual production and its political effects, a historical "will," that, I will show, the freedom-defending

architects of natural law and the constitution can only endorse with much indecision and ambiguity *because of racial slavery*.[xxx] If not for the negative field of absolute symbolic violence and indeterminacy that I argue anti-blackness represents, the constructivist myths of natural law that map intentionality and interest with interiority would remain just that—myths made at the historical intersection of collapsing meaning, where the sovereign hovers between heaven and earth and the theorist, as much of the natural man of their designs, can't quite put power in its place. Under these pressures, assumptions of purity of thought and sovereign intent may be better seen as a ruse to resolve the immense historical violence resultant from feuding authorization of values—the church, the monarch, the parliament, the mind, the body, will, reason—and racial slavery is mobilized as a double ruse, a displacement that gives us the (non-black) self-knowing subject of sovereignty and self-present subject of capital that Silva calls the *transcendental I*.[xxxi]

If the apparent contradiction of theory and practice—a theory of freedom and a practice of slavery—cannot be resolved by interpreting the content of theory through the lens of practice or by making the practice responsive to the demands of theory (i.e. lifting off from what Locke might have to say about intentionality), it is because the contradiction is chiasmic: the political theory of freedom develops a political theory of slavery and the practice of slavery simultaneously expresses a practice of freedom. That is, the quagmire of broader interpretative questions about historicity, responsibility, and intentionality are *internal* to the problem of racial slavery: what Patterson calls Locke's "reconception of freedom" and Bailyn prophesizes as a "contagion of liberty" is reflective of anti-blackness and cannot be made to incorporate it. The groundlessness of sovereignty is buttressed by filling in the groundlessness of racial slavery—with anti-blackness as the mark of negative space, racial slaves are naturalized as a threat internal to the construction of sovereignty, even as they are its products.

Self-Preservation

Locke's supposed democratization of sovereignty, and foundation of individual right, may seem the appropriate place to begin. Given the complex constitutional web between Locke's version of freedom for all and endorsement of slavery for some, it becomes clear that a reading of Locke that is preoccupied primarily with intent goes some distance in deflecting the burden of anti-black investment from all subjectivity (what the following chapter will explore through Du Bois's insight into the "public and psychological wage" of whiteness) to only the slave-holder and the sovereign. This chapter demonstrates, however, the need to return to Locke's natural law forbearers, and here I will take Hugo Grotius and Thomas Hobbes, in particular, as exemplary and critical transitional figures.[xxxii] With their complex of sovereign and corporate authorities commonly characterized as more authoritarian and restrictive than Locke's, it may seem much less difficult to imagine how their theories could lend themselves to a justification racial slavery. Though I will later affirm the centrality of their political and theoretical advocacy for the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the Virginia Company, respectively, Grotius and Hobbes are at least one degree less overtly imbricated with the ongoing trade and, being much more ambiguously attached to discourses of freedom, may not seem to exemplify the slavery/freedom paradox as neatly, or at all.

Assuming, however, that political freedom is at its most paradoxical when supported by those with a demonstratively vested interest in the trade misunderstands the non-economic origins of racial slavery as well as its integrity to modern thought, the depths to which slavery anchors republicanism, natural law, and liberalism, developing not only discourses of freedom, but of reason, history, nature, method, and language, not to mention acting as a driving force in 1) wresting Aristotle from the Scholastics; 2) elaborating and valuating divided, non-territorial,

corporate, and popular sovereignty; and 3) delinking wealth from the mercantilism of concrete recourses. The interpretive impulse in which interest overdetermines slavery can be attributed to the subordination of slavery to the sphere of the colonialization of the Americas and the conquest of native lands—apparent when Grotius's international law is most clearly supervened by Dutch imperialist expansion in the East Indies building from Spanish papal decrees, when Hobbes's state of nature is tied almost exclusively to the Native American examples he provides, and when post-colonial readers prioritize Locke's "Of Property" and "Of Conquest" chapters over his "Of Slavery."[xxxiii] As they are ordinarily conceived, however, these discourses are much more clearly functional; the clear economic and ideological purpose of conquest converges with religious and moral difference to decide developmental scales and apportion global rewards according to relative property-capacity.[xxxiv] Their character and function are largely reduced to what Hannah Arendt, in our first chapter, assumes to be comprehensible. It is not coincidental that the Aristotelian scholastics like Suarez and Vitoria led the charge in bringing "natural slavery" discourse to a new world.[xxxv] But the economic and evangelical impulses that thread together theological and secular just war discourse, and stitch them to timeless and hypocritical readings of the natural slave, are insufficient to explain how anti-black slavery facilitates the perspectival shift from the theological to the political.

To understand this anti-black transmutation of power, I will make the argument that while historical examples like colonization stick out and demand attention, it is the *absence* of direct invocations of African slavery in Grotius, Hobbes, and Locke that most intensifies and enriches the interpretative complicity of natural law. Slavery as such does not disappear as a reference in these texts: much more than a negative opposition in a reconceptualization of freedom, as it is in Patterson's limited scope, slavery profligates first as an especially efficacious metaphor to

dramatize relations of power and to measure and judge the history, ethics, and justice of these relations. When Grotius and Hobbes affirm slavery as a model for political potential (and mediate debates of nominalists and voluntarists before them), they embed the relative freedom of subjects in a nexus of acceptable force and power. Just as a creature can be a slave to his creator, the citizen is metaphorized as a slave to the sovereign. The difference between the theological and political metaphor here is that the power of the latter is recognized as arbitrary, albeit necessary. By more fully foregrounding and accommodating slavery as a form of political liberty, Hobbes and Grotius can index the tenuous, unstable ground of sovereignty, the way in which natural law reconfigures will and reason in the vacuum of a transcendental guarantee. Hobbes, as recent deconstructive readings have foregrounded, is especially preoccupied with this vacuum; it informs his faltering faith in reason and textures the *Leviathan* with rhetorical and imaginative devices, compelling imagery, and historically efficacious allusions to performatively demonstrate the need for persuasion, even force.[xxxvi]

If the impress of political slavery derives its pretense to saliency from what Mary Nyquist dubs its "discursive plasticity," this fungibility bears a direct relationship to the realization of natural slavery as a real abstraction. [xxxvii] My close reading of Grotius and Hobbes will shore up this anti-black abstraction as mediated by three overlapping modes of slavery—the voluntary slave, the war captive slave, and the natural slave. In the gaps of the natural slave, voluntary slavery and war captive slavery collude to frame differential moments of originary contract and elaborate the rights and responsibilities of citizens vis-à-vis a sovereign, with natural slavery siphoned from the theological of conquest to explain a collective incapacity for self-rule in a "protoevolutionary template."[xxxviii] With this triangulation of will, justice, and nature, natural law can unevenly mobilize slavery to fit its demands for order and consistency. Every invocation of slavery becomes

scissional—deliberation over legitimate and illegitimate authority depends on deliberation that severs good slaves from bad, those who know how to consent from those that don't, the latter always vectoring their originary difference from the generic slave caught in war. This split internal to slavery requires, *pace* Silva, a way of thinking nullification instead of contradiction.[xxxix] That is, these texts presage the concept of race by demarcating who is eligible for enslavement, not so much by relegating a categorically distinct black slave to either of the three slots, but by suggesting a certain alignment between irrational violence and a slavery excessive to all meaningful categorizations—what Nahum Chandler and Fred Moten have theorized as the "unsovereign" or "insovereign."[xl] The perilous proximity between the prolific metaphor of slavery and any specific racialized context is effaced through a textual production whose logical and rhetoric maneuvers are doubly material: their ahistorical, individualized, egalitarian, and immanent premises respond to and accentuate historical fears, invoke the reader's participation in a body politic, sanction hierarchy, and rely, in key turns, on faith. These surpluses are secured by building from the performative power of the theorist to provide key interpretative gains to the reading community. They induce the readers consent.

Grotius's 1625 *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (Rights of War and Peace) mobilizes an array of little commented upon and largely un-synthesized origin stories for slavery——public and private, voluntary and involuntary, and perfect and imperfect—that only become legible (and only partially so) by centralizing how in/eligibility to enslavement articulates ambiguities of will and justice.[xli] For Grotius, self-preservation—the instinct to avoid the threat of destruction and maintain one's condition—is elevated as the foundational natural right, from which the right of property, defense, and punishment follow.[xlii] A composite of what flows from self-preservation before civil laws are (rightfully or wrongfully) tacked on, Grotius's natural law is in conversation with the Stoic

anthropology of social communities, as opposed to political authority, as well as Roman property rights.[xliii] His original reading of property denied any *a priori* private claim and yet granted *dominium*, premised on a minimal sociability that balances the right to take from the common pool the things necessary for sustenance with the obligation to preserve a peaceful community.[xliv]

Dominium not only implies occupancy or labor—"with respect to moveables, occupancy implies physical seizure; with respect to immoveables, it implies some activity involving construction or the definition of boundaries."[xlv] Because Grotius transmutes Aristotle's conception of justice to a pre-political realm, prior to the establishment of states, *dominium* also entails the power to punish. In Grotius' view, the "*very Nature of Injustice*" consisted exclusively of "*the Violation of another's Rights*."[xlvi] But absent a distributive authority, the fundamental issue for justice is corrective.[xlvii] The gradual, volitional formation of civil society is offered as a solution to violations of right, transferring the juridical negotiations animating individual self-preservation to a common representative authority invested with decision-making authority. This means, as Richard Tuck has clarified, Grotius attempted to mediate Scholastic and humanistic interpretations of Aristotle: political society both has its origins in nature *and* is consummated by the social.[xlviii]

This decisionist transfer, derived from the law of nature, sets in motion the law of nations. Because Grotius has artificial persons operating in the same manner as natural persons, international law will likewise be conducted along comparable principles of self-preservation. As the law of Nations should, ideally, emerge as the superior register of the law of Nature, there is a certain holistic nestedness to these claims: although states cannot have rights that individuals in nature did not, civil society ends up circumscribing an individual's liberty, most notably the right to punish, and more specifically, the right to kill. By historically and logically linking the state-sanctioned prohibition of force to the originary status of individuals' relinquishment, Grotius also

restricts the possibility of private wars—either an individual's self-defense or a collective's anti-tyrannical resistance—unless threatened by an unjust Sovereign. Here he forges what Deborah Baumgold delimits as a confounding and persistent "Grotian problem" that can be followed as with a möbius strip, giving us Hobbes and Locke: the tension between absolutism and accountability limits the violence of individuals by transferring that right wholly to the state while, simultaneously, opening space for inalienable rights that establish the grounds for resistance.[xlix] This mitigation of violence in the authority of the state exposes the possibility of its undoing.

As a consequence of his perspective on rights, Grotius is pulled in Book 2 towards justifying the Molinist stream of "voluntary slavery" as one, very crucial, legitimation of sovereignty.[l] Grotius argues that, contra Aristotle, "no Man naturally is a Slave," yet freedom in nature *includes* the freedom to sell oneself into slavery and indeed that natural law *must* include this freedom or freedom itself would be limited and un-free.[li] Still, this will must accord with some principle of justice, else Grotius concede a relativism that unhinges his minimal moral order. Man can only enslave himself out of some pressing need, as "Life is far preferable to Liberty."[lii] From these utilitarian premises, Grotius paints a picture not altogether bleak: those who know how to properly comport themselves can reap the benefits—material and spiritual—of voluntary slavery. For that "perfect and utter Slavery…which obliges a Man to serve his Master all his Life long, for Diet and other common Necessities" is not inheritable and has "nothing too hard and severe in it; for that perpetual Obligation to Service, is recompensed by the Certainty of being always provided for."[liii] Slaves cannot, in this condition, be arbitrarily put to death. As their voluntarism is compelled by self-preservation, death would convert the freedom of their slavery into its opposite. Importantly, the analogue between the individual and the state means that "Sovereignty over a people and mastery over an individual" derives "from a similar *facultas moralis.*"[liv] By equating

those individually enslaved with those collectively enslaved, Grotius substantiates the unity of self-preservation and sociability, while offering a model with potential to codify nonresistance as constituve of political society.

Despite the bond between voluntary slavery, nonresistance, and authority, Grotius's call for absolutism is never unconditional. He recognizes that to vindicate absolutism through voluntarism is also to accede to the possibility of other, less binding, voluntary contracts. The motivation to forfeit one's rights can come from "many Causes," just as there are "several Ways of Living, some better than others."[lv] Power, then, can be divided and absolute, varying in proportion to the "Extent of will" subjects bequeath.[lvi]

Hobbes inherits this Grotian problem but, historically and theoretically much more attuned to the dangers of conflicting interpretations, seems to decide in favor of absolutism by amplifying (rather precariously, given what we will see to be his avowed allergy to rhetoric and history) the metaphor of political slavery. In Hobbes's (usually) anti-Aristotelian hands, slavery transforms from one, very important form of possible contract, as in Grotius, to *the* form of sovereignty.[lvii] Instead of assuming a moral sociability (Aristotle's *zoon politikon*) or a pre-political right to punishment or self-defense, he infamously poses natural man in a condition in which "there is no place for industry...and consequently, no culture of the earth...no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society."[lviii] Men are equal in natural, not unequal, as Aristotle presumed, but this inequality extends primarily to their most violent capacities, insofar as "the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others."[lix] Unlike in Grotius, it is the erection of the commonwealth and its compulsion to make and keep covenants that gives us the concept "justice," and thus propriety, not some prior moral law.[lx]

In Hobbes's mechanistic materialism, "every part of the Universe, is body; and that which is not Body, is no part of the Universe."[lxi] Announcing a departure from Aristotle's two substances, for Hobbes the origins of thoughts, speech, and ultimately, historical experience, political arrangements, and philosophical principles, are unified in their derivation from sense-impressions, "*understanding* being nothing else, but conception caused by speech."[lxii] Although scientific reason is positioned as the "antidote" whose rational reconstruction enables natural man to transcend a dizzying stockpile of experiential encounters, and proceed to science, reason is not a faculty of mind endowed with a separate, Cartesian faculty. Even with the right, scientific, registration of words, there remains a distance between our words and the world, such that scientific knowledge is "not absolute, but conditional."[lxiii] Without a separate, stable intellectual faculty and absent any objective criteria to law or truth or language, perceptions remain fragmented, shared meaning is impossible, and disorder multiplies.[lxiv] Although canonical versions of the state of nature focus on brute force, the problem of stabilizing meaning within men should perhaps be centralized as the source of conflict between men. Because language, for Hobbes, is always rhetorical, Aristotle's source of human distinctiveness instead becomes the beginning of human ruin.[lxv] As he distills in his *Elements of Law,* "all violence proceedeth from controversies…concerning *meum* and *tuum,* right and wrong, good and bad, and the like, which men use every one to measure by their own judgments."[lxvi] There can be no authority, even Hobbes's own, that can definitively overcome these limits or stem the tide of excess.

Hobbes nonetheless instructs us in optimism. Although reason cannot provide absolute knowledge of invisible causes, either of the natural world or the God that the natural world imitates, it can be a tool to contain impending chaos.[lxvii] The competing passions of acquisitive men can be inclined by the "foresight of their own preservation" to channel passions into productive ends and

relinquish their exclusive power to name, laying down both the right of the private sword and the right of private judgement.[lxviii] Hobbes then premises his pacified society on the voluntaristic possibility of consent to slavery, with liberty only realizable within a unified political order and the entanglement of social bonds. With his prioritization of the natural equality of ability and freedom of right, Hobbes directly squares off with Aristotle, disparaging the ancient philosopher's supposition that "master and servant were not introduced by consent of men, but by difference of wit," as inequality "is not only against reason, but also against experience."[lxix] Instead, the natural *freedom* of pre-politics, where none are slaves, leads from express commitment or intentional submission to the *liberty* of politics: "For in the act of our *submission,*" Hobbes writes, "consisteth both our *obligation* and our *liberty.*"[lxx] The sovereign can claim "publique reason" only insofar as the binding unity of a single authority, regardless of its content, can "set forth and make known the common measure by which every man is to know what is his, and what another's; what is good and what bad; and what he ought to do, and what not…"[lxxi] This common measure—the regulatory meaning-making of law, convention, and political unity—accomplishes the nominal transcendence of physical and symbolic anarchy not because it inherits the justice of natural man but simply because, unlike in Grotius, it retains the right to aggressive violence and decisionistic speech as its unique monopoly. The common good is not in waiting, ready to be discovered by virtuous politics and persuasion, it is decreed. With the foundation of injustice and justice *internal* to the sovereign bequeathal of meaning and value, injustice is instead defined as the breaking a contract, and subsequently, resistance itself (and not any particular act of the sovereign) constitutes general injustice and injury.[lxxii]

Resituated at the boundary of the state of nature, slavery becomes, in the words of Nyquist, "sovereignty's necessary precondition."[lxxiii] Transplanting war from a political contest to the state

of nature and rethinking liberty as structurally contingent on sovereign representation, the power of the military victor can be reunited with that of the slaveholder. It is no longer some natural beings that are threatening—*every* natural man is a virtual threat and, with liberty preferable to death, *all* should ideally be inclined to become voluntary slaves.[lxxiv] Hobbes does preserve a difference of degree, not kind, between voluntary slavery and war slavery—while the former can be re-designated, following Hobbes, as "commonwealth by institution" and the latter, "commonwealth by acquisition," both are a mix of violence and compact.[lxxv] State-formation is the necessary story of either voluntary enslavement (a compact that transfers one's right to self-defense) or submission to conquest (a gesture also requiring a form of covenant), and the sovereign exercise of power, in Hobbes's myth at least, should be ultimately indifferent to the composition of this mixture at its foundation. Liberty is thus structurally contingent with sovereignty, flowing from how submission carves out a politically safe position from otherwise conflicting, insatiable, and dangerous desires. Political servitude becomes the positive condition of citizen-subjects, who, in a near transvaluation of slavery, finds that their individual liberty is not hampered by, but actually consummated through, despotic rule.

When both Grotius and Hobbes raise self-preservation as a maxim—the first principle of natural law, the thematic of mankind, and the ultimate origin of sovereign authority and international harmony—a certain materiality is snuck in, superseding higher order concerns, and seemingly displacing the theological orientation to heavenly rewards. Even though the early instantiations of natural law doctrines were not secular per se, their attempts to temper ongoing religious strife and dogmatism through a "minima moralia" synthesized scholasticism with burgeoning forces of secularization by grounding the political community in rules of reason ostensibly generalizable to all and at distance from divine intervention.[lxxvi] If political theory can

be separate from political theology, it is because it registers the immanentization of power as a methodological starting point, thematizing the question of god as secondary. Grotius, for instance, initiates a non-divine foundation for natural law, grounded in a rejection, or at least limitation, of spiritual value. A circumscribed agnosticism is leveled with the Skeptics: "all we have now said would take place, though we should even grant…that there is no God or that he takes no Care of human Affairs"—derogating the role of God, while nonetheless maintaining divinity as the first mover.[lxxvii] Such is Grotius's wager: without any divine sign from God, man can study himself and arrive at a generalizable consensus about natural law.

Likewise, Hobbes rejects the scholastic synthesis of religion and science, pursuing a non-transcendental horizon opposed to the dogmatic adaptation of "Aristotelity" by the Church and the University.[lxxviii] Unlike papal authority and revelation, natural law is discovered in the interface with the world, not in communion with God or his officers.[lxxix] Although proceeding from the divine faculty of reason, its rules would be compelling regardless of the actual presence of God. Man's natural condition alone—the "fear of death," the desire for the necessities of living, and the "hope by their industry to obtain them"—is sufficient to explain the constitutive power of the covenant and its form of absolutist power.[lxxx] The civil subject that Hobbes brings into being is thus arrayed as a reasonable expression of natural man; nature appears to contain its own transcendence, its own generative spring for replicating god's artifice, saving subjects through an instituting act that resembles "*fiat,* or the *let us make man,* pronounced by God in the creation."[lxxxi] This distinctly political solution to the metaphysical questions of the day is what Richard Tuck calls Hobbes's "most distinctive contribution to political theory."[lxxxii] Hobbes seems to have tidily resolved the metaphysical crises of nominalism and skepticism with the political decision that births meaning.

The story, of course, is not that simple. Despite Hobbes's presupposed indivisible and homogeneous nature of man, he encounters the same problem as Grotius: difference doesn't disappear. If natural law, like the law of gravity, is inscribed in the artifice of nature, directing us to avoid death and opening us to our worldly salvation, its power is, unlike the law of gravity, pragmatic, not predicative.[lxxxiii] The disposition to make the leap of consent is not guaranteed by the positive existence of the state of nature alone. Some pre-existing intrusion of the social into what is supposed to be an utterly anarchic state of nature would be needed for natural man to have any assurance of the efficacy of his enslavement.[lxxxiv] This Grotian supposition of a proto-political collective capacity, however, evacuates the strong necessity to relinquish the liberty of the pre-political and accede to absolutism, consequently challenging the entire *rasion d'être* of the Hobbesian system.[lxxxv] Further, there would be no reason to assume that subjects would continue to obey a tyrannical government that threatens their self-preservation just because an imaginary contract decrees it so. Given these problems in divergent dispositions and insecure obedience, Hobbes's sovereign truth does not seem effective by reason alone; the chain from the nominalist God to the sovereign God would need remain unbroken, in what William Connolly calls "a command theory of obligation with the chain of command originating in God and progressing through nature, reason, sovereignty and the self." [lxxxvi]

Groundlessness

Both Grotius and Hobbes require *faith* in reason's capacity to contain contesting wills, explosive causes, and potentially unstable worlds. The solution to the "Grotian problem"—the tension between limiting violence and opening space for accountability—may be found in an incipient and enfolding anthropology, the germ of an idea.[lxxxvii] Despite differing on the relative coercion that

the individual should sustain in service of preserving order as well as the varying degrees of social disruption that sovereignty must accept, Grotius and Hobbes's disparate visions are united in their absolute injunction for self-preservation against some version of pre-political man. While their largely constructivist account of un-verifiable hypotheses can be made persuasive for different readers, natural law's meditation on the origin, structure, and legitimacy of sovereignty only sticks with a demonstrative spur. By insisting on natural equality, the composition of political community draws a circle of generalizable principles around its viable actors, the sovereign and its subjects, that can account for the need for and irruption of hierarchy. Its circle presupposes an outside, those not included in this equality and thus not subject to the edict of self-preservation or its corollary, legitimate resistance.[lxxxviii] This is the larger philosophical-theological problem of power: what we might call degodding does not do away with the premise of Christian universalism, or the question of theodicy, instead announcing a "re-godding" now immanent to man.[lxxxix]

It is important to recognize that Grotius supplements his innovative derivation of natural law from general axioms—his "subtle and abstracted" *a priori* claims—with *a posteriori* reflections on the historical course of nations. Grotius's philosophical proofs are meant to coincide with the historical *a posteriori* because they share a common basis in the sustainability and survivability of a state or subject—the stories we tell are of the rise and fall of civilizations, and thus, of the success or failure of self-preservation. He assures us that the "common sense of mankind," especially that of the more "civilized" nations, is "with every probability" in accordance with natural law.[xc] The historical, however, ends up subtending the content of natural law, suturing the contingency of relinquishment with the diversity of political arrangements that can and have legitimately cohered. Grotius does not resolve his methodological and political problem: his project is less to adjudicate preferred forms of sovereignty, and more to enumerate existing forms,

with a variety of rights retained by the subject. Nonetheless, his attempt to map the non-divine, even mathematical, route to political pacification compels him to prioritize and sanctify nonresistance: "if that promiscuous Right of Resistance should be allowed, there would be no longer a State, but a Multitude without Union."[xci]

Some *demonstrability* becomes necessary for Grotius to not only to shore up the diversity of governmental forms, but also to arbitrate between il/legitimate interstate and substate actors. This need for demonstrability intensifies in the attempted sharp delimitation between Book 2's voluntaristic slavery as part of natural law and Book 3's rendition of the war slavery doctrine under the law of nations. Grotius's voluntary slavery as "perfect and utter slavery" is amenable to dense analogizing, but his utilization of the war slavery doctrine is considerably less so.[xcii] While some material need and reward renders voluntary enslavement just, *involuntary* slavery is justified by the right to punishment and the (sometimes overlapping) dictates of war. The individual-collective analogue proceeds here too—as "likewise a whole People may be brought into subjection for a publick Crime," though those nations who are involuntarily imprisoned are so, unlike voluntary slaves (public and private), in perpetuity.[xciii] While Grotius's voluntary slavery limits any unmitigated power of the master over life and death, the classical image of the military victor evoked in Book 3 is given full reign to do as he wishes with the slave's life and death without contravening standards of justice. This Right has expansive, even "infinite" effects, according to Grotius, "so that there is nothing that the Lord may not do to his slave, as *Seneca* the Father said, no Torment but what may be inflicted on him with Impunity."[xciv] In line with Patterson and the war slavery doctrine, hereditary, involuntary slavery and its despotically infinite power emerges from the military victor's mercy to refrain, at least initially, from outright massacre—the Law of Nations grants that the military victor "might be inclined to forbear" the right to kill, "either in the

Fight, or some Time after," extending juridical, sovereign power long after the battleground.[xcv] While the voluntary slave provides a hermetic model of state sovereignty, war slavery offers a model for international relations in a context of conflict.

But how is it to be determined who war can be waged against and how, in these extra and sub-state contexts? Who has the right to exercise this convergence of punishment and military might in a system of extra-juridical policing?[xcvi] Echoing the divine right that theologians attempted to secure for conquest, Grotius returns to morals. Those who wield this superior prerogative are the innocent, whereas the guilty should be demoted to "among the Beasts that are subject to Men."[xcvii] Grotius's rudimentary anthropological distinctions establish that only *man* can reflect on his actions enough to refrain from harming others unnecessarily; brutes don't have the capacity for this reflective formation of "general maxims" and thus have neither justice nor right.[xcviii] In an echo of Aristotle, men who are like beasts, in their offense against nature, are men who engage in that which is unjust, and so "the justest War is that which is undertaken against wild rapacious Beasts, and next to it is that against Men who are like Beasts."[xcix] Grotius here facilitates the erosion of the Christian/infidel fault line through the shared prerogatives of life and liberty. Such lesser men license, in their guilty acts themselves, punitive force *in the name of social self-preservation*. When the victor has justice on his side, the right to punish becomes indistinguishable from the military right over life and death and its commercial continuation.

For Grotius, this variously exercised power of life and death—stretched indefinitely, or until the right to kill is activated—is made explicable from a mercantile perspective of *interest*—social *and* economic. Of the transformation of military victors into slave masters, Grotius explains: "there is no Sort of Agreement to engage them to it, if we only respect this Law of Nations, but a Motive drawn from Interest."[c] No longer a theory propped up from the perspective of the slave's

self-preservation, which would entail a version of Aristotelian advantage, Grotius sets slaving as civil saving against the barbarism of military killing. The market, entering here directly into theorizations of slavery and death, heralds transcendent promise. In this extension, the cathectic sale of the slave, or the vision of it, furnishes the accoutrements of civility for those ineligible for enslavement. The benefit of exacting work from a slave alone can constrain the master and encourage him to maintain the slave's sustenance.[ci] As such, it is the body of the slave that enables the restraint and enlightened self-interest characteristic of political man. It also sanctions a juridical power of perception, as when Grotius's maneuvering is extended to the master's arbitration of the differences among slaves: "*For he did not think to use all alike, either just or honest; but duly weighing the Merits of each Person, he acted rather the Judge (than Conqueror).*"[cii]

Apparently, not all that are captured are judged to be of equal capacity, just as not all that voluntarily subject themselves do so absolutely. And Grotius goes on to suggest that not all should even really be slaves in the first place. In *De Indis*, Grotius takes special exception to the Portuguese enslavement of the Dutch, decrying the "gravity of the offense involved in dragging a free-born man into unmerited captivity, and in subjecting him to chains and torture" as universally unjust. To enslave Christians is, bluntly, "contrary to established law."[ciii] The connection between established law and natural law here is opaque. If Grotius the polemicist still desires to delimit political potential on the basis of religion, Grotius the political scientist and international legal theorist recognizes that it is ultimately too parochial a difference to serve as a sticking point. As Grotius prioritizes, in neo-stoic form, a general equality—"No Man is born either a Freeman or Slave, but these Names Fortune gives them afterwards"[civ]—the origin of (both voluntary and involuntary) slavery should be found in a human *act*, arising "by Vertue of some Agreement, or in

Consequence of some Crime."[cv] Circling Aristotle's conundrum, Grotius is unable to rationalize the desire for exceptionalism (now in the name of Christians not Greeks).

The possibility of unjust enslavement in war, especially punitive wars, is raised again by Grotius in Chapter 10 of Book 3, perhaps to twin his *a posteriori* exception with reasonable authority.[cvi] He also already detailed how the precarity of interpretation is such that "it may happen that neither of the Parities in War acts unjustly," in which case, "People may justly, that is, may honestly and fairly go to War."[cvii] Without an overarching judge to arbitrate between states, as a sovereign does among people, diversity of judgment can replicate a misalignment between the norms of natural law and consent.[cviii] Because he prioritizes order, Grotius brackets this disclaimer by accepting all conquest resultant from war as just, regardless of whether it originated in a just cause.[cix] His hope is that, instead of devolving into interpretative chaos, a "society of nations" can politically cohere to align with moral reasoning. At this juncture, unable (except from the position of hope) to explain the origins of empirically diverse relinquishments of rights through just war, Grotius breaks from his accounting and comes close to a theory he avowedly, in certain maneuvers at least, decries: Natural Slavery. Here he suggests that collective subjection may be just not because of war but because of nature: "some Men are naturally Slaves, that is, turned for Slavery. And some Nations also are of such a Temper, that they know better how to obey than to command."[cx] Some may, by the vicissitudes of nature itself, enslave themselves. Slavery is stretched to be both within nature and its just tendencies, as well as in excess to it. Elsewhere, Grotius's scriptural and ethnographical litany of "modes of worship…of a nature little suited to a Being of goodness and of purity" presents "savage natives of America and Africa, who are still lost in the thick clouds of Paganism,"[cxi] but in his political theory, no explicit figure takes this place.

Grotius does, however, insist that a sovereign cannot wage war against others in order to actively *induce* a state of affairs that would draw categorical distinctions, as if "we may fancy are fit for nothing else, or (as the Philosophers sometimes stile them) are Slaves by Nature."[cxii] Absent this pretense (a pretense because some men, as we have already seen, are turned naturally toward slavery), a superior man can legitimately go to war, which is to say, can legitimately enslave, both in his own self-interest and in an inflated way, the self-interest of the social whole. With readers wading in conceptual conflation, the criminal slave appears to be the very same as the war captive, and *both* overlap with the commercial slave and the natural slave. The slave who sits at the crossroads of these categories—both criminal and enemy, natural and market-mediated—appears as one whose willfulness contravenes natural law, whose predisposition to excess is itself a signal of a degenerate relationship to the interlocking of the law of nature through society and reason. The problem is the line between this figure and the sovereign remains too permeable to be secure.

Hobbes seems to avoid Grotius's categorical disarray by 1) rejecting historical examples; 2) situating the diversity of interpretation as precisely the problem of sovereignty; and 3) synthesizing voluntary slavery and war slavery. Hobbes subordinates the analytic approach that reasons from particulars to universal principles (as is philosophically the case with Aristotle, politically with Machiavelli and Grotius, mathematically with algebra, and theologically with Calvinists and Lutherans)[cxiii] to a synthetic approach based on the universal principles of Euclidian geometry, and ascertains from these hypothetical premises the types of political organization that would result.[cxiv] One cannot, for instance, deduce from every ruinous government the same rise and fall of statehood in civil war or, more broadly, derive accountability from the particular history of each contract—to do so would be uncertain "conjecture...grounded only on experience," and experience, "concludeth nothing universally."[cxv] This is a key methodological axis for Hobbes's

reconception of liberty; those philosophers who tie private liberty to character of public liberty of one's particular state—such that, as Aristotle P*olitics* conceived of it, liberty only coheres in democracy and slavery in all others—mystify the source and direction of freedom through the piecemeal ideological perspective of their own government.[cxvi] Hobbes does admit that historical "knowledge of fact" is the predicate for scientific "knowledge of consequence," but he considers history, like theology, to be merely another form of hubris, too particularistic and amenable to misinterpretation to furnish the ultimate ground of a science capable of any predicative pragmatism.[cxvii] Hobbes's rejection of the demonstration of cause from worldly experience here is, not surprisingly, theologically grounded: like the nominalist voluntarists from whom he draws, Hobbes's omnipotent God creates from such a radical limitless that "There is no effect which the powers of God cannot produce in many several ways."[cxviii] With the causes of historical experience and divine phenomena suspended, Hobbes argues that the experience that leads to the deduction of first principles, or of a first mover (God), should be omitted from a proper presentation of science.[cxix] The field of historical experience likewise remains an ambiguous source of universal knowledge: each empirical example can be translated into an illustrative instance borne out by the unfolding principles of a moral philosophy, but this translation should be concealed from its founding definitions.

Based on these principles, Hobbes's political utopia, unstable as it may be, is usually considered a constructivist consequence of his pessimism: conflict can be contained (or better, concealed) by unifying the multiplicity of wills and diversity of judgments. It is just as accurate, however, to claim that his pessimism is a consequence of his utopia: the state of nature only exists in the past for Hobbes to open a space for the success of the Leviathan in the future. Though self-preservation (in the form of a universal fear of death) grounds the need for sovereignty, an

emergent representational system itself is peculiarly also offered as sovereignty's source, co-constitutive of both subject and sovereign.[cxx] This is where things get interesting, for Hobbes melds the force of sovereign authority with that of his authorial authority. In Chapter Sixteen's very radical representational ontology, Hobbes first appears to have the Leviathan *authored* by the people.[cxxi] The sovereign, as a representative, artificial person, is licensed and commissioned by the author to perform acts with authority and make meaning public. Sovereignty is, thus, like a mask—"the *disguise* or *outward appearance* of a man, counterfeited on the stage," performing a mediation of the words and actions of the author.[cxxii] Although this representation needs to be recognizable *as* representation to command allegiance, it does not take the form of resemblance: to be roused from their fear and command lasting obedience, authors need an actor whose fearsome spectacle presents to them their unity, not an aggregation of disparate and contesting wills.[cxxiii] A commonwealth's dissolution, then, is meant to be forestalled by Hobbes's ingenious preclusion of the Grotian accountability question, for what is afoot is less the individual forming a contract with the sovereign than the co-constitution of both political positions through the symbolic order.[cxxiv]

Moreover, persons don't exist, or at least cannot be known, prior to this constituve moment; insofar as the author is said to "own" himself, it is only with the authorization of the sovereign, from which the values of justice and propriety, truth and meaning, emanate, that the author and his ownership are constituted in the first place. In a strange turn-about, then, the will authorizing the representative seems to be actually *formed by* the representative, and the effects of the commonwealth twist about to somehow precede their origin. The actor instead is constitutive of people as author; a person, as a moral and rational unity, only emerges out of the messy multitude through the representative unity of the sovereign, "for it is the *unity* of the representer, not the *unity* of the represented, that maketh the person *one.*"[cxxv] In this way, sovereignty seems to posit its own

presupposition, making the measure of its methodology and the success of its sanctions internal to its own emergence—relaying the apparitions of violence and force through a fantasy of the containment of an asocial nature, specific to its own universalizing of particular values.[cxxvi] In other words, the misrecognition necessary for the founding of the sovereign acts as if its premise is natural and transcendent, and in doing so, obscures its historical lack of foundation.[cxxvii] Although claiming to encompass both contractualism and absolutism, the mythical character of commonwealth by institution then becomes a means of smuggling support for what is always, perhaps, commonwealth of acquisition. As Sheldon S. Wolin has noted, a "deep irrationalism pervaded Hobbesian society, for the sovereign could assign any content he wished to public meanings."[cxxviii]

The same critical aspersions can be cast at Hobbes the author, who is rather audaciously self-positioned as having achieved the same scientific feat prescribed of the sovereign: displaying the political wisdom of transcending experience in order to construct general precepts in service of reducing conflict.[cxxix] His Introduction closes with an appeal to the reader, precisely by situating himself as having found out this method "yet when I shall have set down my own reading orderly and perspicuously, the pains left another will be only to consider if he also not find the same in himself. For this kind of doctrine admitteth no other demonstration."[cxxx] But although Hobbes seems to require that his readers recognize themselves in this prolonged interpellation, transporting themselves to natural man and back, he was not authorized by them, at least not as the mythical version of his commonwealth of institution would have it. He remains the ultimate constructor of a system with a shifting theoretical basis, first with God as the guarantee of natural law, then self-preservation as the spur for consent, then representation as pragmatic unification. His representational authority, then, serves as a spectacular short-circuit to this equivocal philosophical

ground. The readership, extended in the *Leviathan* beyond the specialists in university hall to the general public,[cxxxi] is asked to covenant with Hobbes's text as spectators to Hobbesian sovereign wisdom: obliged because they are commanded. But why would readers want to imagine themselves as the subjects of such a pessimistic vision? Certainly, as C.B. Macpherson has written, "No reader, except the fashionably flippant, could relish such an exposure of himself and his fellows, especially when it was presented as science."[cxxxii] Hobbes thus follows the sovereign right to exploit the power of images to help unify and regulate the beliefs and behavior of subjects, by himself utilizing rhetoric and imagery to shore up the persuasiveness of his science of politics.

It is at this intersection, on the level of a non-ideal constitutionality, that the slave metaphor does the most work. Hobbes strategically aligns reasoning subjects with sovereign science by instituting a foundational anthropology that segregates the violence of nature from itself. Against considerably good slaves who, perceiving enslavement to be in their own interest, perform a covenant with the military victor and reap the unbinding benefits of their comportment, Hobbes poses bad slaves, who insist on resisting their enslavement and inevitably fall in the category of harsher, more binding enslavement. In *De Cive,* this distinction takes place on an undefined unity*:* "Not every captive in war whose life has been spared is understood to make an agreement with a master, because not everyone is trusted to be left with enough natural liberty to be able to run away or refuse service or cause trouble or loss for his *master* if he should take it into his head to do so."[cxxxiii] Chapter Twenty of the *Leviathan*, spells this out as a fundamental antagonism between the trusted and the untrusted, the unbound and the bound. This chapter, "Of *Dominion* Paternal *and* Despotical," situates slavery alongside paternal power as a species of *commonwealth by acquisition.* But even in acquisition, some form of consent is required to authorize the eventual commonwealth. Thus when Hobbes invokes the war slavery doctrine, "It is not therefore the

victory that giveth the right of dominion over the vanquished, but his own covenant."[cxxxiv] While in his previous texts, servitude and slavery were synonymous, it is only at this juncture in the *Leviathan* that Hobbes accords servitude (etymologically linked to *servus*) a linguistic distinction from slavery, polarizing the two to enhance the commonality between voluntary servanthood and civil subjecthood: "the word *servant,*" he writes, "(whether it be derived from *servire,* to serve, or from *servare,* to save, which I leave to grammarians to dispute) is not meant a captive."[cxxxv] The following parenthetical explains that these captives are "commonly known as slave" and "have no obligation at all."

On the one hand, there are precivil slaves, conceived in the plural as bound to their own aggressions and over which any "owner" has absolute discretionary power of life and death; on the other, there is the unbound, singular servant who *initiates* a covenantal relation, leaving the state of nature for a civil state. It is only, as Hobbes narrates these paragraphs, *consequent* of the covenant between the proto-citizen and the sovereign that "the Vanquished is a SERVANT, and not before."[cxxxvi] While both slaves and the servant perform the first stage of submission on the battlefield, each having "commenth in, and Submitteth to the Victor," this act of surrender is but a prelude to the more formal covenant and to the victor "yielding to discretion."[cxxxvii] The victor wields despotic power over both slaves and the servant, but only the servant expressly consents, either by words or "other sufficient signs of the will" to be obedient.[cxxxviii] Trusted by the master not to continue in violence, he receives a secularized version of grace: reprieve. With his corporal life "in security," he becomes an unbound servant, unlike those "in prisons, or fetters" who work not out of "duty" but the fear of cruelty.[cxxxix] Interestingly, the un-obliging, roguish slaves parenthetically retain, unlike their citizen counterparts, an inalienable right of resistance; with "no obligation at all," they represent a capacious freedom to "break their bonds, or the prison; and kill,

or carry away captive their Master, justly."[cxl] This escalation of violence, from breaking bonds and prison to killing, is distinct from the restricted scope of escape that the following chapter permits to prisoners of war. It is an excessive freedom.[cxli]

Hobbes does not provide an account anywhere as to why only a servant is enabled access to covenant, whereas slaves can make, in the words of Nyquist, only "subcovenantal consent."[cxlii] Slaves are instead relegated to an animalistic cycle of fear and violence, unable to reason their way into the civil world.[cxliii] This split appears as a necessity of his structure. As Hobbes's theoretical and historical medley of sovereign, subject, and slave is crafted out of a pessimistic materialism, it *needs* both the incipient calculation of the fearfully obliging servant and the stuckness of slaves. A concomitant of this stuckness is both a violent disposition, always on the verge of his own death, inducing fear and threatening the collapse of others, *and* a capacious freedom. By singularizing servant and pluralizing slaves, Hobbes aligns the latter directly with an aggregate, chaotic, pre-political multitude against the unified, stable, political person. To corral this freedom is to stigmatize it, to make it a sign immanent to the sovereign of how bounded slaves, in their raging passions, insecure proclivities, fearful recalcitrance, and covenantal incapacity, evoke most closely the natural creatures prior to the representative big bang of the Leviathan and all that accompanies it.

If this maneuver seems to detract bizarrely from the state of equality, freedom, and homogeneity in nature, instead subscribing to a model of a riven multitude, it does explain Hobbes's reluctance to claim natural law as a transcendent before sovereignty. The castration of consenting subjects generates the criteria to measure failures of contract, not any prior ontological or signifying mark, which is also to confirm Hobbes's counter-intuitive time-bending suggestion that the multitude can only be said to precede the political after the political. That is, only from

within the grammar of political philosophy, its social history, do we gain the backwards perspective of a timeless time where the multitude erratically subsists.[cxliv] Hobbes can then maintain the anti-Aristotelian precept that no one is naturally more fit to rule than anyone else, even when he performatively says otherwise, while suggesting that some are, apparently, more fit to be proper subjects and some slaves.

Historicity

Where does this leave us? Are Grotius and Hobbes talking about racial slavery?[cxlv] Although neither provide direct references to racial slavery (in fact, both clearly endorse versions of slavery seemingly abstracted from any context at all), they construct mythical versions of the political whose core tenant, self-preservation, can occlude the absence of transcendental grounding only by demonstrating a differentiation in nature. At the border of the developmental entrance of the political, the negative slave signifies not difference but this process of differentiation: where nature gets carried along with history, the social confounds the political, conflict is never superseded, the methodological is messy, and political signifiers fail. It is precisely these impossibilities in the social bond that open the gateway to racial theorizations and then resuscitate sovereignty from interminable crises. Natural law's ahistoric legitimation of sovereignty, and the self-preserving telos that carries natural man forward towards his political persona, pushes limits that only the most dramatic and damned of metaphors could dramatize and display. Slavery steps into the gap because, while it may have always been waiting at the heart of the philosophical and political, only now at this historical juncture does it become felicitous in both assuming a subject of violence to displace and dispel the sovereign's violent tendencies.

It is now that a qualified version of biography and historical context can enter the scene. During Grotius's life, the Netherlands emerged as a major player in the transatlantic slave trade, establishing forts on what became known as the Gold Coast, increasing production of maritime vessels, and regulating global mercantile aspirations.[cxlvi] Indeed, as Losurdo's study of liberalism explains of the Netherlands, "The first country to embark on the liberal road is one that exhibited an especially tenacious attachment to the institution of slavery."[cxlvii] In the early 1600s, Grotius was commissioned at the behest of the soon to become Dutch East India Company (VOC) to write an important series of texts—the pamphlet *Mare Liberum* (freedom of the seas) formed a chapter of his unpublished *De Indis*, later discovered and renamed *De Iure Praedae Commentarius*—to the explicit end of de-monopolizing the Iberian trading bloc and liberalizing oceanic exchanges, not so much subordinating state power to international trade as forging the two together as complex global problems of multiple and competing claims. In defense of the Dutch capture of a Portuguese merchant ship, *Mare Liberum* licensed private war and punitive offensive strikes as just punishment for Portuguese assertion of maritime sovereignty, emphasizing along the way the analogical relay between the individual and the state and conferring special status to the seas.[cxlviii] As an exceptional zone to law, the free sea—untransformable, unoccupiable, homogenous—represents, in Grotian thought, a generative limit to exclusive conceptions of state-bound sovereignty, enabling its mobile and flexible responsiveness to the right of passage and trade. It is not incidental, then, that Grotius's texts coincide with the emergence of markets as the mediator of violence. His internationalism validated the freedom of extra-state violence, with the mark of the sovereign behind it, to be channeled into profit, giving otherwise anarchic and conflictual economic and political exchanges form in a higher structure.[cxlix]

Grotius's interest clause specifically illuminates the inextricability of his natural law theorizing with this formal juridical expression of a trans-national world-system. If the Grotian right to punish comes not from the consent of subjects to civil law but from the law of nature, then sovereigns had the right to punish any violator of the Law of Nations or reasonable society.[cl] According to this crucial conceit, one would not have to be the sovereign of a particular landed realm to subjugate its peoples, acquire their unused possessions, or enslave them. Such an expanded scope severs the justness of war from jurisdiction. The discursive distinction between property as *dominium* and jurisdiction as *imperium* has reverberating effects: as the state and the individual are derived from the same source, when there is no explicit juridical authority, as in the sea or among incomparable peoples who live in a virtual vacuum of organized law, a private trading company can engage in war as a *corporate* sovereign, according to the same principles as a landed (read: European) sovereign. As Edward Keene clarifies: "the law of nations was not…exclusively a law *for* nations; it included rights and duties, albeit limited ones, for individuals and private corporations."[cli] If, for Grotius, the will to policing emerges, albeit with some seams showing, from the law of nature, where law-making and law-preserving violence overlap, those who stray from the fundamentals precepts that comprise humanity, and who act in way repugnant to society, are willfully wrong, unjust, and in stronger terms, evil violators of the human essence and social conditions of existence. The legitimate violence of sub/states is recast as the conservation and preservation of natural rights and civil interests against such an impermissible violence that tends toward destruction and suicide.

But the will to police does more than that: when historically actualized, it can form the foundation for new models of sovereignty. Remember that the character of each Grotian contract derives from its particular national history—if Grotius the archivist hasn't yet decoded all models

of sovereignty, it is because burgeoning international legal networks reveal pockets of "lawlessness" where new contracts are still in the process of being articulated. The enslaver's extension of the war captive doctrine into commercialism reflects the change into the slave's origins. It does so not by investigating these origins but by singularizing comity into the hands of the trader, who is no longer a middle man arbitrating between two nations but a key policer in a complex jurisdictional network of contractual promises aspiring to global comity. On offer, then, is a policing role that can enforce monopolistic violence through contract theory because it can strengthen the social bond by encouraging the civility of enslavement, encoded with an infinite power.[clii] When extending this commercial slave relation indefinitely, it represents a new and important form of contract, one that finally determines who has the right to punish and who can be punished. It promises to establish a more generalized explanation for the sovereign need for self-preservation, as well as the interlocking favors of established nations. Grotius elaborates an absolutely essential proposition for legitimizing subcorporate entities dominating the slave trade at a time when no just war could be reasonably said to be waged, even hypothetically, against Africans in the name of European sovereigns.

Because Hobbes explicitly rejects leading with history (it being liable to the same compounding epistemic errors of language and the misplaced faith in transcendental principles), the status of examples that pepper his text, from slavery's indirect invocation to more fully realized references to the English Civil War and the Amerindians, is more complicated—the subject of endless essays (and at least one anthology).[cliii] While the quality of this intersection remains hotly contested, a bevy of theorists including, but not limited to, the Cambridge School of Political Philosophy have made it clear that Hobbes's political philosophy does not just emerge wholesale from his singular pessimistic view of human nature: it is driven to its unique model of political

pacification and scientific rationality in considered mediation of European, and specifically English, historical and intellectual fissures.[cliv] Hobbes's anti-Aristotelian rejection of human nature and speculative presupposition of homogeneity (where all are equally vulnerable to death), along with his constructivist version of politics (where truth is created, not found), distance him from forms of hubris that depend on an intelligible world beyond that of empirical sense, from the Reformation shortcut to God through private judgement and enthusiasms, the Presbyterian claims to ecclesiastical authority, the Scholastic vision of divine manifestation, and the Parliamentarian illusion of direct political representation.[clv] Balancing consent with absolutism, materialism with nominalism, and like Grotius, creating a political philosophy whose ethics were responsive to the waning importance of the Church and the distance of the spiritual realm, Hobbes, we might say, had very historical motivations for wanting to cleanse politics of history.[clvi]

It is only more recently that historians have indicated the limitations of prioritizing the specifically monarchal model of historical context, forging broader analytics that situate Hobbes's England through the lens of an expanding Atlantic economy and the intense international stand-offs opening on its immense maritime power.[clvii] Of course, the first move has been that of the investigator: Hobbes's involvement with the Virginia Company began in 1619 (the same year that "20. and Odd Negroes" arrived in Virginia, taken from a Portuguese Slaver), on behalf of his patron Lord Cabendish, and extended to becoming an involved shareholder of this and the Somer Islands Company in Bermuda, attending numerous meetings, and drafting responses to correspondence from restless settlers reeling from the Jamestown massacre of 1622.[clviii]

Hobbes's experience in Virginia, although usually sutured to the state of nature, also appears in *Leviathan*'s Chapters 22 and 24, where international trade, economics, and dissolved commonwealths intermix with the question of the administration, composition, and constitution of

transoceanic subordinate "political systems" (Hobbes's term).[clix] Historically, the concerns of corporate entities reflected the constitutional crisis of the nation-state: both the Parliamentarians and the Virginia Company asserted local interests to limit the crown and, insofar as their interests intersected, they exhibited a parallel pragmatism that enabled open trade in the absence of regulation.[clx] For Hobbes, colonies and plantations did provide profit, and consequently, health and coherence to the commonwealth, but he remained skeptical of the disorder and diversification that could result—the merchants who create their own monopoly drain revenue from the nation (the state of affairs that, in fact, took place following the of 1688), foreshadowing attendant risks of a colony that, like a child, might grow up to overthrow its mother (prescient as Hobbes was).[clxi] His admonishment to regulate these companies, such that they don't impede the vital forces of the commonwealth, like "worms in the entrails," was taken up by Charles II when he attempted to mitigate and control the affairs and authority of the American colonies.[clxii] Although Hobbes's subordination of corporate authority to the commonwealth may seem like a retreat from Grotius, his appeal to labor as a source of wealth broke from the mercantilist preoccupation with balancing trade and is indicative of its transitional period in which in wrote.[clxiii] At a most basic level, his version of natural rights precipitates a commercial cultural whose central insights on the harmonizing duty of government presupposes self-interested and conflicting individuals. And by having the symbol of the state be both artificial and maritime, Hobbes's Leviathan—in conceptual distinction from any particular ruler and from the more territorially minded behemoth—is aligned with the legal person of the joint-stock company which opens space for the corporation as a surrogate sovereign.

Strikingly, though not surprisingly, the complicated question of the political purchase and historical context of the slavery metaphor has received far less attention in these

recontextualizations of an Atlantic Hobbes, almost never taken up in tandem with the much more robustly discussed problem of the English Civil war, colonialization, and proto-capitalism. 1651 marked not only the publication of the *Leviathan* but the passage of Cromwell's Acts of Navigation, key facilitators of the transatlantic imperial pursuits that would make England the commercial stronghold for centuries to come. With the English settlements in Virginia (1609) and the Caribbean (Bermuda (1609), Barbados (1627), Providence, and Tortuga) already populated with enslaved Africans and, with the conquest of Jamaica from the Spanish just around the corner (1655), the English were poised to launch their lucrative sugar empire, building off the Iberian plantation model.[clxiv] Hobbes surely was called upon to assess not only the economic failure of the Virginia Company, but alternate solutions—racial slavery, as we have noted, already being developed in Virginia since at least 1633, and the Portuguese and Spanish providing models elsewhere, not only in the Caribbean but the Atlantic Islands. In contrast to Virginia, the founding problem of a depopulated Bermuda, where Hobbes also had legal-economic interest, was first and foremost not the acquisition of land but the control and development of that land through labor.[clxv]

Again, I want to caution against an approach that would reduce Hobbes's metaphorization to the construction of an alibi. By seemingly displacing slavery's negative associations, the racial slave cannot be avowed in any straightforward manner as the slave of Hobbes's construction. The fact that Hobbes had holdings in Virginia and Bermuda does not necessarily substantiate the intended meaning or implicit function behind an architectonic that transforms servitude into beneficial political subjection. While this connection might serve to explain the transoceanic arena in which racialized slavery was already underfoot, the particular character of Hobbes's transvaluation can be reframed as a negotiation with its context. Only by working through how the internal limit to sovereignty—its regeneration not assured, its expanse generating its own

dangers—is, in fact, a theme that strikes at the very heart of Hobbes's method do we get a sense of slavery's political purchase.

First, it is too crude to say that Hobbes exempts himself from the ban on rhetoric and history simply because his rhetoric promotes the imperative of peace and he wants his readers to ratify this vision. His pessimistic conjuncture of metaphysical rationality and political absolutism was crafted in a more strategic recognition of the obduracy of irrationality and the (perhaps insurmountable) historical feints that continue to befall man and the nation.[clxvi] Take metaphor: although metaphor can, in Hobbes's own commentary, be a source of contamination, Hobbes praises the effectiveness of aptly used metaphors which thereby "profess their inconstancy" and, by evidently advertising their own misleadingness, can serve to stimulate the understanding.[clxvii] By repeatedly using metaphors, however, he signals to his readers how a metaphor more fundamentally registers in its composition what Daniel Skinner calls the "rhetoricity" and David E. Johnson the "metaphoricity" of language—the fact that all language is arrayed on a sliding scale and only arbitrarily reified.[clxviii] Although Aristotle would protest, language *is* rhetorical and this problem animates the doubled nature of the sovereign.[clxix] The same can be said of history. Executed with rhetorical panache, Hobbes's appeal to the lurking possibility of war and discord, especially, conjure the state of nature through a negative synthesis of the imagination. The obvious flaws of the historical allusions to the state of nature—indicating an absence of value not born out by the English context or reports of Native Americans at the time—follow from a rhetorical employ to those readers for whom the state of nature's dissociative destruction may seem "strange."[clxx]

These negatively generated exteriorities not only exhort the reader and potential sovereigns of the urgency of order, they also uncomfortably show how the things we ban remain past their

prohibition, and even, perhaps originate in them.[clxxi] While striving to convince readers that even the contested, coerced liberty that sovereignty bequeaths is still preferable to the threat of civil war, Hobbes makes plain the persistence of conflict internal to the sovereign: the madness of individuals—"passions unguided"—can give way to the "Seditious roaring of a troubled Nation"; likewise the phantasms of the imagination can bewitch subjects into fictitious' attractions of something beyond sovereign rule and through the myths "fear that proceeds from the ignorance itself" men erect "several kinds of power invisible; and…stand in awe of their own imaginations."[clxxii] Similarly, the fear of death, in Blumenbergian fashion, is meant to reoccupy the position of the fear of things invisible and ground transencendal questions about the afterlife through the here and now.[clxxiii] But by employing the fear of death as evidence of consent, Hobbes does not purge the passions; he repurposes them. Remember, these external threats are part of the *Leviathan*'s groundwork: experience, imagination, and passion are the material fulcrum for sovereignty, as the correct synthesis of experience, movement of imagination, and cultivation of fear are the techniques of reason from which flow words, and with them, the possibility for consensus, science, sovereignty, peace. As such, the features external to, but jumpstarting, social life—nature, passions, fear—are as much science and reason's essential byproducts as they are their disavowed intellectual predicates. What Hobbes evokes negatively from without mirrors a negativity within, an alienated sovereignty, where the sedition prohibited by political authority is a form of staving off the internal limit to sovereign's serial irrationality.[clxxiv] The fall of the British Empire might be conceived in this mold—establishing its absoluteness in a global horizon that is its undoing.[clxxv]

When reading the *Leviathan* through these failures, it can be seen less as a polemic for or performance of political superiority and scientific pragmatism, than as a plea on their behalf. If

irrationality can never be completely "abolished out of human nature"[clxxvi] and if, more fundamentally, the model of the rational actor was a construction, at odds with Hobbes's perception of reality, then Hobbes's *Leviathan* retains the logic of myth because its hubris is future oriented, awaiting, as Johnston puts it, "not man as he is…" but "as [Hobbes] hoped he would become."[clxxvii] To this end, it is important to take heed of Hobbes's audience, extended not only to the general public but to potential sovereigns. This (admittedly debatable) intent opens a reading of the *Leviathan* itself as a "masque-like text," written for a young Charles II that could see in it enough distance from himself to become the sovereign of Hobbes's fashioning.[clxxviii] Far from repressing history, Hobbes *needs* the coming of history to retroactively confirm and prove his scientific constructs efficacious, that is, scientific. In this sense, his exposure of foundationlessness is meant to compel the authorization of a new foundation.[clxxix] Hobbes is the vanishing mediator of sovereignty's rational fiction, awaiting, in his own words, the form of authority that can "convert this truth of speculation, into the utility of practice."[clxxx]

The textual residue of history and rhetoric, then, despite injunctions against them, indicate to the reader a place of haunting, the gap to be imagined anew. Through the state of nature, we hit this impossible space of historicity, but by tying it to the savages or the civil war, Hobbes encourages a reduction to the space of historiography (already legible presence within a symbolic order) in order to leverage the imagination of the sovereign guarantee of future peace. Indeed, Hobbes's historical examples already anticipate their telic resolution. In an eminently sovereign/scientific gesture, he incorporates historical events not as impossible cause, but as reconstructive origin/exceptional leftover (Native Americans) and temporary disunity (English civil war). While both historicities can, theoretically at least, be re/incorporated by the quilting power of sovereignty, the native American examples holds special sway because, even as

projection, their genesis shows our closeness to what Hobbes disavows while pointing to the possibility that he hopes we all will attain.[clxxxi] The figure of the slave, by contrast, remains a threatening persistence, an originary outside shining through Hobbes's equivocal rhetoric to expose the continued failures of reason, the impossibility of signification, and the delegitimation of authority.

By foregrounding slavery as the generation of all subjects, Hobbes is playing a dangerous game, potentially compromising the allure of peace and order bought from natural man with an imaginative similarity and stubborn obstinacy. That Hobbes cuts his divisions so precisely in Chapter 20 of the *Leviathan* evinces this anxiety.[clxxxii] By this point, slavery was well on the way to being considered an integral outside to English self-fashioning.[clxxxiii] Hobbes's proposition of servitude for all encourages readers to recognize the providence of their relative enslavement against the historical allusion of its opposite. His slight linguistic difference between the singular servant and plural slaves signals to his readers the fantasy of the historical juncture they already know, while also employing a metaphorical construction that, as a generalizing frame for sovereign subjects, can mark its own artifice. Any lingering regrets invoked by nostalgia for the freedom of excess can positively forestalled by this reference. Even if not all can be sovereign, at least their servitude is not slavery. As these subjects gain the representational benefit of not being slaves, their selfhood has the potential to metonymically stand-in for that of the sovereign. Both citizen and sovereign are hailed as readers—together they can decide whose version of impossibility is a blueprint for the future, only those that recognize textual surpluses as an opportunity for resolution can participate. With this joint recognition, the *Leviathan* is already halfway towards fulfilling its the future. It is here that the metaphor of slavery gains enough momentum to inscribe an absence of signification into Being itself. If reason lacks authority from God, then racial slaves' potential,

demonstrative, bodily difference can give Hobbes's materialism a pre-eminently nominalist bent, a necessary phantom that could end up elevating reason to near-Cartesian transcendence: even though both the servant and slaves were born in nature, the material workings of racial slavery could determine who can generate the right cause and effect to lead them to politically and scientifically pacify it.

Almost against himself, however, Hobbes also returns to the slave metaphor not only for its effective power but for its metaphoricity. When Hobbes hardens open antagonism to civility in the figure of slaves, he ends up highlights the contingency of this figuration as a problem of securing meaning itself. Slaves are unable to consent because they lack both the reason and speech to do so. Hobbes does not square the "vicious circle," of Aristotle, he re-encircles it. What Hobbes exposes more directly is the temporal and paradox that pre-symbolic violence is only ever registered through the symbolic. Lacking any symbolic register except in its slight difference from itself, slavery might indicate how society created its own monster. In a strong reading of this, Hobbes's political community is *enlivened* by this anti-social remnant, which may only be a fantasmatical residue of how the formal requirement of Hobbes's knowledge skirts the interior enemy that lurks inside the sovereign, the civil war that the sovereign never vanquishes, the passions that can't be willed, the multiplicity that never unifies. The slave functions as both the residue of the servant's covenant and its cause, doubling as an effected premise of Hobbes's laborious architecture, validating larger systemic claims of order and method, and suggesting their undoing.

Grotius's *Rights of War and Peace* sows the seeds of anti-blackness, for while appearing more interested in the rules and rituals regulating international law than the human as such, the materialism of self-preservation coincides with knowledge of man (as rational, understanding and

autonomous first, and enjoying sociability second), with the imagination of moral law, and with the incipient global chain of commodification. Indeed, now, after the biological origins of race are no longer compelling, a residual, post-racial anti-blackness, which is to say an "analytics of raciality,"[clxxxiv] draws from these same rudiments of self-defense and pre-emptive strikes, so that, oddly, enough the form of post-racialism appears to have preceded and presaged race. Continuously subordinated corporate entities with the commonwealth, Hobbes may not have found the economic thoroughfare permitting the transportation and flourishing of slaves, he did find its racial justification. His revealing fantasy approaches the fundamental antagonism of racial slavery, a stateless condition where the mass of pre-existing slaves are non-persons, representatively speaking, where blackness names the chaotic nothingness the sovereign calls itself to protect. In other words, sovereignty is Hobbes' wish for meaning, order; slavery his precarious conduit.

Locke's Castles in the Air

If Grotius and Hobbes access truths that liberalism disavows—that the promise of equality and freedom are always conflictual, that moral value is constructed, that we remain haunted by unrepresentable excess—their solutions grant ethical protection to a newly crafted political man only by naturalizing one abstract recurrent threat and concretely socializing another.[clxxxv] This trajectory, arriving at Locke's paradigmatic individual, whose universal, God-given attributes of liberty, equality, and property aspire to self-determination sustains what Silva calls "a social ontology," a political and preserving society that can double in and as civil society, against those who are always/already written as violent.[clxxxvi] As the political community comes to imagine itself as a preserving force against the violent tendencies of nature, the shape of that violence becomes coincident with its prohibition. By inverting Hobbes's moral and political universe, retreating from

the incipient secularism of Grotius and Hobbes, and returning to the transcendental backing of God, Locke inherits this (anti-black) torsion.[clxxxvii]

The key features of the Lockean universe—the inalienability of life and liberty—are established by forging a specifically *proprietorial* relationship between God and man, where god as maker is rendered the corollary of "Sovereign Master,"[clxxxviii] for one cannot give or take, by force or free will, that which belongs to God.[clxxxix] Through the theological faith underpinning these core conceits, Locke strives to secure a rational foundation to reject the threat of Hobbesian groundlessness (and its expression in resistance) while retaining its individualized program of self-preservation. While Locke's moral philosophy wants to secure "moral knowledge…capable of real Certainty, as Mathematicks," he also recognizes that understanding is a process, that judgements are contentious, and the consequences cannot be known with certainty: "At least, if mine prove a Castle in the Air, I will endeavor it should be all of a piece, and hang together."[cxc] To Hobbes's claim that truth and justice are arbitrary in the state of nature, and that, in effect, all force prior to the authorization of the sovereign is legitimate, Locke replies that there *are* illegitimate forms of force in the state of nature: the force that divorces itself of its obligations to others and, ultimately, to God. The duty to one another flows from the prerogative of divine ownership: because we are all "all the servants of one Sovereign Master, sent into the World by his order, and about his business," we must treat each other as "his Property, whose Workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one anothers Pleasure." As such, natural man "may not, unless it be to do justice on an offender, take away, or impair the life, or what tends to the Preservation of the life, the Liberty, Health, Limb or Goods of another."[cxci] It is by dint of his refusal to engage the slave metaphor as a positive political possibility that Locke ends up re-interring slavery as a theological relationship.

Locke arrives at the familiar deadlock of punishment. Like Grotius's explicit avowal, the enactment of a crime, a *transgression* of God's natural right, will justify a proportional punishment, befitting "*Reparation* and *Restraint*," including, in what he calls a "very strange Doctrine," capital punishment.[cxcii] For Locke, nearly any act that contains force or even the possibility of force, has the potential to accelerate into a permissible murder outside of civil society: it is "'just to kill a thief" because there is no way of deciding in advance whether the theft of property will advance to the theft of liberty (slavery) or life (murder).[cxciii] Like Hobbes, the inconsistency and escalation of proportionate punishment to death or slavery exposes an order of "Confusion and Disorder" that only disinterested, reasonable, political power can begin to resolve and is why "God hath certainly appointed Government to restrain the partiality and violence of Men."[cxciv] The originary aim of social collaboration and political organizations is to control and manage the excesses of natural punishment.[cxcv] Unlike Hobbes, however, Locke stages the punishment deadlock as one of the key "inconveniences" of the state of nature. Because convenience, not necessity, births political union, Locke insists on the importance of the free consent of individuals over obedience and authority. It needs to be emphasized that Locke is only able to prioritize freedom because of an assertion of faith: his dogmatic precedence of "the industrious and rational" over "the quarrelsome and contentious" serves as the guarantee that at least some men can join together to form a common language and civil society.[cxcvi]

Locke builds on the Grotian analogy between individual and collective self-defense to make the state of war a juridical condition, instead of a temporal one. As the absence of effective law in the face of force, his revisionist state of war is no longer the prior condition of the political; it is an immanent potential threatening the state of nature *and* civil society alike.[cxcvii] When confronting any permutation of the state of war, innocent subjects, with whom Locke has already

in "The State of Nature" initiated general identification, retain the defensive right to kill "whoever introduces a State of War, and is *aggressor* in it."[cxcviii] Given Locke's analogical tethering of criminality and tyranny, this self-defense does not explicitly extend to the innocent, liberal subject *himself* enslaving the criminal or warring aggressor, else that subject appear himself as a tyrannical ruler, wielding a political force that exceeds the duties of divine ownership.

Yet the possibility of the legitimately commuted death sentence of slavery, the first of five relationships following the theoretical establishment of the state of nature and state of war that Locke gives a chapter-length-consideration, arises in this exact mix as the invagination of political power. Although Locke rejects the enslavement of those born free (on the grounds of just war), he ends up licensing the enslavement of animalistic, unjust aggressors as an unspoken source of social preservation. Here, Locke justifies slavery in the tradition of the war slavery doctrine, with slavery as "nothing else, but *the State of War between a lawful Conqueror and a Captive*."[cxcix] While the slave was first conceived as a victim of an unjust aggressor, the slave is now cast as the instigator, willing a sort of violence by having offended the political order, and "by his fault, forfeited his own life, by some act that deserves death."[cc] His enslavement itself is not political on his part—no one can consent to voluntary slavery, just as no one can consent to a tyrannical ruler.[cci] No secondary compact can ever consummate and stabilize the master-slave relation, obliging the slave into permanent submission. But who, then, actually does the enslaving, wielding "an Absolute, Arbitrary, and Despotic" power, and how, if slavery can be exercised defensively against an unjust aggressor? Nyquist identifies this mystification of mastership as Locke's "looming lacuna."[ccii] In no way can Locke grant enslavement as a form of preservation: for Locke, freedom from arbitrary power is so "closely joyned with Man's Preservation" that only forfeiture of "Preservation and Life together" could account for it.[cciii] Like Grotius's interest clause, the deferral of death can only

be represented as an elongation of the right to kill: the decision to "delay" taking the enslaved's life permits the lawful conqueror to "make use of him to his own Service."[cciv]

Locke does not provide any examples of this form of just slavery.[ccv] Instead, he invokes an instance of the *illegitimate* metaphorical slavery that tyranny represents—the "Norman Conquest" as the foundation of English monarchy—and imagines that even if it were just, Stuarts would not have a monarchial claim to succession on this basis.[ccvi] His pointed example goes some distance to indicate that Locke's primarily theoretical target was monarchical "absolute power" in Stuart England. Indeed, the *Second Treatise,* published in 1689, was written in the maelstrom of the 1688 Revolution, in conversation with the Whigs' frequent and fiery invectives against political slavery.[ccvii] More tellingly, Locke's restricted just war theory, evoked in this specific English context, proclaims itself to be non-inheritable, tempering Grotius by categorically excluding from the war slavery doctrine those women, children, and non-combatants whose participation in a polity does not necessarily spell consent.[ccviii] Specified in this way, Locke's "Of Slavery" was perhaps never meant to be an explicit argument *for* slavery; instead laboring in the abstract to establish the *inapplicability* of figurative slavery for the English.[ccix] It should be no surprise that the argumentative structure of the chapter is recapitulated in the later chapter "Despotical Power."[ccx]

The efficacy of the analogy between slavery and despotism breaks down, however, in its allotment of resistance. While subjects of tyranny retain a moral standard and can leverage their rights to their political advantage, the slave of Locke's imagination is only capable of a version of suicide: "whenever (a slave) finds the hardship of his Slavery out-weigh the value of his Life, 'tis in his power, by resisting the Will of his Master, to draw on himself the Death he desires."[ccxi] This limited provision is all the more curious given that, in a specification of his rejection of voluntary

subjection, Locke enjoins against voluntary suicide, as man does not have "Liberty to destroy himself."[ccxii] We should pause here to consider that murder, the power to *take away* another's life either by killing or withholding death in the form of slavery, is apparently more ethical than suicide. But why would slavery lead Locke to forgo his suicide taboo? And how could Locke justify such differential political capacity?[ccxiii]

To answer these questions requires addressing an ambiguity of Locke's speciesism. In characterizing the criminal, Locke has already drawn on what is by now a familiar story, setting up an almost ontological split in the equality of nature.[ccxiv] "Dangerous to mankind," "trespass[ing] against the whole Species," a "degenerate" and "noxious creature," those criminal wills who go against the law of nature declare themselves "to live by another rule, than that of *reason* and common *Equity.*" [ccxv] They seem to mark themselves by their acts to be of a certain aberrant *kind*. Yet any incipient species classification that would specify the barrier between human and beast seems undone by Locke's nominalist rejection of innate ideas in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Like Aristotle, Locke recognizes he cannot decipher the connection between the outward appearance of man and his inner constitution: he conceives of human norms as culturally varied,[ccxvi] and poses differences, even among degrees of reason, on a continuum with "no chasms, or gaps" between kinds.[ccxvii] As such, the relative relation between man and ape species depends on "the definition of the word man," that is, on boundaries made by men, not nature.[ccxviii]

Locke demonstrates the failure to demarcate a species through the frame of a specifically white, English child, whose idea of man erroneously generalizes a picture from cobbled together simple ideas:

> A Child having framed the idea of a man, it is probable that his idea is just like that picture which the painter makes of the visible appearances joined together; and such a complication of ideas together in his understanding makes up the single complex idea which he calls "man;" whereof white or flesh-colour in England being one, the child can

> demonstrate to you, that a negro is not a man, because white colour was one of the constant simple ideas of the complex idea he calls 'man.'[ccxix]

Despite Locke's rejection of this faulty argumentation, there is no reason to conclude that he likewise rejects its conclusions. His ambiguous inclusion of and apparent fascination with black difference returns in the significance of "monstrous productions" that cross supposed species divisions in a fanstamatic Africa, relying on dubious ethnographical evidence that "if history lie not" women have been conceived by "drills" or apes native to Guinea.[ccxx]

Locke needs the concept of species to make his political man meaningful. His epistemological aversion to categorical delimitation does not prevent him from establishing a species gradient from which to give man his special moral status—the capacity for abstraction.[ccxxi] Although animals act on ideas, they lack "the faculty to enlarge by any kind of abstraction."[ccxxii] Abstraction "puts a perfect distinction betwixt and brutes" because it enables a sort of reflexive sovereignty—the capacity to step back from the sensory overload that preoccupied Hobbes to see ourselves persisting over spatial duration.[ccxxiii] Locke links this power to the apprehension of God, which in turn gives us knowledge of our moral duties vis-à-vis the promise of divine rewards. In the *Two Treatises,* Locke admits that the Principle of equality unites "Creatures of the same species and rank" but that this unifying membership fails if "the Lord and Master of them all should, by any manifest Declaration of his Will set one above another, and confer on him, by an evident and clear appointment, an undoubted Right to Dominion and Sovereignty."[ccxxiv] If God holds the key to potential species division, then it is correct political practice—a metonym for the recognition of divine rules—that can establish who is evidentially a part of the human whole.[ccxxv]

The contrast between the slave and the example of the Native American in the fifth chapter of the *Two Treatises* gives us some sense of how. If Locke's theory of property makes labor and cultivation moral acts, the divine injunction to "increase and multiply" certainly worked to justify

Native American dispossession.[ccxxvi] The absence, by Locke's very parochial measure, of cultivated lands, economic industriousness, and institutionalized political socieities, shows a failure to follow and fulfill the divine duty of use and accumulation but it still does not suffice as a "manifest declaration" that would preclude Native Americans from the possibility of personhood. Locke's epistemology, and his later evangelical impulses, affirms the latent rationality and federative capacity of (at least some) Native Americans: "had the *Virginia* King *Apochancana*, been educated in *England*, he had, perhaps, been as knowing a Divine, and as good a Mathematician, as any in it."[ccxxvii] Their accidental origins don't make them criminals, subject to the punishment of death or slavery, nor does the right of the British to take property (*dominium*) include the right to take Native American sovereignty (*imperium*).[ccxxviii] More precisely, Locke's priority is not property, which can be alienated, but the *inalienable* right to property. For Locke, one can only give up the object of right not the right itself, a parcel of land, for instance, but not "property-having" as such.

The prior condition for this right is property in the self: "Though the earth, and all inferior creatures be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person. This no body has right to but himself."[ccxxix] This statement marks something of an anomaly in that Locke's elastic human community shifts from the duty of divine ownership to the right of self-ownership. But this shift to self-ownership, which becomes the prior condition for the transformation of labor, where one "may even destroy the thing that he has property in," was already foreshadowed in the puzzle of the slave's suicide. If slavery is properly a forfeiture of life, as Locke states, then the slave is no longer bound by any duty.[ccxxx] According to the tenets of self-ownership, the slave can give up life, but not the right to life, a right from which, in any case, the slave has already been divested. The slave, being wholly given over to serve another's will, can induce the slave-owner to activate

his right to kill off his or her particular slaves; the slave-owner kills that part of himself the slave as property represents, though not his propriety over his slaves as such. This exchange of forces actually transfers the sovereign maker's power to the slave master, who can own the politically dead slave and extract whatever pleasure he can out of their deferred death. Because the slave is not a meaningful being, his continually willful criminality is but a perpetual plea for suicidal murder, the execution of which is inconsequential to the slave's status but essential as a possibility to fill in the lacuna of the master's representational power. Slaves enable the "rest of mankind" to join an offended party "in the execution of Justice, as any other wild beast or noxious brute, with whom Mankind can have neither Society nor Security."[ccxxxi] While Native Americans simply make insufficient use of land and cannot consent to money, they retain a possible personhood. Slaves, however, are both property and money. They induce abstraction but cannot themselves abstract.

On this reading, the matter of doing "justice on an offender" is more than the crucial spring for politicization and firmament of collective rebellion. Functioning as a surreptitious means of differentiation, it defines eligibility for membership in civil society, eligibility for rebellion, eligibility for human-ness. In what Keally McBride refers to as a circular relationship between personhood and punishment, one's secure status as an innocent, reasoning human can only be established once this individual power is entrusted in the care of another.[ccxxxii] The self is guaranteed once it has gone public as a person. The fiction of consent, then, offers proof of one's species-belonging by retroactively confirming one's natural capacities and is mirrored in Locke's slippage between revelation and reason, duty and right. Locke's slippages prefigure a need to write rationality, not as an effect of territory or the endowment of a divine creator, but as self-grounding.[ccxxxiii]

If Locke did not directly justify slavery, he circled a problem—the liberal preoccupation with establishing and explaining originary freedom is in tension with voluntaristic slavery.[ccxxxiv] When the latter is rejected *tout court*, the just war doctrine becomes inapplicable with populations becoming racialized in an emerging Atlantic economy, and instead inversely contributes to the analytics of raciality. Despite Locke claiming that slavery "is the state of war continued," there was no unending war that could justify the continuous capture of Africans, unless we conceive of war as a generalized condition in which every singular black slave committed sins against society, against which the rest of the world, united by common political identification and not any particular representative, could marshal the resources of self-defense and even the prerogative of divine ownership.[ccxxxv] Indeed, as James Farr notes, Locke's non-inherited dominion of slaves has a "glaring exception" when slaves were perceived to have been gained by *purchase* rather than by war.[ccxxxvi] Regarding any defense of *this* form of slavery, Locke is, as Farr makes clear, "systematically silent."[ccxxxvii] When in *Freedom,* Patterson credits Locke with the distinction of having "bluntly stated," like few others before or since, the war slavery doctrine's "nearly universalizing way of rationalizing and symbolically expressing the condition of slavery,"[ccxxxviii] he hits upon the war slavery doctrine's persistent persuasive political sway, but he collapses the complex rhetorical condensation in which war slavery provides only partial rationalization and severed symbolic expression for slavery.

Perspectivism is already immanent to the form of self at the intersections of life and death, freedom and slavery, history and nature: the beguiling excesses of Locke's texts invites identification with a proper subject, guiding contemporaries and followers, from John Norris to Benjamin Franklin to Southern apologists to propose drastic and violent solutions to the puzzle of his meaning and applicability.[ccxxxix] Although war, and the war slavery doctrine, does remain a

primary backdrop for political theorization (see, of course, Foucault's famous commentary on this fact),[ccxl] it is primarily as a vehicle to inoculate racial slaves from the embrace of sovereignty. The failure of just war theory to make sense of the status of those permanently enslaved, and exchangeable, is confirmed in the un-representability of the very *constitution* of the slave master's proprietary force and through the resistance allotted to slaves of a tyranny. Indeed, the disposition to evade a critical inhabitation of the problem of slavery and sale is endemic and constitutive to sovereignty as such—both in the exteriority of the state and the interiority of the self.

The more the subject appears to resemble the slave, the more sovereignty reveals its own violence. While it may seem that the liberalization of natural law perfects the violent logic of slavery and sovereignty by most polarizing them, Locke's freedom *from* slavery is only achieved through a sublation of Hobbes's enslaved subject. For Locke does more than just democratize sovereignty, he disperses slavery—as the slave relation migrates back to theology, each individual becomes the overseer and slave of their moral and political universe. But he does so perilously: a "zone of indistinction" between the subject-qua-slave and the slave-qua-absence does not resolve those other antinomies between the sovereign and the subject. As such, the more enthusiastically liberalism rationalizes consent and protests figurative slavery, the more it funnels rhetorical energy away from any insight into both sovereignty and slavery's rhetorical constitution, the more, that is, it contributes to violence. Indeed, the attempt to depoliticize this constitutive movement is perhaps the enduring project of liberalism.

Conclusion

Is it that invocations of slavery forge an appreciable connection with what some might call "actually existing slavery," and thus, an implicit critique via similitude (as Buck-Morss seems to

suggest of Hegel), or that the slave metaphor is positioned as a distancing maneuver? I have argued both: any tendentiously incipient identification of *political* slavery with chattel slavery was kept discrete, by way of an operative abstraction, not just anxiously side-stepping the arbitrary ground for "real" slaves in their midst, but contributing "political-symbolic weapons" in a global adjudication of political ontology.[ccxli] The more the slave metaphor strikes a recognizable chord, the more the metaphor splinters, severed into good slaves and bad slaves. Through abstraction, natural law theorists complete the break from Plato that was Aristotle's political animal. The capacity to abstract, and the make those abstractions legible in language, is proof positive of an alignment between will and reason, a power unique to man as a species. An absence of such powers indeed puts one on the side of pre-political violence, bereft of political possibility. This bodes true for the political theorist as well as for his construct of man: the more idealized the system, the more it adheres to the rules revealed in nature. By comprehending the historical purchase of such an abstraction, readers identify in themselves the capacity to consent. In their rhetorical distance from the historical allusion of "actually existing slaves," they gain the limited political power of metaphorical slavery, positively bonded with the sovereign, no matter how arbitrary or authoritarian it is, and demonstrate their anthropological political potential.

Paradoxically, then, by burying the history of the slave trade—the contracts, technologies, corporations, etc. already well established by the *Leviathan*'s publication—under the abstraction of slavery and the corresponding discussions of God, humanity, right, morality, nature, war, preservation, and punishment, racial slavery is more closely integrated with the ideal of early modern political theory. The same can be said of the founding text of America—racial slavery does not positively appear in the constitution.[ccxlii] Grotius, Hobbes, Locke, or the American founders may not have deliberately smuggled in race between the lines—their anti-blackness gains

its power not merely in after-the-fact justifications, employed by greedy political actors with contradictory visions, nor is it realized only through a unified vision of human difference. Though it is all these things, its maneuvering begins to matter most as an unthought mediation for a precariously indeterminate state, the shadow generated by an attempt to give form and order to a disintegrating world. Wilderson's "ruse of analogy" has thus always been already doubled: "real slavery," racial slavery, was from the beginning legitimized by its concealment in "semantic superabundance" and ultimate expulsion to the outside of language itself.[ccxliii] For while those who are enslaved to the polis, the sovereign's just or unjust subjects, might resemble racial slaves, this chapter argues that blackness represents a constitutive limit to the political as such, the nothingness the political calls itself to protect.

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[i] David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), 119; Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 289; Dominic Losurdo, *Liberalism: A Counter-History* (New York: Verso, 2014) 27; Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), 32. See also, Edmund S. Morgan, "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox," *Journal of American History* 59 (1972): 5-9; 6. For an alternate explanation, see Davis's later *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 11.

[ii] Orlando Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture, Vol. 1* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

[iii] M. NourbeSe Philip, *Frontiers: Essays and Writings on Racism and Culture* (Stratford: The Mercury Press, 1992), 271.

[iv] Mark Goldie, "Introduction," in *John Locke: Selected Correspondence*, ed. Mark Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), viii, xviii. For a sampling of perspectives on the political corruption of Locke, see James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Mark A. Michael, "Locke's Second Treatise and the Literature of Colonization," *Interpretation* 25 (1998): 407-27; Duncan Ivison, "Locke, Liberalism, and Empire," in *The Philosophy of John Locke: New Perspectives*, ed. Peter R. Arnstey (London: Routledge, 2003), 86-105; Herman Lebovics, *Imperialism and the Corruption of Democracies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), chap. 5; David Armitage, "John Locke, Carolina, and the Two Treatises of Government," *Political Theory* 32 (2004): 602-27; Wayne Glausser, "Three Approaches to Locke and the Slave Trade," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 51 (1990): 199-216; Robert Bernasconi, "Locke's Almost Random Talk of Man: The Double Use of Words in the Natural Law Justification of Slavery," *Perspektiven der Philosophie* 18 (1992): 293-318; Jennifer Welchman, "Locke on Slavery and Inalienable Rights," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 25, no. 1 (1995): 67-81; Peter Laslett, "Locke as Founder of the Board of Trade," in *A Locke Miscellany,* ed. Jean S. Yolton (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1990), 127-36; Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 167-169; Martin Seliger, *The Liberal Politics of John Locke* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969), 114-24.

[v] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* [1689], ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1.1.1, pg. 141. See also, Glausser, "Three Approaches to John Locke," 205-6.

[vi] A key example of the first is William Uzgalis, "The Same Tyrannical Principle: The Lockean Legacy on Slavery," in *Subjugation and Bondage: Critical Essays on Slavery and Social Philosophy*, ed. Tommy L. Lott, (Lanham, MD:

Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998), 49-77. For the latter, see, famously, David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 107.

[vii] Robert Bernasconi and Anika Maaza Mann, "The Contradictions of Racism: Locke, Slavery and the Two Treatises," in *Race and Racism in Modern Philosophy* ed. Andrew Vails (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 95. They write further that to "try to separate Locke the political theorist from Locke the secretary of the Board of Trade does violence to the kind of political thinker Locke was and wanted to be remembered as being," 102.

[viii] See Nahum Chandler, *X—The Problem of the Negro as a Problem for Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014).

[ix] In this sense, race at this stage was, in Rei Terada's sense, peculiarly "postracial." See Terada, "Hegel and the Prehistory of the Postracial," *European Romantic Review* 26, no. 3 (2105): 289-99, as well as Denise Ferreira da Silva's account of the "analytics of raciality" in *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007). On Locke and natural history, see Daniel Carey, Chapter One "Locke, Diversity, and the Natural History of Man" and Chapter Two "The Uses of Diversity: Locke's Skeptical Critique of Stoicism," in *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson: Contesting Diversity in the Enlightenment and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). See also details of the 1570s English colony to the Artic whose speculation on physical acclimation to new climates positioned Africans as cursed by an "infection," in Joyce E. Chaplin's "Race," in *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800,* eds. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 154-72.

[x] Nearly half of these allusions are found in the "Of Property" section of the *Two Treatises*.

[xi] Quote from *Two Treatises,* 1.11.130, pg. 237. See analysis in Farr, "Locke, Natural Law," 505.

[xii] Losurdo, *Counter-History,* 27

[xiii] See James Farr in "Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery": "Locke's intentions in forwarding his theory of slavery are not clear from the *Two Treatises* alone. If the theory were to be applied to the new world, Locke would have known everything relevant to its application," 497.

[xiv] Two signal exceptions are the exemplary Mary Nyquist's *Arbitrary Rule: Slavery, Tyranny, and the Power of Life and Death* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013) and Martin Seliger's *The Liberal Politics of John Locke*.

[xv] This point is made by James Farr and William Uzgalis. David Wootton goes on to say, "It seems to me clear that the argument of the Second Treatise made chattel slavery as it existed in the New World illegitimate, and clear too that Locke, who played a role in shaping England's policy towards the colonies, did nothing about it," in "Introduction," *John Locke: Political Writings* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003), 117.

[xvi] John Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke: An Historical Account of the Argument of the "Two Treatises of Government"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 175 n. 4.

[xvii] Patterson, "Freedom, Slavery, and the Modern Construction of Rights," in *The Cultural Values of Europe,* eds. Hans Joas and Klaus Wiegandt (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), 115-151; 151.

[xviii] *Ibid.*

[xix] Patterson, *Ethnic Chauvinism: The Reactionary Impulse* (Briarcliff Manor, NY: Stein and Day, 1977), 286.

[xx] Patterson, "Freedom, Slavery, and the Modern Construction of Rights," 151. See Farr's argument that *"*when some abolitionists reluctantly came to acknowledge that 'Locke introduced' the article on 'Negro slavery' in the Fundamental Constitutions, accommodations were made: 'These sentiments of Locke did not lower him in the eyes of our ancestors," in "Locke, Natural Law, and New World Slavery," 79.

[xxi] See James Oakes who argues that "Of all New World slave societies, the southern United States was most powerfully shaped by liberalism, and of all the founders of liberal philosophy no one was more influential in the South than John Locke," in *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 62. 18th Century cleric and economist Josiah Tucker noted that in the *Fundamental Constitutions*, Locke "lays it down as an invariable Maxim…'That every Freeman of *Carolina* shall have ABSOLUTE POWER AND AUTHORITY over his Negro Slaves.' How could this be reconciled with the statement in the opening lines of the *Two Treatises of Government* that 'Slavery is so vile and miserable an Estate of Man…that 'tis hardly to conceived, that an *Englishman*, much less a *Gentleman*, should plead for't'? So much for 'the humane Mr. LOCKE! the great and glorious Assertor of the natural Rights and Liberties of Mankind'. Tucker thought that in this regard Locke was just like all 'Republicans', or what we would call liberals: that is, in favour of levelling all hierarchies above themselves while 'tyrannizing over those, whom Chance or Misfortune have placed below them," *A Series of Answers to Certain Popular Objections, Against Separating the Rebellious Colonies, and Discarding them Entirely* (Gloucester, 1776), 103-4.

[xxii] See, for instance, Herbert J. Storing's "Slavery and the Moral Foundations of the American Republic," *Slavery and Its Consequences: The Constitution, Equality, and Race,* eds. Robert A. Goldwin and Art Kaufman (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1988), 45-63. Howard A. Ohline by contrast writes that Northerners engaged in their own form of special interest politics but "chose to extend federal power over the debts of the states instead of

over domestic slavery," in "Slavery, Economics, and Congressional Politics, 1790," *Journal of Southern History* 46 (1980): 335-60; 357-8.

[xxiii] Peter A. Dorsey, *Common Bondage: Slavery as Metaphor in Revolutionary America*. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2010), xi; see also David Brion Davis: "For eighteenth-century thinkers who contemplated the subject, slavery stood as the central metaphor for all the forces that debased the human spirit," in *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution,* 263; Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 55-143; 232-46; Joyce Appleby *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination,* 154-160; Foner, *The Story of American Freedom,* 29-45*;* Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, Chapter Seven, *The Many-Headed Hydra: The Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000).

[xxiv] Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, 234.

[xxv] *Ibid.,* 235, x. See a similar analysis in Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1992), 186–87, 179.

[xxvi] See overviews of these arguments in *Slavery and Its Consequences.* W.E.B. Du Bois argues, by contrast, that "The men who wrote the Constitution sought by every evasion, and almost by subterfuge, to keep recognition of slavery out of the basic form of the new government," in *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* [1935] (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1962), 4.

[xxvii] Denise Ferreira da Silva, "The Banalization of Racial Events," *Theory & Event* 20, no. 1 (2017): 61-65; 64.

[xxviii] Lindon Barrett, *Racial Blackness and the Discontinuity of Western Modernity,* eds. Justin A. Joyce, Dwight A. McBride, and John Carlos Rowe (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 87.

[xxix] Albert Toscano, "Beyond Abstraction: Marx and the Critique of the Critique of Religion," *Historical Materialism* 18, no. 1 (2010): 3-29; 25.

[xxx] For a relevant critique of hypocrisy, see the closing pages of Nyquist's *Arbitrary Rule*: "*Hypocrisy* suggests either a semiconscious attempt to mislead by exploiting appearances or self-deception as a habitual practice of ethical bad faith. Antityrannicism, however, is a complex of conceptual and rhetorical principles that operates ideologically to consolidate communal political identity and claims," 365. The problem, first, is that for both apologists and critics what is considered to be "sociohistorical context," as Andrew Sartori puts it in related discussion on empire, "enters the analysis too late, as an external variable acting on representational orders that are simply posited as given." Instead, Sartori encourages us to see both abstract logic and concrete practices as embedded in the ongoing development of social formations, though for Sartori, his social formation—capitalism—is largely assumed as given. Another way to put this lesson for the purposes of this chapter is that the materiality of slavery can be found in the rhetorical figuring and formal moves of political theory, insofar as both are expressing a deep need to resolve a riven reality. See, Sartori, "The British Empire and Its Liberal Mission," *The Journal of Modern History* 78, no. 3 (2006): 623-642, 638.

[xxxi] In this sense, I ultimately disagree with Silva's deferment of the racial to the production of scientific reason in the 19th Century and of blackness to postbellum politics. See Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race,* fn8, 283-4 and 208-10.

[xxxii] The return to Grotius has become an almost standard interpretative conceit—Richard Tuck and Deborah Baumgold, to take two prominent examples, have made a career out of resituating liberal tensions between absolutism and accountability, will and reason, power and resistance, nature and history, God and man, in this longer Grotian legacy. See for instance, Tuck, *Philosophy and Government 1572-1651* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) and Baumgold, "Pacifying Politics: Resistance, Violence, and Accountability in Seventeenth-Century Contract Theory," *Political Theory* 21, no. 1 (1993): 6-27. This re-situation, as we will see, rebounds to become a restitution of Grotius and Hobbes in the debates of nominalism that mark the theological approach to nominalism. I insist that this complex return is all the more pressing when thinking through the problem of slavery.

[xxxiii] A point emphasized by Bernasconi and Mann, "The Contradictions of Racism," 89-107; 94-5. See representations of this focus in Barbara Arneil, *John Locke and America: The Defence of English Colonialism* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1996); James Tully, "Rediscovering America," *An Approach to Political Philosophy,* 137-76.; Kathy Squadrito, "Locke and the Dispossession of the American Indian," in, *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays,* eds. Julie K. Ward and Tommy Lee Lott (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 101-124; Anthony Pagden, "The Struggle for Legitimacy and the Image of Empire in the Atlantic to c. 1700," *The Oxford History of the British Empire,* vol.1, *The Origins of Empire*, ed. Nicholas Canny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 42; Mark A. Michael, "Locke's Second Treatise and the Literature of Colonization," *Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy* 25, no. 3 (1998): 407-26; and Herman Leibovics, ''The Uses of America in John Locke's Second Treatise of Government,'' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 47 (1986): 567–81.

[xxxiv] For just for one example, see Anthony Pagden's take: "That so many of the examples Locke uses in his *Second Treatise* are American ones shows that his intention was to provide the settlers, for whom he had worked in so many other ways, with a powerful argument based in natural law rather than legislative decree to justify their depredations," in "The Struggle for Legitimacy and the Image of Empire in the Atlantic to c. 1700" in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume !: The Origins of Empire: British Overseas Enterprise to the Close of the Seventeenth Century* ed. Nicholas Canny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 43. This is not to disavow economic interpretations, but to expand the movement of the economy—an argument made at length in the following chapter.

[xxxv] See, among others, Richard Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 45-57.

[xxxvi] For two recent, persuasive readings to this end, see in Joanne Faulkner, "The Eternal Jouissance of the Community: Phantasm, Imagination, and 'Natural Man' in Hobbes," *Theory & Event* 12, no.3 (2009); Paul Downes, *Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Early American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). These were predated by Skinner's interest in Hobbes and metaphor.

[xxxvii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 6. See also Tuck's "history of ideas" in *Natural Rights Theories* that substantiates this claim.

[xxxviii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 367.

[xxxix] Silva, "1 (life) ÷ 0 (blackness) = ∞ − ∞ or ∞ / ∞: On Matter Beyond the Equation of Value," *e-flux* 79 (2017).

[xl] See Nahum Chandler, *X*, 163, and Fred Moten, "Notes on Passage (The New International of Sovereign Feelings," *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International* 3, no. 1 (2014): 51-74. See also, Jared Sexton, "The Vel of Slavery: Tracking the Figure of the Unsovereign," *Critical Sociology* 42, no. 4–5 (2016): 583–597; and Che Gossett, "Blackness, Animality, and the Unsovereign," *Verso Books Blogs* (September 8, 2015), https:// www.versobooks.com/blogs/2228-che-gossett-blackness-animality-and-the-unsovereign.

[xli] Hugo Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace* [1625], ed. Richard Tuck (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, Inc., 2005). The only text to devote its focus to Grotius and slavery at present is John W. Cairns's "Stoicism, Slavery and Law: Grotian Jurisprudence and its Reception," in *Grotius and the Stoa,* eds. Hans W. Blom and Laurens C. Winkel (Assen: Royal Van Corcum, 2004), 179-232.

[xlii] Grotius, *Rights of War and Peace,* 1.2.1, pg. 180

[xliii] Benjamin Straumann, *Roman Law in the State of Nature: The Classical Foundations of Hugo Grotius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 121-3. Staumann's broader assessment of Groitus's relation to Aristotle is instructive: "Grotius thus foists the theory of justice developed by Aristotle for the context of the *polis* onto a property-oriented theory of justice of Roman provenance, which he then transfers to the sphere of the oceans,
understood as the state of nature, and has them develop their full legal effect there," 124.

[xliv] On the trouble of the "social" in Grotius, see Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace,* 94-9. On Property, see Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories,* 60-2.

[xlv] Grotius, *Mare Liberum 1609-2009: Original Latin Text and English Translation*, ed. Robert Feenstra (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 57.

[xlvi] "Preliminary Discourse," *Rights of War and Peace*, pg. 121, emphasis in original.

[xlvii] "'Tis expletive Justice, Justice properly and strictly taken, which respects the *Faculty*, or *perfect Right*, and is called by *Aristotle συναλλακτικὴ*, *Justice of Contracts*, but this does not give us an adequate Idea of that Sort of Justice. For, if I have a Right to demand Restitution of my Goods, which are in the Possession of another, it is not by vertue of any *Contract*, and yet it is the Justice in question that gives me such a Right. Wherefore he also calls it more properly *ἐπανορθωτικὴν*, *corrective* Justice. *Attributive Justice*, stiled by *Aristotle διανεμητικὴ Distributive*, respects Aptitude or *imperfect Right*, the attendant of those Virtues that are beneficial to others, as Liberality, Mercy, and prudent Administration of Government," *Rights of War and Peace,* 1.1.8, pg. 142-3. Straumman has clarified that this distinction owes more to Cicero's reading of Aristotle that Aristotle himself (and is later duplicated by Adam Smith), *Roman Law in the State of Nature,* 126-8. See Raymond Koen's "Pashukanis on Crime and Punishment," *De Jure* 25 (2013): 486-509; 496-7, as well as Eric Engle, "The General Principle of Proportionality and Aristotle," in *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Law: Theory Practice, and Justice* eds. Liesbeth Huppes-Cluysenaer and Nuno M.M.S. Coelho (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013), 265-275. On Grotius and Aristotle, see Andrew S. Blom, "Grotius and Aristotle: The Justice of Taking Too Little," *History of Political Thought* 36, no. 1 (2015): 84-112; Jerome B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 76-78; Benjamin Straumann, *Roman Law in the State of Nature*, 119-29; Jeremy Seth Geddert, *Hugo Grotius and the Modern Theology of Freedom: Transcending Natural Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 213-4.

[xlviii] As Tuck emphasizes, because Grotius, "felt obliged to find some quotation from 'Aristotle himself, the author chiefly relied upon by those who hold the contrary view' in order to justify his position, thereby revealing his

schizophrenia at this time," *Natural Rights Theories,* 63. See also, Annabel S. Brett, "Natural Right and Civil Community: The Civil Philosophy of Hugo Grotius," *The Historical Journal* 45, no. 1 (2000): 31–51.

[xlix] Baumgold, "Pacifying Politics," 8. See also, Bruce Buchan, "Liberalism and Fear of Violence," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 4, no. 3, 27-48.

[l] The alienation of rights is driven by a necessity internal to Grotius's structure: as John Cairns notes, "his approach to sovereignty required him to have such an attitude to slavery," in "Stoicism, Slavery and Law," 210-11. On Molina, see Frank Bartholomew Costello, *The Political Philosophy of Luis de Molina, S.J. (1535-1600)* (Rome and Spokane: Institutum Historicum S.I. and Gonzaga University Press, 1974) and Matthias Kaufmann, "Slavery between Law, Morality, and Economy," in *A Companion to Luis de Molina* eds. Kaufmann and Alexander Aichele (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 183-225.

[li] *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.22.11, pgs. 1105-1106.

[lii] *Ibid*. See echoes of this debate in the distinction between Gerson and Vitoria, who argued that "liberty cannot rightfully be traded for all the gold in the world: it can be traded for life, which is more precious than any gold" in Tuck, *Natural Rights Theories,* 49.

[liii] *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.5.27, pg. 557.

[liv] Cairns, "Stoicism, Slavery and Law," 210-11. "Why should it not therefore be as lawful for a People that are at their own Disposal, to deliver up themselves to any one or more Persons, and transfer the Right of governing them upon him or them, without reserving any Share of that Right to themselves?" Grotius, *Rights of War and Peace,* 1.3.8, pg. 261.

[lv] *Rights of War and Peace,* 1.3.8, pg. 262.

[lvi] *Ibid*.

[lvii] Quentin Skinner has been central to the elaboration of attention to Hobbesian metaphor. Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). His latest is *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), esp. x–xvi, 52–5, 104–7, 121–3 161–2, 173–7.

[lviii] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* [1651], ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), xiii, 9. See his statement on the political versus the social: "It is true that certain living creatures (as bees and ants) live sociably one with another (which are therefore by *Aristotle* numbered amongst political creatures), and yet have no other direction than their particular judgements and appetites, nor speech, whereby one of them can signify to another what he thinks expedient for the common benefit: and therefore some man may perhaps desire to know why mankind cannot do the same," 2.17.6, pg. 108. On Hobbes and Aristotle, see Tom Sorell, "Hobbes and Aristotle," in *Philosophy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Conversations with Aristotle* eds. Constance Blackwell and Sachiko Kusukawa (Aldershot-Brookfield: Ashgate, 1999), 364-379; Donald Rutherford, "In Pursuit of Happiness: Hobbes's New Science of Ethics," *Philosophical Topics* 31, nos. 1-2 (2003): 369-393; Cees Leijenhorst, *The Mechanisation of Aristotelianism: The Late Aristotelian Setting of Thomas Hobbes's Natural Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes,* Chapter 6; J. Laird, "Hobbes on Aristotle's *Politics*," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 43 (1942-3): 1-20; and Geoffrey Bennington, "Political Animals," *diacritics* 39, no. 2 (2009): 21-35.

[lix] *Leviathan,* 1.8.1, pg. 74. See also, Ernst Lohoff: "Mortality as *conditio humana* is replaced in Hobbes by what might be termed the universal capacity for homicide. Men are equal insofar as all are equally capable of killing each other," in "Violence as the Order of Things and the Logic of Extermination," *Mediations: Journal of the Marxist Literary Group* 27, nos. 1-2 (2003), http://www.mediationsjournal.org/articles/violence-as-order.

[lx] *Leviathan,* 1.15.2-3, pg. 89.

[lxi] See Samantha Frost, *Lessons from a Materialist Thinker: Hobbesian Reflections on Ethics and Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), and W. T. Lynch, "Politics in Hobbes's Mechanics: The Social is Enabling," *Studies in the History of the Philosophy of Science* 22, no. 2 (1991): 298-9(295-320). See also, Michael Allen Gillespie's *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 40-42; 261-270. Hobbes famously publishes objections to Descartes, see René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes,* trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), Vol. 2.

[lxii] *Leviathan,* 1.4.22, pg. 21.

[lxiii] *Ibid.,* 1.7.3, pg. 35. See also, 1.9.1, pg. 47.

[lxiv] See also Hobbes's *De Cive:* "[W]hen every man follows his own opinion, it is necessary that the controversies which arise among them, will become innumerable and indeterminable; whence there will breed among men, who by their own natural inclinations do account all dissension an affront, first hatred then brawls and wars," *[De Cive], Hobbes: On the Citizen* ed. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xvii, 27. Jacques Rancière, "The theoretical and political evil, for Hobbes and the tradition he opens, may be identified

in this way: the proliferation of borrowed names, of names that do not resemble any reality, and that kill because they are poorly used, used by people who should not handle them, who have torn them from their context to apply them in a situation that has nothing to do with their context. The peril comes from all these floating names, from the multiplicity of homonyms and figures that don't name any real property but find, in their very motion, the means to incorporate themselves anywhere at all. The disorder of politics is strictly identical to a disorder of knowledge," *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge* [1992], trans. Hassan Melehy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 21.

[lxv] Bennington, "Political Animals," 29. See *The Elements of Law,* where Hobbes proposes that non-human social animals "want speech, and are therefore unable to instigate one another to faction, which men want not," *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* [1650], ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 1.19.5, pg. 105. This corrective should also be seen in the fact that Hobbes was the first English translator for Aristotle's rhetoric. See Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis* [1936] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 35-42.

[lxvi] *Elements,* 2.20.10, pg. 113.

[lxvii] See William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 21-26 and Nicholas Dungey, "Thomas Hobbes's Materialism, Language, and the Possibility of Politics," *The Review of Politics* 70, no. 2 (2008): 190-220; 214. This is, to be sure, a practical reason: like his mentor Francis Bacon, Hobbes asserts that "Knowledge is for the sake of power…and all speculation is put in place for the sake of some action or work," *De Cive,* 1.6. See also, *Leviathan,* 4.46.1, pg. 453-4.

[lxviii] Hobbes, *Leviathan,* 2.17.1, pg. 106.

[lxix] *Ibid.,* 1.15.21, pg. 96. See also *The Elements,* where he writes of Aristotle that "he putteth so much difference between the powers of men by nature, that he doubteth not to set down, as the ground of all his politics, that some men are by nature worthy to govern, and others by nature ought to serve. Which foundation hath not only weakened the whole frame of his politics, but hath also given men colour and pretences, whereby to disturb and hinder the peace of one another," 1.17.1, pg. 93.

[lxx] *Leviathan,* 2.21.10, pg. 141.

[lxxi] *Elements,* 2.20.10, pg. 113.

[lxxii] *Leviathan,* 1.15.3, pg. 89.

[lxxiii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 306.

[lxxiv] See this dramatized in Hobbes's *Elements,* "For who would lose the liberty that nature hath given him, of governing himself by his own will and power, if they feared not death in the retaining of it?," 1.15.13, pg. 86.

[lxxv] Hobbes first draws this distinction at the end of Chapter 17: "Of the Causes, Generation, and Definition of a Commonwealth," 2.17.15, pg. 110. The following two Chapters, Chapter 18 and 19—"Of the Rights of Sovereigns by Institutions" and "Of the Several Kinds of Commonwealth by Institution and of Succession to the Sovereign Power"—deal with the first kind, while Chapter 20—"Of Dominion Paternal and Despotical"—deals with the second.

[lxxvi] As Michael Gillespie has made clear, "it is not the rejection of religion that produces modern natural and political science but the theological demonstration of religion's irrelevance for life in this world," *The Theological Origins of Modernity,* 210.

[lxxvii] Grotius, "Preliminary Discourse," *Rights of War and Peace,* pg. 89. See Tuck, *Philosophy and Government,* xvi, 347, as well as Tuck, *Natural Law Theories*, 61. This means that "the Law of Nature is so unalterable, that God himself cannot change it. For tho' the Power of God be infinite, yet we may say, that there are some Things to which this infinite Power does not extend, because they cannot be expressed by Propositions that contain any Sense, but manifestly imply a Contradiction. For Instance then, as God himself cannot effect, that twice two should not be four; so neither can he, that what is intrinsically Evil should not be Evil. And this is Aristotle's Meaning, when he says, ἔνια ἐυθὺς ὀνόμασται,&c. *Some Things are no sooner mentioned than we discover Depravity in them*. For as the Being and Essence of Things after they exist, depend not upon any other, so neither do the Properties which necessarily follow that Being and Essence. Now such is the Evil of some Actions, compared with a Nature guided by right Reason. Therefore God suffers himself to be judged of according to this Rule," *Rights of War and Peace,* 1.1.10, pgs. 155-6.

[lxxviii] *Leviathan,* 4.46.13, pg. 458.

[lxxix] *Ibid.,* 1.7, pgs. 63-74.

[lxxx] *Ibid.,* 1.13.14, pg. 78.

[lxxxi] *Ibid.,* "The Introduction," pg. 4.

[lxxxii] Tuck, *Hobbes* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 67. See Leo Strauss on Hobbes's "political atheism," in "On the Spirit of Hobbes's Political Philosophy," in *Hobbes Studies,* ed. Keith Conrad Brown (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), 3-4.

[lxxxiii] See Ted H. Miller: Hobbes "will not therefore wish to build on his claims concerning human nature in the way that the Newtonian physicist will build upon assertions about the laws of gravity. He does not make it his concern, therefore, to predict what *the* rationally self-interested person will *always,* or even usually, do," in *Mortal Gods: Science, Politics, and the Humanist Ambitions of Thomas Hobbes* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University, 2011), 76. Indeed, Hobbes specifies that the laws of nature are not, in fact, "properly laws" at all—they are "qualities that dispose men to peace and to obedience. When a commonwealth is once settled, then are they actually laws, and not before...for it is the sovereign power that obliges men to obey them," *Leviathan,* 2.26.8, pg. 174.

[lxxxiv] Indeed, this was to be what preoccupied Samuel von Pufendorf and later Locke. See also Tuck's account of a "minimal sociability" in *The Rights of War and Peace,* 132-135, and Naeem Inayatullah and Mark E. Rupert's assessment of a "latent social ontology" in "The Problem of Conflated Ontology: Hobbes, Smith and Contemporary International Political Economy," in *The Global Economy as Political Space*, eds. Stephen J. Rosow, Inayatullah, and Rupert (Boulder, CO: Lynne-Rienner, 1994), 61-85; 63. Hans Blumenberg cuts into the theoretical problem by drawing attention to "the indefiniteness and the multiplicity of interpretations" facing those in the state of nature, an indeterminacy which can explain why some opt for cooperation, whereas others might not. Quoted in Brad Tabas, "Blumenberg, Politics, Anthropology," *Telos: Critical Theory of the Contemporary* 158 (2012): 135-153; 142. See also, Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983).

[lxxxv] Hobbes himself names this as a problem through a counter-factual: "For if we could suppose a great multitude of men to consent in the observation of justice… without a common power to keep them all in awe, we might as well suppose all mankind to do the same; and then there neither would be, nor need to be, any civil government or commonwealth at all, because there would be peace without subjection," *Leviathan,* 2.17.4, pg. 107. Since, in Hobbes's mind, however, we *do* have a need for civil government such a collective supposition is patently false.

[lxxxvi] Connolly*:* "For Hobbes, however, there is nothing that is freely given in an absolute sense. Everything we do, we do because we are in a real sense pushed to do it. Obligation thus is not something chosen but something imposed as a result of an unequal power relationship. We are thus obliged only because we are commanded," *Political Theory and Modernity*, 26. Hobbes: "Curiosity, or love of the knowledge of causes, draws a man from consider action of the effect to seek the cause, and again the cause of that cause, till of necessity he must come to this thought at last: that there is some cause, whereof there is no former cause, but is eternal, which is it men call God. So that it is impossible to make any profound inquiry into natural causes without being inclined thereby to believe there is one God eternal," *Leviathan,* 1.6.25, pg. 62.

[lxxxvii] That political theory requires anthropology has been widely noted. See C.B. Macpherson: "Every political theory which sets out to justify or advocate a particular system of government, or a limited or unlimited degree of obligation of the citizen to the state, must rest on an explicit or implicit theory of human nature," *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* [1962] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), x. For a rebuttal of Macpherson, see James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy*, 131–32; Richard Ashcraft, *Locke's ''Two Treatises of Government''* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1987); Ashcraft*, Revolutionary Politics and Locke's ''Two Treatises of Government''* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986); and Gordon J. Schochet, ''Radical Politics and Ashcraft's Treatise on Locke,'' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 50 (1989): 491–510.

[lxxxviii] As Edmund Husserl argues, equality, when granted, "refers to a species to which all of them belong. If it is no longer permissible to speak of the identity of the species, of the respect in which the equality takes place, the talk of equality also loses its foundation," quoted in Carl Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory* [1928] (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 265.

[lxxxix] See Lewis Gordon, "Race, Theodicy, and the Normative Emancipatory Challenges of Blackness," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 112, no. 4 (2013): 725–736, along with all of Sylvia Wynter's corpus.

[xc] *Rights of War and Peace*, 1.1.12, pg. 42.

[xci] *Ibid.,* 1.4.2, pgs. 338-339.

[xcii] On this point, see Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 223.

[xciii] *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.5.32, pgs. 564-5. According to the Law of Nations, the war captive becomes the victor's property, as does the captive's possessions and any subsequent children. Further still, the entirety of the vanquished population, even noncombatants and nonconsenting inhabitants, becomes enslaved.

[xciv] *Ibid*., 3.7.3, pgs. 1362-3. One effect of this infinite right is that even voluntary slaves could become subject to the interminable withholding of death, something Grotius would be inclined to moderate, if not limit altogether.

[xcv] *Ibid.,* 3.7.5, pg. 1364.

[xcvi] See Emmerich de Vattel's caution to this end: "Did not Grotius perceive that in spite of all precautions added [by him] ... his view opens the door to all the passions of zealots and fanatics and gives to ambitious men pretexts without number?" Quoted in Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace,* 194.

[xcvii] *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.20.20, pg. 995.
[xcviii] *Ibid*., 1.1.11, pg. 157.
[xcix] *Ibid.*, 2.20.40, pg. 1024.
[c] *Ibid*., 3.7.5, pg. 1364.
[ci] *Ibid.*, 3.14.5, pg. 1489.
[cii] *Ibid*., 3.14.1, pg. 1481.
[ciii] Grotius, [*De Indis*] *De Iure Praedae Commentarius: Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty* [1604], trans. Gwladys L. Williams (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1950), 269.
[civ] *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.22.11, pg. 1106. Here he is affirmatively quoting Roman orator Albutius. See also, "There is no Man by Nature Slave to another, that is, in his primitive State considered, independently of any human Fact," 3.7.1, pg. 1360.
[cv] *Ibid*., 3.7.1, pg. 1360.
[cvi] See also, "that those Wars which are undertaken for the exacting of Punishment, are suspected to be unjust, unless the Crimes be very heinous and manifest, or there be, at the same Time, a Concurrence of some other Cause," *ibid.*, 4.20.43, pg. 1027.
[cvii] *Ibid.,* 2.23.13, pg. 1130. See Georg Cavallar, *The Rights of Strangers: Theories of International Hospitality, the Global Community and Political Justice since Vitoria* [2002] (London: Routledge, 2016), 138-144.
[cviii] Grotius rejects international institutions with an analogy: "For a Ship may be built to so vast a Bulk, as to be unwieldy, and not manageable, so an Empire may be extended over so great a Number of Men and Places so widely distant from each other, that the Government of it becomes a Task, to which no one Sovereign can be equal," *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.22.13, pg. 1108.
[cix] *Rights of War and Peace:* "Moreover, by the Law of Nations, not only he that makes War for a just Cause, but every Man in a solemn War acquires the Property of what he takes from the Enemy, and that without Rule or Measure; so that both he and his Assigns are to be defended in Possession of them by all Nations; which, as to the external Effects of it, may be called the Right of Property," 3.6.2, pgs. 1316-7. See Sharon Korman, *The Right of Conquest: The Acquisition of Territory by Force in International Law and Practice (*Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), part I.
[cx] *Rights of War and Peace*, 1.3.8, pg. 263. See also, "not because God did not create man as a free being, but because there are some individuals whose character is such that it is expedient for them to be governed by another's sovereign will rather than by their own," *De Indis,* 61-2.
[cxi] Grotius, *On the Truth of Christianity* [1627], trans. Spencer Madan (London: J. Dodsby, 1782), 195-6. Cited in Losurdo's *Liberalism,* 22.
[cxii] *Rights of War and Peace,* 2.22.11, pg. 1106.
[cxiii] Of his many critiques of this tradition, the most thoroughgoing is when he condemns a line of thinkers from whom "Their moral philosophy is but a description of their own passions…Whereas they make the rules of *good* and *bad* by their own *liking* and *disliking,* by which means, in so great diversity of taste, there is nothing generally agreed on, but every one doth (as far as he dares) whatsoever seemeth good in his own eyes, to the subversion of commonwealth…And I believe that scarce anything can be more absurdly said in natural philosophy than that which now is called *Aristotle's Metaphysics*; nor more repugnant to government than much of that he hath said in his *Politics*; nor more ignorantly than a great part of his *Ethics,*" *Leviathan,* 4.46.11, pgs. 456-7. See also, the *Elements,* where he charges that "those men who have written concerning the faculties, passions, and manners of men, that is to say, of moral philosophy, or of policy, government, and laws, whereof there be infinite volumes…take for principles those opinions which are already vulgarly received, whether true or false; being for the most part false," 1.13.3, pg. 75 and his condemnation of those who have learned "from the doctrine of Aristotle, and others (who have delivered nothing concerning morality, and policy demonstratively; but being passionately addicted to popular government, have insinuated their opinions by eloquent sophistry)," 2.24.8, pg. 176. Likewise, citing Plato, Zeno, Epicurus, and Aristotle, Hobbes writes in a 1666 dialogue that "All Men (you know) are subject to Error, the ways of Error very different; and therefore 'tis no wonder if these Wise, and diligent searchers of the Truth did, notwithstanding their Excellent parts, differ in many points amongst themselves," *A Dialogue Between A Philosopher and A Student of the Common Laws of England,* ed. Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), VIII, 124. See J. Laird, "Hobbes on Aristotle's *Politics*."
[cxiv] Hobbes remarks of the creative superiority of geometry over the re-creative aspirations of physics, radically different for not being bound to the world. to provide a model of how "men begin at settling the significations of their words, which settling of significations they call definitions, and place them in the beginning of their reckoning," *Leviathan,* 1.4.12, pg. 19. See Douglas Jesseph, "Hobbes and the Method of Natural Science," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes,* 92-6. See how this is elaborated as an interlocution in ongoing scholastic debates in Hull, *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political Thought* (London: Continuum, 2009), 54-7. See also, J. G. A. Pocock,

"Time, History and Eschatology in the Thought of Thomas Hobbes," in *Politics, Language, and Time: Essays and Political Thought and History* [1971] (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989), 148-201. Peter Dear provides a good overview of these approaches in early modernity in *Discipline and Experience: The Mathematical Way in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[cxv] *Leviathan,* 1.3.11, pg. 14 and *Elements,* 1.4.10, pg. 33. See also Hobbes's dialogues on the civil wars in *Behemoth,* when he insists that, even if we study the ancients in detail, we can never hope "to derive from them any argument of Right, but onely examples of fact," *Behemoth or the Long Parliament,* ed. Ferdinand Tonnies (London: M. M. Goldsmith, 1969), 76.

[cxvi] *Leviathan,* 2.21.9, pg. 140-1.

[cxvii] *Ibid.,* 1.7.3, pg. 35 and 1.9.1, pg. 49. For accounts that detail the profound instability of this opposition, see David Johnston, *The Rhetoric of the Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes and the Publics of Cultural Transformation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 3-23. "I have derived the rights of sovereign power, and the duty of subjects, hitherto from the principles of nature only; such as experience has found true or consent (concerning the use of words) has made so; that is to say, from the nature of men, known to us by experience, and from definitions (of such words as are essential to all political reasoning) universally agreed upon," 3.17.1, pg. 245. See also, "When for the doing of anything, there be infallible rules, (as in engines and edifices, the rules of geometry), all the experience of the world cannot equal his counsel that has learnt or found out the rule," *Leviathan,* 2.25.13, pg. 170. The faith of the puritans or scholastics is scrutinized in the same fashion. It too is a historical form of knowledge, drawn only from prophesies transmitted by the authority of others. Just as we may not believe all that historians write about Alexander or Caser, we should not publicly avow demagogues: "If Livy say the Gods made once a cow speak, as we believe it not, we distrust not God therein, but Livy," 1.7.7, pg. 37.

[cxviii] Hobbes, "To the King," in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol. 7: Seven Philosophical Problems* [1662], ed. William Molesworth (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1845), 3.

[cxix] Positive claims about god are "meant not to declare what he is (for that were to circumscribe him within the limits of our fancy), they show us about ourselves," *Leviathan,* 2.31.28, pg. 240.

[cxx] In fact, as Richard E. Flathman notes, given everything Hobbes says about the state of nature and the human condition, it appears that "commonwealth[s] can get started only through the highly uncertain process of 'acquisition' by one or more powerful individuals," *Thomas Hobbes: Skepticism, Individuality, and Chastened Politics* [1993] (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), 132. Gary Herbert agrees, claiming that "it is unlikely that any civil society has ever come about by an original, contractual act of institution. Most likely, the emphasis on sovereignty by institution in *Leviathan* is Hobbes's way of legitimizing sovereignty by acquisition," *Thomas Hobbes: The Unity of Scientific and Moral Wisdom* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1989), 158.

[cxxi] *Leviathan,* 1.16.4, pg. 101.

[cxxii] *Ibid*., 1.16.3, pg. 101. For an interesting reading on the theatricality of this section, and its resonances with Hobbes's daemonic, see Christopher Pye, "The Sovereign, the Theatre, and the Kingdome of Darknesse: Hobbes and the Spectacle of Power," *Representation* 8 (1984): 84-106.

[cxxiii] As Paul Dumouchel clarifies, "Men must recognize themselves in the sovereign, but this representation of themselves must at the same time hide them from themselves," "'Persona': Reason and Representation in Hobbes' Political Philosophy," in *Public Space and Democracy,* eds. Marcel Hénaff and Tracy B. Strong (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 53-65; 62. The representational tension between recognition and distance prohibits subjects from expecting the sovereign to be responsive to their immediate desires, a pressing concern for Hobbes given the factionalism implied by Parliamentarian's claim to directly represent the people (and preempting a liberal demand for representation to align with a correspondence theory of truth).

[cxxiv] Writes Hobbes, in his preclusion of the Grotian accountability question: "he that complaineth of injury from his sovereign, complaineth of that whereof he himself is author, and therefore ought not to accuse any man but himself; no, nor himself of injury, because to do injury to one's self is impossible," *Leviathan,* 2.18.6, pgs. 112-3.

[cxxv] *Ibid*., 1.16.13, pg. 104.

[cxxvi] In this way, sovereignty poses signification and society together and against the impossible semiotics of nature, and in doing so, makes the measure of its methodology and the success of its sanctions internal to its own emergence. If there is no extra-linguistic stabilization to the world, just as there is no extra-political moral authority or representational unity, language and thought, are ultimately wholly immanent to the way political action affects us. See Hull, *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political thought,* 86. See also, Jacques Derrida: "The signature invents the signer. The signer can only authorize him- or herself to sign once he or she has come to the end, if one can say this, of his or her own signature, in a sort of fabulous retroactivity," in "Declarations of Independence" *New Political Science* 7, no. 1 (1986): 7-15; 10.

[cxxvii] See Majid Yar, "From Nature to History, and Back Again: Blumenberg, Strauss and the Hobbesian Community," *History of the Human Sciences* 15, no. 3 (2002): 53-73.
[cxxviii] Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* [1960] (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 233.
[cxxix] Writing in his book on optics that "if it be found true doctrine…I shall deserve the reputation of having been ye first to lay the grounds of two sciences; this of *Optiques*, ye most curious, and ye other of *Natural Justice*, which I have done in my book *De Cive*, ye most profitable of all other," *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, Seven Volumes, Facsimile of 1839 Gulielmi Molesworth Edition, Elibron Classics* (New York: Adament Media, 2005), VII, 471.
[cxxx] *Leviathan*, "The Introduction," 5. See Victoria Silver, "The Fiction of Self-Evidence in Hobbes's Leviathan," *ELH* 50, no. 2 (1988): 351-379; 362-3.
[cxxxi] On this point, see in particular Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan,* 88-9.
[cxxxii] Macpherson, *Possessive Individualism,* 106.
[cxxxiii] *De Cive*, 2.8.2, pg. 103.
[cxxxiv] *Leviathan*, 2.20.11, pg. 131. This is echoes too in his "Review and Conclusion" where Hobbes writes that "*conquest* (to define it) is the acquiring of the right of sovereignty by victory. Which right is acquired in the people's submission, by which they contract with the victor, promising obedience, for life and liberty," 491.
[cxxxv] *Ibid.,* 2.20.10, pgs. 130-131.
[cxxxvi] *Ibid.,* 2.20.10, pg. 130.
[cxxxvii] *Ibid*., 2.20.11, pg. 131.
[cxxxviii] *Ibid*., 2.20.10, pg. 130.
[cxxxix] Compare to *De Cive*, where the bound servants serve "in order to avoid beatings, not on the basis of an agreement," 2.8.4, pg. 103.
[cxl] *Leviathan*, 2.20.11, pg. 131.
[cxli] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 325. Paul Downes likens it to the slave rebellions that "confronted Americans with a sovereign terror," *Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Early American Literature,* 206, and Chapter 9 more generally.
[cxlii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 321-2.
[cxliii] Downes writes that slaves were "walled in by double parentheses, as if Hobbes already had an intimation that he was touching on an extremely volatile concept," *Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Early American Literature,* 196.
[cxliv] As Gordon Hull notes, Hobbes's political philosophy is constructed by "leaving the multitude behind," *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political Thought,* 123.
[cxlv] Most interpretations say no. See, for instance, Benedict Kingsbury and Adam Roberts: "Grotius's acceptance of slavery does not appear to stem from his consideration of issues concerning relations between Europeans and non-Europeans or Christians and non-Christians," in "Introduction: Grotian Thought in International Relations," *Hugo Grotius and International Relations* eds. Hedley Bull, Kingsbury, and Roberts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 1-64; 46.
[cxlvi] See Ernest van den Boogaart, "The Dutch Participation in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1596-1650," in *The Dutch in the Atlantic Economy, 1580-1880: Trade, Slavery, and Emancipation,* ed. Pieter Emmer (Aldershot and Brookfield: Ashgate, Variorum, 1998), 33-64; Allison Blakeley, *Blacks in the Dutch World: The Evolution of Racial Imagery in a Modern Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993). In a telling contrast, Simon Schama's lengthy and influential *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Cultural in the Golden Age* does not mention slavery at all, (New York: University of California Press, 1987).
[cxlvii] Losurdo, *Liberalism,* 16. Losurdo goes on to note "this tenacity in Holland's explicit declaration of the slave trade's essentiality, its insistence that its slave holders (contrary to Britain) have a right to use the home country as an intermediate zone for the transportation of slaves, the virulent resistance to abolition exhibited by American colonists of Dutch province, and its late abolition of slavery in its colonies," 16-7. See also, David Eltis: "The countries least likely to enslave their own had the harshest and most sophisticated system of exploiting enslaved non-Europeans. Overall, the English and Dutch conception of the role of the individual in metropolitan society ensured the accelerated development of African chattel slavery in the Americas…because their own subjects could not become chattel slaves or even convicts for life," in "Europeans and the Rise and Fall of African Slavery in the Americas: An Interpretation," *The American Historical Review* 98, no. 5 (1993): 1399-1423; 1423.
[cxlviii] See Martine Julia Van Ittersum's long monograph, reconstructing the historical context of Grotius's thought, *Profit and Principle: Hugo Grotius, Natural Rights Theories and the Rise of Dutch Power in the East Indies, 1595-1615* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).
[cxlix] It is only later that Grotius's work turns toward the right of acquiring unoccupied land, in alignment, Richard Tuck argues, with the new Dutch interest in the annexation of land, suggesting a certain preoccupation with possessing, apart from land. Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace,* 103-4.

[cl] Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 2.10.40, pg. 1021.

[cli] Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 52.

[clii] See China Miéville: "The power to sell imbued the power to promise, and Grotius claimed that the trading partners of the Dutch had promised – had *contracted* – to trade only with them. With a masterstroke, Grotius constructs the arguments for monopoly and closed ports, *against* free seas, *on the basis of contract theory* that underpins law. In terms of modernist rigour, this is a great improvement on his earlier natural-law conception of free seas, and it is this later conception of contractual monopoly that makes its way into his better known work, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*…The international legal argument for free and equal access to trade was simultaneously an argument for the strengthening of the violent mercantile state," *Between Equal Rights: A Marxist Theory of International Law* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 213; 210.

[cliii] See the collection *Hobbes and History,* eds. G. A. J. Rogers and Tom Sorell (London: Routledge, 2000).

[cliv] See, for instance, Quentin Skinner, "Conquest and Consent: Thomas Hobbes and the Engagement Controversy," in *The Interregnum: The Quest for Settlement,* ed. G. E. Aylmer (London: Macmillan, 1974), 79-98. More recent studies have argued that the boundaries of these fissures are less localized than theorists like Skinner would have them, as the English Civil War and its attendant Engagement Controversy and parliamentarian debates are expressed in negotiation with the dilemmas of nominalism. Jonathan Wiener argues that Skinner's exclusive focus on the English intellectual context obscures the wider context of political unrest and social change, "Quentin Skinner's Hobbes," *Political Theory* 2, no.3 (1974): 251-60; 257. Cary J. Nederman and Joseph Femia both draw attention to Skinner's atomized view of history: Nederman, *Lineages of European Political Thought: Explorations Along the Medieval/Modern Divide from John of Salisbury to Hegel* (The Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 17-22; and Joseph V. Femia, "An Historicist Critique of 'Revisionist' Methods for Studying the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 20 (1981): 113-4. There is also, of course, Carl Schmitt's early argument that "Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* is the fruit of a particular theologico-political era," in *Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of Any Political Theology* [1970], trans. Michael Hoelzl and Graham Ward (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 101.

[clv] See Mika Ojakangas's argument that "Hobbes's intention was to *depoliticize religion* and expulse religious zealots and religious feelings from the sphere of politics," in "Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau on Liberty and Slavery of Conscience in the Context of Christian Political Theology," *Redescriptions: Yearbook of Political Thought, Conceptual History & Feminist Theory* 16 (2012/2013): 106-124. See Gillespie, "Hobbes accepts this doctrine of unconditional election, but he turns it on its head. If nothing we do on earth affects our salvation, then there is no soteriological reason to perform any earthly action. Properly understood, the nominalist doctrine of divine omnipotence and the Calvinist notion of election that follows from it thus undermine the authority of religion in secular affairs. Therefore, it is not the rejection of religion that produces modern natural and political science but the theological demonstration of religion's irrelevance for life in this world," *The Theological Origins of Modernity,* 209-210. See also, Patricia Springborg, "Hobbes, Heresy, and the *Historia Ecclesiastica*," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 55, no. 4 (1994): 553-571; Angelo Campodonico, "Secularization in Thomas Hobbes's Anthropology" in *Thomas Hobbes: His View of Man,* 112-123.

[clvi] See Deborah Baumgold, "Hobbes's and Locke's Contract Theories: Political not Metaphysical," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 8, no. 3 (2005): 289-308; 290.

[clvii] On Hobbes and America, see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Richard Tuck's "Hobbes and Democracy" and David Armitage's "Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought" both in *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 171-190 and 219-235; Srinivas Aravamudan, "Hobbes and America," in *The Postcolonial Enlightenment: Eighteenth-Century Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory,* eds. Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 37-70. Patricia Springborg has been a lone voice in assert that "even where Hobbes does not seem to be speaking of empire, in fact he is speaking of empire," Patricia Springborg, "Hobbes, Donne and the Virginia Company: *Terra Nullius* and 'The Bulimia of Dominium'" *History of Political Thought,* 36, no. 1 (2015), 113-164; 163. See also, Springborg: "A Very British Hobbes, or a More European Hobbes?" *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 22, no. 2 (2014): 368-386.

[clviii] See Noel Malcolm, "Hobbes, Sandys, and the Virginia Company," in *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 53–79; Mathias Hein Jessen, "The State of the Company: Corporations, Colonies and Companies in Leviathan," *Journal of Intellectual History and Political Thought* 1 (2012): 56–85; Patricia Springborg, "Hobbes, Donne," 156-62. Even prior to his active involvement in the company, Hobbes was privy to the hotly contested Anglo-Dutch debate over the relative freedom of the seas that posed John Selden's arguments for a closed sea against none other than Grotius's *Mare Liberum.*

[clix] See Srinivas Aravamudan, "'The Unity of the Representer': Reading Leviathan against the Grain," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 104, no. 4 (2005): 631-653; Georg Cavallar, *The Rights of Strangers,* 173-189.

[clx] Springborg, "Hobbes, Donne," 148-9. See *Records of the Virginia Company of London, Vol. 2,* ed. Susan M. Kingsbury (Washington DC, 1906–35), 157-9. See also, William Pettigrew: "Because corporate activities were often constitutionally contentious and because their privileges were frequently re-negotiated, corporations sometimes placed these international constitutional experiences into the heated constitutional debates about the location of state sovereignty and the relationship between King and Parliament taking place in England throughout the seventeenth century as part of their attempts to sustain their constitutional position," in "Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and Local in Seventeenth Century English History," *Itinerario* 39, no. 2 (2015): 487-501; 496; Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990); Eliga H. Gould, "Revolution and Counter-Revolution," in *The British Atlantic World,* 196-213.

[clxi] *Leviathan*: "Again there is sometimes in a Common-wealth, a Disease… and that is, when the Treasure of the Common-wealth, flowing out of its due course, is gathered together in too much abundance, in one, or a few private men, by Monopolies," 2.29.19, pg. 218.

[clxii] *Ibid.* See also, Springborg, "Hobbes, Donne," 158-9.

[clxiii] See Ian Shapiro, *The Evolution of Rights in Liberal Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 37-8. For more on this proto-capitalist dimension of Hobbes, see also, Chapter Three.

[clxiv] See Lindon Barrett's caution: "The historical and geographic relay in the commodification of sugar for international markets does not stand as a direct correlate to the processes introducing African-derived persons into the economic and civil networks derived from Atlantic traffic; however, by the end of the eighteenth century, the commodification of this product represents the preeminent market activity defining the Atlantic trade. In particular, it remains the catalyst for British economic and imperial ascendance in the 'New World,'" *Racial Blackness,* 14.

[clxv] See Virginia Bernhard, *Slaves and Slaveholders in Bermuda, 1616-1782* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 49-52. Bermuda at the time of its accidental discovery being uninhabited, was occupied by slaves who, by the very longevity of their contract, were distinguished from indentured servants. Even without large plantations—a requirement only if attempting to confirm an emphatically economic model—Bermuda became and in 1623 passing the first racialized law in the English colonies to "to restrayne the insolencies of the Negroes," and in the decades that followed prohibited baptizing blacks and legitimated the master's power to murder those slaves out after dusk "then & there without mercye," *Slaves and Slaveholders,* 30, 92-3. Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 324-5.

[clxvi] Hobbes's *Leviathan,* as both David Johnston and Quentin Skinner have differently argued, returned to rhetoric more deliberately than his previous works precisely because Hobbes realized the profound political consequences of philosophy, as well as betraying a profound "skepticism about the power of reason to move us," Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric,* 428. Hobbes writes "if there not be powerful Eloquence, which procureth attention and Consent, the effect of Reason will be little," and further, "There is nothing I distrust more than my elocution," in "A Review and Conclusion, 489; 495. His doubts can be seen, too, in the *Elements*: "If we consider the power of those deceptions of sense…and also how unconstantly names have been settled, and how subject they are to equivocation…and how subject men are to…fallacy in reasoning, I may in a manner conclude, that it is impossible to rectify so many errors," 1.5.14, pg. 49. It would, to this end, be a misreading to argue, as Michael Ryan's illuminating misreading has done, that Hobbes was sanguine in seeking "conscious categorical mastery," *Marxism and Deconstruction: A Critical Articulation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 2-8. See also, Tom Sorell, "Hobbes's Persuasive Civil Science," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 40, no. 160 (1990): 342-351.

[clxvii] *Leviathan,* 1.4.24, pg. 22.

[clxviii] Daniel Skinner, "Political Theory Beyond the Rhetoric-Reason Divide: Hobbes, Semantic Indeterminacy, and Political Order," *The Review of Politics* 73, no. 4 (2011): 561-580; 562. David E. Johnson, "Yet, even if metaphors could be excluded, metaphoricity—the logic or structure of 'ference' (reference, transference, inference, etc.)—can not be, first, because the function of words in general is to transfer mental discourse into spoken; and, second, because without such transference the registration —thus constitution— of thought could not take place. Metaphoricity is transference," in "Wartime: Foucault, Hobbes and the Promise of Peace," *Revisita Pléyade* 13 (2014): 61-85; 75.

[clxix] Bennington, "Political Animals"; Tom Sorell, "Hobbes's UnAristotelian Political Rhetoric," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 23, no. 2 (1990): 96-108.

[clxx] "It may mean strange, to some man that has not well weighed these things, that nature should thus dissociate, and render men apt to invade and destroy one another. And he may, therefore, not trusting to this inference made from the passions, desire perhaps to have the same confirmed by experience. Let him therefore consider with himself…It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of war as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world. But there are many places, where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of

America, except the government of small Families (the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust) have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before. Howsoever, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be where there were no common power to fear, by the manner of life which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government use to degenerate into, in a civil war," *Leviathan,* 1.13.10-1, pg. 76-77. See Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace,* 126-129; 135-139 or an especially interesting account of a contemporary reader of Hobbes, Peleau, who initiated a correspondence with Hobbes on precisely the status of this example. See also, Hobbes's comments on war, equality, and the state of nature in *De Cive,* where he writes that "the present century presents an example of this in the Americans. Past centuries show us nations, now civilized and flourishing, whose inhabitants then were few, savage, short lived, poor and mean, and lacked all the comforts and amenities of life which peace and society afford," *On the Citizen,* ed. and trans. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 30. See also, Aravamudan, "Hobbes and America," 38-55 and Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace,* 137-8. Elsewhere in the *Leviathan,* he writes: "The savages of America, are not without some good moral sentences; also they have a little arithmetic, to add, and divide in numbers not too great. But they are not therefore philosophers," 4.46.6, pg. 454.

[clxxi] See Joanna Faulkner's illuminating remarks: "The imagination with the passions is thus both a resource for the polis and its internal enemy. Likewise, the figurative 'natural man' emergent from the depths of Hobbes's own imagination, haunts his account of social human being at each of its historical and conceptual junctures as what both animates society and threatens its destabilization. The imagination, emotion, and natural man each represent the excessive matter existing prior to social life, which is constrained, limited and transformed within the polis. Yet, as such, these concepts originate in their own prohibition, supporting the polis as its mobile reserve of energy, which is exhausted and excluded in turn," in "The Eternal Jouissance of the Community."

[clxxii] *Leviathan,* 1.8.21-3, pgs. 42-3; 1.11.26, pg. 62. "If this superstitious fear of spirits were taken away, and with it, prognostiques from dreams, false prophecies, and many other things depending thereon, by which crafty ambitious persons abuse the simple people, men would be much more fitted than they are for civil obedience," *Leviathan,* 1.2.8, pg. 11.

[clxxiii] See Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan,* 98-101; 111-12. See also David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States and Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 242n23. 242.

[clxxiv] This is why Michael Ryan is so off point, when he writes, as if critiquing, instead of elaborating Hobbes: "The deconstructive argument asserts that rather than be the purgation of civil war, absolute sovereignty is itself a form of civil war in that it must be defined as the suppression of sedition. The exclusion of civil war must take the form of a civil war against civil war; the attempt to exclude division absolutely is the absolute internalization of division. Intended to transcend difference, sovereignty instead is situated within difference, as a form of difference. The limit to its absoluteness is internal. Absolute transcendence, in meaning or in the state, is impossible as what it claims to be; universal transcendence is itself merely a situated point in the seriality it is supposed to encompass," *Marxism and Deconstruction,* 5-6.

[clxxv] See Pettigrew "the trading corporation could be both the agent of constitutional coherence but also the harbinger of constitutional diversification," 492.

[clxxvi] *Leviathan,* 1.12.23, pg. 179.

[clxxvii] Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan,* 217. See also, F. Roger Devlin, *Alexandre Kojeve and the Outcome of Modern Thought,* 41: "At present, Hobbes's doctrine is contradictory, that is, necessarily false; but, if actualized in a world state, it could become true. In other words, it might be *made* true," 41.

[clxxviii] See Ted H. Miller, "The sovereign becomes the creator that philosophy crafts. *Leviathan* teaches the sovereign to see himself as the bringer of order, as the mortal version of the Grand Geometer."; "He was giving the king his advice in a mirror, and showing him how magnificent he would be if he were to accept it as his image."; "As a wider seventeenth-century audience read the book, like the persons sitting near to the monarchy in a masque audience, they would learn to see themselves as the orderly part of an absolutist artifice. In its moment of creation, Hobbes's artificial man would be made by the people, and, at once, recognized as the sovereign's self," *Mortal Gods,* 199, 203, 204. See also, Noel Malcolm, "The Writing of Leviathan," in *Thomas Hobbes: Leviathan* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2014), 58.

[clxxix] Robert E. Stillman: "By creating epistemological fear, the work seeks to enlist its readers as real participants in this act of validation. By transforming them from readers of a text to authors of a commonwealth, *Leviathan* will be released, in one final, dramatic erasure of metaphor, from textual construct into historical being. Only at the moment that the sovereign in the text becomes a sovereign in the world, when the figural becomes literal, does linguistic chaos and the political chaos it spawns in society come to a close. As the historical Leviathan replaces the figural, the monster text designed to erase the monstrous metaphors and metaphysics of a decayed symbolic order is validated as its metaphors are erased. The historical Leviathan erases the metaphorical. Philosophy exposes its own inadequacy before

the court of truth in order to compel the creation of the sole authority that can make philosophical truth realizable as historical fact: the fiat of sovereign power," in "Hobbes's *Leviathan:* Monsters, Metaphors, and Magic," *English Literary History* 62, no. 4 (1995): 791-819; 812-3.

[clxxx] *Leviathan,* 2.31.41, pg. 244.

[clxxxi] As Hobbes argues in *De Cive,* "[p]ast centuries show us nations, now civilized and flourishing, whose inhabitants then were few, savage, short lived, poor and mean, and lacked all the comforts and amenities of life which *peace* and society afford...[t]he present century presents an example of this in the Americans," *De Cive,* 1.1.13, pg. 30. Like Vitoria, the unlikely possibility of the "savage people" attaining political subjecthood is left open, most likely because the kinship based government that Hobbes did see was only a step away from the political. See Springborg, "Hobbes, Donne and the Virginia Company," 130-1, 144-5. See also the *Leviathan,* where Hobbes writes, "The savages of America, are not without some good moral sentences; also they have a little arithmetic, to add and divide in numbers not too great. But they are not therefore philosophers," 4.46.6, pg.454. Hobbes dismisses these 'savages' as not wanting to build houses because they hadn't seen any, a charge he takes as an analogy for those who do not wish to explore his political theory of sovereignty even though it was so effective. If the state of nature can become, like Grotius, an analogue for interstate rivalries, the latter proceeds along difference of opinion that presume a shared frame, and not, as the state of nature seems to contest, a dissolution of meaning itself. Despite being "in continual jealousies and in the state and posture of gladiators, having their weapons pointing and their eyes fixed on one another," sovereign states "uphold thereby the industry of their subjects," 1.13.12, pg. 78. See Jonathan Elmer's statements to this end in *On Lingering and Being Last: Race and Sovereignty in the New World* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 11-2.

[clxxxii] Like Vitoria, children, fools, and madmen are of the same status as animals, excluded from the capacity to compact on the grounds of non-consent: "a man that by asperity of nature, will strive to retain those things which to himself are superfluous and to others necessary; and for the stubbornness of his passions, cannot be corrected, is to be left, or cast out of society, as cumbersome, thereunto…The observers of this Law, may be called SOCIABLE…the contrary, Stubborn, Insociable, Froward, Intractable," *Leviathan,* 1.15.17, pg. 95-6. See also *De Cive*'s explanation of "why we cannot make agreements with animals or credit them with rights or take their rights away, because they lack language and understanding," 1.2.12, pg. 37. But they mark the need for society only insofar as they are its immanent effect, not its outside cause. It is because of a generic man, not a bevy of children and madmen that we form political society.

[clxxxiii] Indeed, by the time of Hobbes's writing, the threat portended by Britain's surplus population (a potential double population to slaves) was, although displaced to faroff places like Virginia and Barbados by Parliamentary acts in 1652 and 1654, coming to be seen less as "a threat to social stability" than as "an economic resource to be better managed and exploited," see Abigail L. Swingen's *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 28. See also Paul Slack, *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Longman, 1988), 30-31; Joyce Appleby, *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), Chap. 6; D. C. Coleman, "Labour in the English Economy of the Seventeenth Century," *Economic History Review* 8, no. 3 (1956): 280-295; 293–294; Audrey Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian Sea: Colonialism in the British Atlantic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[clxxxiv] Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*.

[clxxxv] Scott Nelson*:* "liberalism offers up the sovereign, autonomous, rational, free and rights-being individual—Hobbesian/Lockian 'Man,' in other words—which is then capable of fashioning a politics designed to conceal the fact that a ground of the pre-political is needed in the first place," *Sovereignty and the Limits of the Liberal Imagination,* 33. Ted H. Miller writes that "Hobbes's audacity consisted in what he refused to hide," *Mortal Gods,* 218. Vickie Sullivan writes, "Hobbes's purposes can be turned against him, recognizing that security can only be served by expanding the rights to include the right to liberty and to property" *Machiavelli, Hobbes, and the Formation of a Liberal Republicanism in England,* 14. Leo Strauss is also an advocate of a similar position: Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953); Miguel Vatter, "Strauss and Schmitt as Readers of Hobbes and Spinoza: On the Relation between Political Theology and Liberalism," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 4, no. 3, (2004), pp. 161-214; and Richard Cox, *Locke on War and Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960). Likewise, for Carl Schmitt, "Liberal toleration has a theological condition of possibility," see *Law as Politics: Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism,* ed. David Dyzenhaus (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998). For Hans Blumenberg, "Absolutism and liberalism are based upon the same principle of self-regulation, being distinguished from one another only in their judgments of the murderousness of the initial situation and of the forces at work in it," *Legitimacy of the Modern Age,* 220. For more defenses of Hobbes as a liberal philosopher, see J. Judd Owen, "The Tolerant Leviathan: Hobbes and the Paradox of Liberalism," *Polity* 37, no. 1 (2005): 130-148; James R. Martel, "The Radical Promise of

Thomas Hobbes: The Road not taken in Liberal Theory," *Theory & Event* 4, no. 2 (2000); Richard Flathman, *Thomas Hobbes* and *Willful Liberalism* as well; Michael Oakeshott *Hobbes on Civil Association* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975). Recent attempts to think Hobbes and the foundation of America, in particular, include Thomas Pope *Social Contract Theory in American Jurisprudence: Too Much Liberty and Too Much Authority* (New York: Routledge, 2013); and James Stoner, Jr., *Common Law and Liberal Theory: Coke, Hobbes, and the Origins of American Constitutionalism* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1992). Paul Downes opens his text with the argument that "anyone interested in rereading American literary and political history with an eye to understanding and critiquing the world that liberal (now 'neoliberal') political philosophy has shaped (and misshaped) will find conceptual ammunition in the version of sovereignty and commonwealth that Hobbes unfolds in his *Leviathan*…If American revolutionaries read Locke and Montesquieu, but *not* Hobbes, and if they looked toward 'nature's god' in order *not* to have to contemplate Hobbes's 'state of nature,' this is because, I want to argue, *Leviathan*'s political philosophy demanded a revolution these Americans were not yet ready to endorse," *Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Early American Literature*, 1-2.

[clxxxvi] Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race,* 52.

[clxxxvii] Locke writes: "There is, indeed, one science (as they are now distinguished) incomparably above all the rest…I mean theology, which, containing the knowledge of God and his creatures, our duty to him and our fellow creatures, and a view of our present and future state, is the comprehension of all other knowledge directed to its true end; i.e., the honour and veneration of the Creator, and the happiness of mankind. This is that noble study which is every man's duty, and everyone that can be called a rational creature is capable of," in "Conduct of the Understanding," in *The Works of John Locke: Essay Concerning Human Understanding* [1689], ed. Roger Woolhouse (London, C. Baldwin, 1824), 360. See Jeremy Waldron: "Lockean equality is not fit to be taught as a secular doctrine; it is a conception of equality that makes no sense except in the light of a particular account of the relation between man and God," *God, Locke, and Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke's Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 82. Richard Ashcraft writes: "If, ultimately, the epistemological views of Locke, the Christian, cannot be satisfactorily reconciled with those of Locke, the philosopher, it is the faith of the former which ensures the salvation of the latter," "Faith and Knowledge in Locke's Philosophy," in *John Locke: Problems and Perspectives*, ed. John W. Yolton (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 194-223; 223. See also, Francis Oakley, "Locke, Natural Law, and God; Note," *Natural Law Forum* 10 (1965): 168-201; and Steven Ford's "Natural Law, Theology, and Morality in Locke," *American Journal of Political Science* 45, no. 2 (2001): 396 –409.

[clxxxviii] *Two Treatises, "*all the Workmanship of one Omnipotent, and infinitely wise Maker; All the Servants of one Sovereign Master," 2.2.6, pg. 271.

[clxxxix] Baumgold, "Pacifying Politics," 18.

[cxc] *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (London: William Tegg and Co., 1877), 4.4.7, pg. 484; 1.4.25, pg. 56. See Ashcraft: "Faith and Knowledge," 194-223.

[cxci] Locke, *Two Treatises,* 2.2.6, pg. 271.

[cxcii] *Ibid.,* 2.2.8, pg. 272.

[cxciii] *Ibid*., 2.3.17, pg. 279. Aggressors in the state of war intend to capture innocent individuals and use them mercilessly—Locke muses, in his mimicry of the victim's perspective, that "no body can desire *to have me in his Absolute Power,* unless it be to compel me by force to that, which is against the Right of my Freedom, i.e. to make me a Slave."

[cxciv] *Ibid.,* 2.2.13, pg. 275-6.

[cxcv] See Andrew Dilts, "My reading of Locke, in contrast, takes punishment to be an integral and indispensable part of his political theory and the figure of the thief to be an important rhetorical device for his argument….Punishment always carries with it an excessive quality, and the purpose of founding a civil society is not to eradicate this excess but rather to manage and use it productively," *Punishment and Inclusion: Race, Membership, and the Limits of American Liberalism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 87-8. Punishment is, as Keally McBride puts it succinctly, "the midwife in the birth of the social contract," *Punishment and Political Order* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2007), 104. See also, Ruth W. Grant's *John Locke's Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 49-50.

[cxcvi] *Two Treatises,* 2.5.34, pg. 291. On how "industriousness" forms the basis of economic and political exclusion, see Gianna Englert, "Liberty and Industry: John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and the Economic Foundations of Political Membership," *Polity* 48, no. 4 (2016): 551-579.

[cxcvii] See Grant, "By identifying the state of nature as the worst case, Hobbes teaches obedience to civil government. By identifying the state of war as the worst case, Locke justifies resistance," *John Locke's Liberalism*, 72. See also, Ashcraft, *Revolutionary Politics,* 399-401; Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, 166-72.

[cxcviii] *Two Treatises,* 2.3.18, pg. 280.

[cxcix] *Ibid*., 2.4.24, pg. 284. Conquest is the only legitimate means of political obligation, but it is only just when defensive. See Seliger "Locke, Liberalism and Nationalism," in *John Locke: Problems and Perspectives,* 19-33; 26-28.
[cc] *Two Treatises,* 2.4.24, pg. 284.
[cci] *Ibid*., 2.4.23, pg. 284. Unlike in Grotius and Hobbes, Locke's slave cannot "by Compact, or his own Consent, *enslave himself* to any one," for "No body can give more Power than he has himself."
[ccii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 338. Locke, writes Nyquist, "does not--*cannot*--represent the decision to enslave rather than kill as an act of saving or preservation of life," 346.
[cciii] Locke, *Two Treatises,* 2.4.23, pg. 284.
[cciv] *Ibid.,* "he, to whom he has forfeited it, may (when he has him in his Power) delay to take it, and make use of him to his own Service, and he does him no injury by it."
[ccv] *Ibid.,* 2.4.24, pg. 285. He does specify a conceptually distinct servitude--that of the Hebrews, who only sold their service, not their selves.
[ccvi] *Ibid*., 2.16.177, pg. 387.
[ccvii] John Marshall, "Whig Thought and the Revolution of 1688–91," in *The Final Crisis of the Stuart Monarchy: The Revolutions of 1688-91 in Their British, Atlantic and European Contexts,* eds. Stephen Taylor and Tim Harris (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2013), 57-86; 59-60.
[ccviii] See *Two Treatises,* 1.6.51, pg. 177 and 2.16.180-196, pgs. 388-397.
[ccix] See James Farr, "Locke, Natural Law," and Martin Seliger, *The Liberal Politics of John Locke.*
[ccx] Indeed, as Nyquist notes, Locke's "Of Slavery" "anticipates virtually every logical and rhetorical move as well as individual phrases" of his "Despoticall Power," *Arbitrary Rule,* 360. See also Ruth Grant's observation that "Locke's discussion of slavery in chapter 4 is the culmination of the discussion of the natural executive power" *John Locke's Liberalism,* 67.
[ccxi] *Two Treatises*, 2.4.23, pg. 284. For other interpretations of slavery taboo, see Dilts' *Punishment and Inclusion,* 85-109.
[ccxii] *Two Treatises,* 2.1.6, pg. 271. See Michael P. Zuckert, *Natural Rights and the New Republicanism,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 240-6. The same passage asserts that human beings are "all the Workmanship of one Omnipotent, and infinitely wise Maker; All the Servants of one Sovereign Master, sent into the World by this order and about his business, they are his Property, whose Workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one another's Pleasure."
[ccxiii] Zuckert instructively outlines three interpretations here: "it may be that 1) the right of self-ownership, where one 'may even destroy the thing, that he has property in,' supersedes the duty of divine-ownership as the ground of natural law; 2) the slave is actually courting the master into killing him; or 3) as slavery is properly a forfeiture of life, as Locke himself wrote, the slave is no longer bound by any duty. If Locke intends to prioritize right over duty, then, by other tenets of his thinking, one can only give up the object of right not the right itself, a parcel of land, for instance, but not property as such. This means that the slave can give up life, but not the right to life, a right from which, in any case, the slave has already been divested. These three interpretations, when racial slavery is at stake, can be combined. The slave, being wholly given over to another's service, can induce the slave-owner to activate his right to kill off his or her particular slaves; the slave-owner kills that part of himself the slave as property represents, though not his propriety over his slaves as such. This exchange of forces actually transfers the sovereign maker's power to the slave master, who can own the politically dead slave and extract whatever pleasure he can out of their deferred death," *Natural Rights,* 244-6.
[ccxiv] See his statement in the *Two Treatises,* "To those who have the Supream Power of making Laws in England, France, or Holland, are to an Indian, but like the rest of the World, Men without Authority; And therefore if by the Law of Nature, every Man hath not a Power to punish Offenses against it, as he soberly judges the Case to require, I see not how the Magistrates of any Community, can punish an Alien of another Country," 2.2.9, pg. 273.
[ccxv] *Ibid.,* 2.2.8, pg. 272. Dilts: "Locke tells us that punishment (especially in its most unlimited moments) is a response to the criminal as a *kind* rather than the crime as an *event*. The transgression is a rejection of God's gift of rational thought as well as a rejection of the Law of Nature's binding quality, leaving themselves dangerous to all of humanity, not just the person whom they have harmed," *Punishment and Inclusion,* 102.
[ccxvi] Locke writes, "There is scarce that principle of morality to be named, or rule of virtue to be thought on…which is not, somewhere or other, slighted and condemned by the general fashion of whole societies of Men," *Essay,* 1.3.6, pg. 32.
[ccxvii] *Ibid.,* 3.6.12, pg. 362. What variations in capacity we may find are accidental and external, often just as distinct internal to ethnographic groups as they are between them: "Amongst men of equal education there is great inequality

of parts. And the woods of America, as well as the Schools of Athens, produce men of several abilities in the same kind," "Conduct of the Understanding," 325.

[ccxviii] *Essay,* 3.6.22, pg. 365. "[I]t is beyond the power of human capacity to frame and retain distinct ideas of all the particular things we meet with: every bird and beast men saw; every tree and plant that affected the senses, could not find a place in the most capacious understanding…If it were possible, it would be useless; because…men would in vain heap up names of particular things, that would not serve them to communicate their thoughts," 3.3.2-3, pgs. 326-7. See Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality,* 49-51.

[ccxix] Locke's convenient child also appears earlier in the Essay: "The Child certainly knows, that the Nurse that feeds it, is neither the Cat it plays with, nor the Blackmoor it is afraid of," 1.2.25, pg. 24.

[ccxx] *Ibid.,* 3.6.23, pg. 366. See Constantine George Caffentzis: "…is it the fallaciousness of the argument or the falsity of the conclusion which Locke rejects?" in *Clipped Coins, Abused Words and Civil Government: John Locke's Philosophy of Money* (New York: Autonomedia, 1989), 194. See also, Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe,* trans. Edmund Howard (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 145-50; Harry M. Bracken, "Essence, Accident, and Race," *Hermathena,* 116 (1973): 81-96, 93; Richard H. Popkin, "The Philosophical Bases of Modern Racism," in *Philosophy and the Civilizing Arts,* eds. Craig Walton and John P. Anton (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974), 126-65.

[ccxxi] Equality, as we have seen, inevitably refers to a generalized concept of species which is necessarily circumscribed by positioning an outside to membership. The analysis that follows is informed by Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality,* Chapter Three: Species and the Shape of Equality. In addition, see Grant, *John Locke's Liberalism,* 43; Ward, *John Locke and Modern Life,* 88; and Zuckert, *Natural Rights,* 282-3.

[ccxxii] *Essay,* 2.11.11, pg. 105.

[ccxxiii] *Ibid.,* 2.11.10, pg. 105.

[ccxxiv] *Two Treatises,* 2.2.4, pg. 269. See Jennifer Welchman, "Once slavery exists it is no longer the case that human beings subsequently born are all 'Creatures of the same species and rank promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature,' Henceforth they are born as members of one species but two ranks, right-bearing human persons and non-right-bearing human property. The term 'man' no longer denotes any human being, but only those human beings who are persons," in "Locke on Slavery," 80. This sentiment was echoed by Richard Bland of Virginia: equality "in Instances to which they belong," Quoted in Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom*, 74.

[ccxxv] See Étienne Balibar: "the subjects who 'own themselves' separately are isolated because what makes them identical humans is not only the power of an 'abstract idea' (private property), but the power of *the idea of 'abstraction'* itself. This is a very acute understanding of the logic of the 'ontology' that we can call, after C.B. Macpherson, 'possessive individualism,'" in "From Philosophical Anthropology to Social Ontology and Back: What to Do with Marx's Sixth Thesis on Feuerbach?," in *Postmodern Culture: Journal of Interdisciplinary Thought on Contemporary Cultures* 22, no. 3 (2012), fn. 18. And: "…*property as such is the exercise of liberty…constituent property*, an originary property that is not 'measured' by preexisting conditions because it is individuality itself," in Balibar's "The Reversal of Possessive Individualism: From Locke to Derrida," *Constellations* 9, no. 3 (2002): 299-317; 302.

[ccxxvi] See Locke's heavily quoted passage: "God, who hath given the World to Men in common, hath also given them reason to make use of it to the best advantage of Life, and convenience. The earth, and all that is therein, is given to Men for the Support and Comfort of their being. And though all the Fruits it naturally produces, and Beasts it feeds, belong to Mankind in common, as they are produced by the spontaneous hand of Nature; and no body has originally a private Dominion, exclusive of the rest of Mankind, in any of them, as they are thus in their natural state: yet being given for the use of Men, there must of necessity be a means *to appropriate* them some way or other before they can be of any use, or at all beneficial to any particular man. The Fruit, or Venison, which nourishes the wild *Indian,* who knows no Inclosure, and is still a Tenant in common, must be his, and so his, *i.e.* a part of him, that another can no longer have any right to it, before it can do him any good for the support of his Life," *Two Treaties,* 2.5.26, pgs. 286-7. Tully, "Aboriginal Property and Western Theory"; Arneil, *John Locke and America*. For an overview, see David Armitage, "John Locke, Theorist of Empire?" in *Empire and Modern Political Thought*, ed. Sankar Muthu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Barbara Arneil, "The Wild Indian's Venison: Locke's Theory of Property and English Colonialism in America," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 60-74; Vicki Hsueh, "Cultivating and Challenging the Common: Lockean Property, Indigenous Traditionalisms, and the Problem of Exclusion," *Contemporary Political Theory* 5 (2006): 193-214; Stephanie B. Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Theory: States of Nature and Aboriginality* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 95-114. On money in particular, see Locke: "But since Gold and Silver, being little useful to the Life of Man in proportion to Food, Rayment, and Carriage, has its value only from the consent of Men, whereof labour yet makes, in great part, the measure; it is plain, that men have agreed to a disproportionate and unequal Possession of the Earth; they having, by tacit and voluntary

consent, found out a way how a man may fairly possess more land than he himself could use the product of, by receiving, in exchange for the overplus, gold and silver, which may be hoarded up without injury to anyone…This partage of things in an inequality of private possessions, men have made practicable out of the bounds of Societie, and without compact; only by putting a value on gold and silver, and tacitly agreeing in the use of Money. For in Governments, the Laws regulate the right of property, and the possession of land is determined by positive constitutions," *Two Treatises,* 2.5.50, pgs. 301-2. See Constantine Caffentzis, *Clipped Coins,* 70-1; Onur Ulas Ince, "Enclosing in God's Name, Accumulating for Mankind: Money, Morality, and Accumulation in John Locke's Theory of Property," *The Review of Politics* 73, no. 1 (2011): 29-54.

[ccxxvii] *Essay*, 1.4.12, pg. 42.

[ccxxviii] David Armitage, "John Locke, Theorist of Empire?," 105. See also, Robert A. Williams, *The American Indian in Western Legal Thought: The Discourses of Conquest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[ccxxix] *Two Treatises,* 2.5.27, pg. 287-8. See also, Zuckert, *Natural Rights*, 277. John Hittinger argues for the primacy of self-preservation in the Lockean universe in *Liberty, Wisdom, and Grace: Thomism and Democratic Political Theory* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002), 105-112.

[ccxxx] "But there is another sort of Servants, which by a peculiar Name we call *Slaves*, who being Captives taken in a just War, are by the Right of Nature subjected to the Absolute Dominion and Arbitrary power of their Masters. These Men having, as I say, forfeited their Lives, and with it their Liberties, and lost their Estates; and being in the *State of Slavery*, not capable of any property, cannot in that state be considered as any part of *Civil Society*; the chief end whereof is the preservation of Property," 2.7.85, pg. 322-3.

[ccxxxi] *Two Treatises,* 2.15.172, pg. 383.

[ccxxxii] McBride, *Punishment and Political Order,* 110.

[ccxxxiii] Which, as Silva's analytics of raciality grasps, traverses Kant and Hegel to reconfigure the human subject as both the product *and* producer of reason, see Silva, "No-Bodies: Law, Raciality and Violence," *Griffith Law Review* 18, no. 2 (2009): 212-236. See also, Scott Nelson, *Sovereignty and the Limits of the Liberal Imagination*, 76-79 and Connolly, *Why I am Not a Secularist* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 30-31. The Enlightenment, through Kant and Hegel, continued to seek a form of reason independent of theological authority or faith that could support political liberalism.

[ccxxxiv] A French revolutionary and admirer of England, Malouet, cited the "wise Locke" as proof that the slavery of "barbarous peoples…does not offend the right of nature," quoted in Losurdo, *Liberalism,* 139. See Sora Han who writes that "personal sovereignty, recognized by contract law in the legal personality of the individual, is haunted materially at the level of formal legal reasoning by a notion of 'free will' that is free precisely because this freedom can be given away," in "Slavery as Contract: *Betty's Case* and the Questions of Freedom," *Law & Literature* 27, no. 3 (2015): 395-416; 400.

[ccxxxv] Here I disagree with James Oakes, who claims that slaveholders abandoned the state of nature but retained pure property rights, *Slavery and Freedom,* 71.

[ccxxxvi] Farr, "Locke, Natural Law," 504. See Seymour Drescher, "On James Farr's 'So Vile and Miserable an Estate,'" *Political Theory* 16, no. 3 (1988): 502–3, which is a response to Farr's earlier '"So Vile and Miserable an Estate': The Problem of Slavery in Locke's Political Thought," *Political Theory* 14 (1986): 263-89; and to which Farr replies with "'Slaves Bought with Money,'" *Political Theory* 17 (1988): 471-74. An instrument in Locke's handwriting, however, makes an exception to the exception "Noe Indian upon any occasion or pretense watsoever is to be made a slave without his owne consent to be carried out of our country," quoted by Arneil, *John Locke and America,* 126.

[ccxxxvii] Farr, "Slaves Bought With Money," 473.

[ccxxxviii] Patterson, *Freedom,* 10.

[ccxxxix] See Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 360-1 and Farr, "Locke, Natural Law," 511-518. Oakes: "This was the great burden of proslavery thought in the nineteenth-century South. It was easy enough to show that the Bible and history alike sanctioned slavery. What the slaveholders had to do was demonstrate that slavery was compatible with freedom and that *black* people were inherently suited for the state of tyranny, rendered fit for the freedom of society by the immutable laws of nature, and as such justifiably reduced to the status of human property," in *Slavery and Freedom,* 73.

[ccxl] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–1976*, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003).

[ccxli] Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*, 99.

[ccxlii] The internecine conflicts that characterized the constitutional convention—Northern and Southern values, Federalist and Anti-Federalist ideals, agricultural and industrial economies—were mediated in an anti-blackness that exceeds the question of whether the Founders economic interests may or may not have squared with the form of government they crafted. Indeed, the cohesiveness of the national government, its union in difference, depended on

pro-slavery stances that exceeded the supposed special-interests of the South and brokered deals in service of national preservation. See Earl M. Maltz, "The Idea of the Proslavery Constitution," *Journal of the Early Republic* 17, no. 1 (1997): 37-59. A similar alliance bonded Whigs and Tories in England. See Marshall, "Whig Thought," 74-5. See also, David Roediger: "Remarkably, the framers did all this without using the words slave or slavery," *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991), 34. For an overview of slavery in the constitution, see Paul Finkelman, *Slavery and the Founders: Race and Liberty in the Age of Jefferson* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 3-7, and Alan Gibson, *Understanding the Founding: The Crucial Questions* (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 2007). I disagree with Paul Kahn that "Protection of the institution of slavery had been a political cost of the new Constitution in 1787. This political reality tested the limits of the constitutional world view of the founders' generation, challenging the claim that the constitutional founding had successfully integrated reason and will. This challenge was all the more difficult because the slavery issue simultaneously tested the commitment to the fundamental republican postulate that in political life will has priority over reason. Here, in an area that was to become critical to the life of the nation, the Constitution was 'unreasonable,' resting on will alone. The slavery issue, then, opened up a breach between political science-at least republican, political science-and constitutional law," in "Reason and Will in the Origins of American Constitutionalism," *The Yale Law Journal* 98, no. 3 (1989): 449-571; 491. The negative constitutional residue of slavery is mirrored in law: positive law presumes it is enacting the principles of natural law, or, in line with our reading of Hobbes, an aspirational version of what the world should be. Robert Cover argues that natural law was foundational, "residual law because it consisted not of rules of decision, but of the principles from which they are formed," and filled in the gap of no English law, Cover, *Justice Accused: Antislavery and the Judicial Process* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 18. Sora Hahn, by contrast, argues that "Caught somewhere between positive and natural legal theories of American modern law, slavery as a foundational national value is not ever fully present, except by a certain opacity of rights and principles necessary for developing a legal language of freedom within an American liberal political tradition…Still, the slave's status as either free or bonded was never philosophically or constitutionally determined by positive law. In this way, the slave was always a kind of afterlife, a form of legal being that was neither birthed by law, nor extinguished by law, but nonetheless present in the law," in "Slavery as Contract," 410. See also, Christopher L.M. Eisgruber, "Justice Story, Slavery, and the Natural Law Foundations of American Constitutionalism," *The University of Chicago Law Review* 55 (1988): 273-327.

[ccxliii] Nyquist, *Arbitrary Rule,* 11.

CHAPTER THREE:
The Wage Slave

> *The whole mystery of commodities, all the magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labor on the basis of commodity production vanishes therefore as soon as we come to other forms of production.*[1]
>
> *The secret of capitalism is to be found not in the factory but in the plantation.*[2]

My focus on the theoretical production of sovereignty may seem to have sidelined the traditional concerns of political economy, casting markets as merely external variables for more essential fields of representation. Certainly, this dissertation's enduring emphasis has been with what anthropologist and critical theorist David Scott calls "a *spiritual*, and therefore *internal*" insight into how "Europe's self-knowledges, not to say its cultural identity, are in fundamental ways shaped by the colonial relation, and specifically the relation that constituted New World plantation slavery."[i] For Scott, a shift toward this dimension of plantation production is a necessary counterbalance to the much more prevalent perception that slavery's products "have been purely and entirely *material*, and therefore *external*—that is to say, it is possible to acknowledge that Europe's *wealth and power* were substantially derived from the massive profits of the slave-based sugar plantation colonies."[ii] The quality of Scott's distinction, its very separation, identifies a problem of articulation: how does self-knowledge and the material world intersect and interact? Possible itineraries have long been charted: 1) the idealist route that subsumes materiality; 2) the (vulgar) materialist approach that renders ideas mere manifestations of an economic base; and 3) the more complex dance with a Marx who attempted, from materiality, to think material forms and ideal forms together.

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[1] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Volume 1* (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 169.
[2] Sylvia Wynter, "Black Metamorphosis," Unpublished Manuscript, 582.

Though a considerable amount of political and theoretical work has gone into establishing the truth of material production (just take the controversial intellectual event that was and remains Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery*), the possibility of this acknowledgement has, in some sense, been recognized from its earliest appearance: an economist in 1745 proudly crowed that the British empire was "a magnificent superstructure of American commerce and naval power, *on an African foundation*" and touted slavery as "the first principle and foundation of all the rest; the mainspring of the machine, which sets every wheel in motion,"[iii] while a 1698 broadsheet proclaimed that "The great and unspeakable Advantage the West-India Plantations are to England, is so well known that it needs no demonstration to prove it."[iv] In 1827, an editor could without difficulty map the cartography of the United States through the slave economy: "on the White mountains of New Hampshire we find the sugar of Louisiana, and in the plains beyond the Mississippi the cotton cloths of Rhode Island are domesticated."[v]

If the facticity of slavery's influence can be claimed, even celebrated, it is in part because of a peculiar figuration of economic power—at minimum, a demonstration of chance and fortune, at medium, of British ingenuity and African failings, at most, of providence. As "The Political Slave" explored, contextualizing self-knowledge still leaves those critical of the contradiction between theory and practice at a loss to elaborate any more fundamental necessity, or even political pull, to complicate self-presence as such. For when the validity of natural law, liberalism, and its freedoms is made to shrink or expand relative to a thinker's affective ties or a theory's practical implications, the material world of profit and power is made influential but not determinant. The ruse of these early concessions—the ability to speak of slavery and its gains in abstraction from ethics and without subverting self-coherence—reflects a delegation of the material to the contingent and the ideal to the necessary, a maneuver that both informs our contemporary frame

of materiality and coheres to Scott's own categorical identification. The internal accent on self-knowledges signifies a mode of knowledge production that, while it may very well be informed by material relations, operates in an insular realm that incubates its self-instantiating fiction. It is this insularity that needs to be explained.

While it is true that avowedly materialist approaches continue to overdetermine slavery's frame, these same gestures also complicate the assumption of a pure material world by revealing the entanglements of identity and subjectivity. Take Williams's classic example of material production: the application of slave labor on export crops like sugar, tea, and tobacco for the world market has certainly "provided one of the main streams of the accumulation of capital in England which financed the Industrial Revolution."[vi] But the engineering of new commodities for consumption not only filled the pockets of a new elite and metabolized an ever-expanding system of production, it developed a world of taste and culture.[vii] Likewise, the trans-Atlantic trade was the primary channel for an immense public-private intercourse that, in coordinating between the state and the corporation and between plantation debtors and British creditors bolstered English administrative reach, resolved internal demographic problems, and jump-started far-reaching commercial innovations in shipping and finance.[viii] In this respect, racial slavery became both the material and symbolic locus from which imperial authority emanated but of which it did not regulate.[ix] This broadened sphere of activity fostered paradoxically protectionist subjects of free trade and cinched techniques for the non-agrarian homogenization of labor.[x] If Britannia ruled the waves, it was by integrating (and not always successfully) a diverse trans-Atlantic network of newly constituted interests whose market dependence only spawned more intense clamoring for freedom in colonial outposts.

While the epistemological importance of this varied and vast research cannot be overstated, its undercurrent of interest remains, ultimately, with capitalism (and to a lesser extent colonialism).[xi] Slavery is subsumed under the question of transition, a cipher for capitalism's lift-off from feudalism and aristocracy, its continual involvement with political power, the persistence of seemingly archaic forms of violence, and the possibility of freedom. Should capitalism be conceived through the primacy of free labor or through the emergence of the relentless drive for accumulation? Did it secure the primacy of the state-form or emancipate itself from it? Slavery recedes in the face of the difficulty of discerning what capitalism actually is, when it originated, and how it might encompass divergent economic systems as well as the social relations that constitute them. Internal to Marxist discourse on transition, the terms of thinking whether slavery can be capitalist, whether slave-masters can be capitalists (Eugene Genovese would say no),[xii] slaves can be proletariats (C.L.R. James and Sidney Mintz would say yes),[xiii] and what capitalism might actually be hinges on the centrality of wage-labor to the definition of capitalism. These famous debates have now calcified in counter-posing the national specificity of Maurice Dobb's English lens of the transition from feudalism with the wider internationalism of Paul Sweezy.[xiv] Their polarizing theoretical tendencies each offer different synthesizing subjects (of capitalism) as objects (of analysis): despite their internal differences, the line from Dobb extends in characterizing the capitalist mode of production by the existence of wage-labor, while Sweezy, and world-system analysis that follows, identifies capitalism as production for the market. When slavery *can* be incorporated into capitalism, then, it is only because of a decision determining the content of capitalism—its production of surplus for circulation rather than, say, its characteristic of coercion.

Neither pole, however, centralizes the content of slavery, apart from the fact of its laboring; slavery is subsumed as one among a series of external, non-waged relationships that needs attention. For political economy, slavery exudes a problem of embeddedness: an anomaly or necessity or, in the words of Robert Miles, an "anomalous necessity,"[xv] it can affect capitalism, in that it can contribute to its wealth or, more radically perhaps, elements of its ideological reproduction, and it can be affected by capitalism, in that it can be made more or less a vehicle for accumulation and, when touched by "distortions" like race, an ideological wedge for class control, but its formation remains presumed as both derivative and static. Moreover, because capitalism is framed by our temporal imagination as the historical field in which the economy becomes or appears to be dominant, released from traditional political hierarchies in which labor was previously entrenched, capitalism is granted a certain priority. Its freedoms are made, however reluctantly, the source of the flourishing of wealth in goods and knowledges and the ground for a revolutionary future.[xvi] This reduction means, in effect, that the logical and historic relationship between the political and economic and between the spiritual and material is deployed from the perspective of shifts within capitalism, not slavery. It also means that it takes concerted effort to explore how exploitation is undergirded by expropriation,[xvii] how the value-form is produced by force, and how (to return to this chapter's opening problematic) slavery could produce anything except the materiality to which it has been consigned. With a focus on what slavery produces *for* capitalism, not what produces slavery, comes the ricocheted return to the material assumption of its content—a domestic-economic configuration, as Aristotle long ago solidified, that without any natural or divine providence is usually maintained by the most material and direct of violence.

Scott, in his admittedly brief overview, does not provide insight by way of intellectual history or theoretical analysis that could account for why an interpretation of slavery as material

productivity gained traction, nor how it can ever be differentiated from its opposite. Of course, his leveraging of such intellectual abstractions is more valuative and prescriptive than it is genealogical, deployed in celebration of Susan Buck-Morss's *Hegel and Haiti*, a text that provocates for perception one: that racial slavery shaped European self-knowledge and that, more specifically, Hegel "knew about real slaves revolting successfully against real masters, and he elaborated his dialectic of lordship and bondage deliberately within this contemporary context."[xviii] With the Haitian Revolution displacing the importance of the French, Buck-Morss explains that real slaves, not symbolic ones, should be conceived as the "linchpin" of Hegel's highly contested and endlessly invoked dialectics. Buck-Morss's historicization stands Hegel on his head in a gesture reminiscent, on the surface, of Marx, filling in the material world for what she considers Hegel's willful abstraction from the activity of real slaves. For Buck-Morss, however, Marxist methodology does not actually constitute a model for thinking the relation between historical action and theory, at least not in this instance. Instead, she proceeds to explain, Marx followed Hegel in a process of abstraction that lifted slavery "from literal reference" to read it "once again as a metaphor—this time for the class struggle."[xix] This abstracting procedure is made endemic to both materialists and idealists, in that slavery as metaphor is always occurring in thought against a really real process, the process of actually existing slaves and their domineering masters.

Here we have to pull the breaks. Buck-Morss's invocation of "real slaves" as a "literal reference" seems to relegate slavery to the field of pure actuality in a struggle untouched by the ruses of symbolic slavery. Hegel appropriated the activity of slaves because it was available for thought—Buck-Morss's retracing of the archive shows that—even, paradoxically, as it couldn't be thought (then or now).[xx] In this way, Buck-Morss produces a strain of the hypocrisy mode of analysis; the attachment between Hegel's self-consciousness and the slave, as well as between the

metaphoric and actual slave, remains contingent and, ultimately, itself unthought, in a Marxist inversion that is not Marxist at all. For if "The actual and successful revolution of Caribbean slaves against their masters is the moment when the dialectical logic of recognition becomes visible as the thematics of world history…to put it in Hegelian language, the rational—freedom—becomes real,"[xxi] then, from Buck-Morss's vantage, the rational still precedes the real. It is merely that the real can become a stage for developing the rational—a claim entirely consistent with Hegelian world history. There is, indeed, no reason why Hegel could not incorporate his dependency on this real world history in the development of his thought while simultaneously affirming and even performing the engulfment that Denise Ferreira da Silva considers characteristic of his *Phenomenology of Spirit.*[xxii] An alternate option persists: if Hegel's "genius," as David Brion Davis puts it, was "to endow lordship and bondage with such a rich resonance of meanings that the model could be applied to every form of physical and psychological domination," then perhaps the abstraction of slavery could only persist *because of* its opposition to slavery in "fact."[xxiii] As our last chapter attempted to argue, the very existence of "real slaves" is in every way embedded in how the symbolic structure of slavery played out in natural law and became available for appropriation for Hegel. This more constitutive insight into abstraction takes us further than a mere critique of the insufficiency of Hegelian abstraction. Already, we can say that Buck-Morss's well-documented proof that Hegel "knew" about Haiti leaves open the structure of that knowing in a way that can more fundamentally challenge the very metaphysical structure of Hegel's oeuvre as well as its intellectual lineage.

By aligning the spirituality of self-knowledge with internal *necessity* and the materiality of power and wealth with *contingency*, Scott's own prioritization of the less perceptible builds from Buck-Morss to tarry with a version of nominalism that itself is at the center of the problem of anti-

blackness and slavery. I seek to complicate this abstraction of an abstraction—Scott's theoretical abstraction of Buck-Morss's identification of Hegel's ideologically insufficient abstraction—by thinking through the schema of the ideal and the real as a "real abstraction," in the tradition of Marx but recalibrated under the sign of slavery. Marx, and here I don't quite want to leave behind his methodology, shows us that the presumed separation sequestering the material and economic, on the one hand, and the social-symbolic and political-juridical, on the other, cannot be sustained: social individuation, qualified by its economic rationality, equality, and private proprietorship expands with the consistent, common systems of calculation reproducing capitalist exchange.[xxiv] While informed by Marx's convergence between mind and matter—turning from Hegel to elaborate what Raya Dunayevskaya has condensed as "the most idealistic of all materialistic philosophy,"[xxv] Alberto Toscano has dubbed a "materialism without matter,"[xxvi] and Chris Arthur a "spectral objectivity"[xxvii]—this chapter argues, however, that the theoretical split between slavery's ideational and material production cannot be resolved by Marx. If, as Dunayevskaya contends, Hegel's failure stemmed from his commitment to "trace the logical movement, not of the worker, but of the intellectual,"[xxviii] then Marx's commitment not to the slave but to the worker—and to labor as an analytic frame—is what generates his ideological and methodological limits. When Marx turns the slave of Hegel's self-consciousness on its head, he finds the worker, not the problematic of slavery.

I follow Frank B. Wilderson III to propose that "Work is not an organic principle for the slave."[xxix] Being that labor for Marx is 1) the primary activity of historical subjects; 2) the historically distinct form of social mediation under capitalism; and 3) the grounds for revolutionary unfettering, this proposal already moves away from the method and aim of historical materialism. Following radical currents in Black Studies and extending my reading of Aristotle, I will expand

the frame from capitalism, and even racism, to anti-blackness in order to position the slave's production as neither ideas nor material goods, *but the appearance of the distinction between the two*. If it seems easier to admit and even, at key turns, celebrate the material foundation of the slave trade without conceding its traffic in ideas and if, similarly, it is *du jour* to charge scholars with being too materially invested (profit-hungry) or theoretically impoverished (insufficiently abstract), it is not only because of the difficulty of thinking the material and ideal together and not only because any distinction between the two are always already collapsing but more fundamentally because the very construction of slavery (as a historically bankrupt, economic system whose origin and aim are profit and whose continuance is predicated on direct force) mediates the difference. Indeed, I propose that the theoretical split over the material and ideal labor of the slave (couched in Afro-pessimism as the difference between slavery's political and libidinal economies)[xxx] is itself a fall-out from the theoretical extrication of slavery from capitalism. This is a fairly complex argument requiring engagement with the problematic of disciplines (political or economic), historical transition (slavery and capitalism), metaphysics (non-being and being), and the intricacies and, ultimately, insufficiencies of methodology (history and structure). Slavery's condensation to "direct slavery," that is, is a real abstraction, the hypostatization of the ideal from the real being the slave's arche-production, anti-blackness ever mediating the yawning chasm between the two.

A New Dress

I will begin by returning to "The Political Slave" to chart a speculative trajectory from domination by the tyrant to domination by capital. It is not difficult to reconstruct how natural law could be an important resource for and reflection of the emergent dynamics of colonialism and capitalism, or

"colonial capitalism."[xxxi] At its most direct, natural law was bent towards furthering all scales of self-interest. Grotius's exegesis on free trade was a veritable manifesto, a forthright intervention on and in behalf of political interests whose protectionism aligns with the contradictory elements of capitalist formation. Hobbes, meanwhile, in recognizing the equality of man and the limits of his natural world, resolved universal competition in a manner that also elaborated an international political economy. This involved making manifest internal protocols encouraging the extension of political problems to the new world because, as he puts it, "there is no territory under the dominion of one commonwealth (except it be of very vast extent) that produceth all things needful for the maintenance and motion of the whole body."[xxxii] Further, in articulating how commonwealths make up the deficit "by importation of that which may be had abroad, either by exchange, or by just war, or by labour," Hobbes not only made an argument consistent with mercantile balance of trade; in a significant move for the development of political economy, he pinpointed that "a man's labour also is a commodity exchangeable for benefit, as well as any other thing."[xxxiii] Likewise, Locke's proto-labor theory of value helped explain why "numbers of men are to be preferred to largenesse of dominions," why, even without bountiful land and natural resources, a country could still thrive and that "the property of labor should be able to overbalance the community of land."[xxxiv] Consequently, Locke argues that if "*labour makes the far greatest part of the value* of things…we enjoy in this World," it is because it can be sold; labor, rephrased through Marx, is the source not only of use-value but of exchange-value.[xxxv]

In its move from mercantilism, then, natural law does more than merely spell out shifts in the world order, it designates new subjects that precipitate the realization of these shifts. Importantly, the capacity to alienate oneself from labor requires a foundational, even metaphysical, instantiation of property as property in "self," heralding the fundamentally distinctive concept of

the individual, divorced from social relations, that C.B. Macpherson contentiously dubbed "possessive individualism."[xxxvi] Through natural law, the non-black subject achieved what in political theory has been christened "negative freedom"—the freedom *from* intolerable arbitrary rule and feudal ties, which also means the freedom from prosecution, the freedom from slavery, and the freedom, ultimately, from blackness. To be free from blackness as an internal property, in other words, was to be free to be anti-black—it solidified positive freedom through a unifying ethos: to name, hunt, patrol, police, discriminate, kill, all in the name of self-defense or, more simply, self. In natural law, and liberalism by extension, blackness sits at the place of a complex production of causality that achieves freedom in positing a threat, the threat of unfreedom. If the state's role is condensed into one of facilitating the defense of freedom—the freedom of life, the freedom of property, and the freedom to name, police, and protect—its purpose is also to project and induce encroaching unfreedom. The problem, identified by historical actors while perplexing political economists and coloring the pages of labor historians since, is that this newest phase of human liberation did not equal substantive freedom and was nothing like total liberation for its intended (non-black) subjects. The promise of progress to self-employment met historical limits with an increase in manufacturing and immigration (the latter problem only increased animosity towards the British and their displaced paupers)[xxxvii] and, driven by economic necessity to sell their labor, exposed the various ways that this freedom was underneath one of compulsion.[xxxviii]

Given that the classical ideal of the virtuous, selfless citizen contrasted dramatically with the exploitation endemic to an acquisitive, self-interested social reality, the damning consequences for lower-class workers were ameliorated by a unification of public virtue with abstract gestures that fronted equality of opportunity.[xxxix] This new self-determined subject of sovereignty took theoretical shape most explicitly when Grotius naturalized the right to defend oneself and to

possess property. Its contradictions climaxed when Locke's edifice of private property (as a mixture of labor and land) presupposed ownership in oneself to forward a new sort of theological claim.[xl] By emphasizing the *sui juris* status of self-ownership, labor was assimilated into a form of property-ownership—the choice to exercise judgment already, of course, at stake in Locke. Locke's slide from the inalienable property of the self to the alienable property of labor and his corresponding swerve from theological nominalism to realist empiricism recaptured the subject in a logic of economic servitude explicitly denied by the political injunction against it in the *Two Treatises.*[xli] Because personhood was articulated as the root by which nature is improved, it could sublate the emergence of property and accumulation into the workings of divine manifestation. From this premise Locke was able to provide an explanation for the origins of inequality, an empirical fact so seemingly at odds with natural law's intuitive equality. Locke first established a distinction between the mere fact of producing a product and the actual processes by which that that product becomes one's property: the "taking of this or that part" of the commons, the beginning of property, "does not depend on the express consent of all the Commoners."[xlii] Property-owners could nonetheless proceed, in the absence of consent, with unlimited rights to improve and fulfill God's larger purpose, provided their efforts did not result in spoilage. Money, in particular, entered the sphere of exchange by enabling, through tacit consent, a medium of circulation that would forestall waste.[xliii] In this way, it could be considered both rational and providential to accumulate capital; the increasing inequality of wealth necessitates the protection of civil society.

The structure of these suppositions, building from labor to property, wealth, and divine order justified the continuous contractual alienation of labor as a social fact that favors the "Industrious and Rational."[xliv] Anticipating the increasing industrialization of Europe, Locke

encouraged enclosures and the more general dispossession of paupers from social safety ties, theorizing that work was the means by which rationality was exercised.[xlv] Wage labor could be made to confirm with free labor if it could demonstrate and model moral purpose—discipline, ambition, industry, thrift.[xlvi] And because "the accumulation of stock must, in the nature of things, be previous to the division of labour,"[xlvii] political economy could eventually secularize divine provenance in the form of the spontaneous invisible hand. Its pre-political differentiation of have and have-nots could attach to an evolutionary account of biology, as in Friedrich Hayek where the factor of chance selects individuals endowed with rational capacity.[xlviii] Thus was born was Du Bois termed "The American Assumption" "that wealth is mainly the result of its owner's effort and that any average worker can by thrift become a capitalist."[xlix] The revolutionary economy's network of free exchange represented a liberation from the aristocratic ties and monopolistic constraints of the mother country.[l] While British monarchism maintained hereditary forms of hierarchy, American liberal-republicanism conceived of itself as distributing gains according to individual merit: indentured servants were being released from their ascriptive ties and labor ceased to primarily perpetuate social hierarchies. With hard work, it was promised that one would eventually realize the Jeffersonian Yeoman ideal.[li] It has not gone unnoticed by critical eyes that the expropriation of this labor resembles Locke's expropriation of land from native Americans.[lii] There is a structural and historical connection between the dispossession of land and labor that offered both a similar ideology of advancement: Locke's liberalism, as the last chapter insinuated, could include both Native Americans and laborers in its vision of freedom.[liii]

The biologization of individual capacity is not, however, the first appearance of the specter of race; its constitution, as our last chapter articulated, has its lineage long before. As the political rhetoric of freedom became increasingly charged with unfreedom, a new metaphor took on

accelerating momentum: "wage slavery."[liv] The positive, unifying features of neo-Republicanism, enshrined in the American constitution and exchanged globally, ended up internalizing a version of the violent antagonism of its gestation, repeating the Hobbesian dilemma anew: political freedom became encrusted with the contractual version of slavery. "Wage slavery" became a watchword for international antagonisms, its utility and evocativeness spreading throughout militant English and American antebellum labor organizers. Anglo-American tensions were elaborated vis-à-vis this charge—not only mobilized by British chartists to expose working conditions but, in a transference of anxieties, counterposed by Americans as a fundamentally British problem, uniting Northerners and Southerners alike in defending racial slavery as a defense of America.[lv] The union brought by America's foundational anti-black civil society of course generated its own internal fissures, what labor leader George McNeill in 1877 as "an inevitable and irresistible conflict between the wage-system of labor and the republican system of government."[lvi] The disjuncture between free labor and artisanal republicanism found in American labor movements conflicted with abolitionists on precisely this problem.[lvii] While labor movements like the National Reform Association tended to heighten the analogy between wage labor and slavery (claims that wage labor was the "very essence of slavery"[lviii] were ubiquitous), abolitionists like William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips and William Jay rejected such analogies as "an abuse of language,"[lix] (as someone "who either cannot discern, or willingly attempts to confound, the distinction between Slavery and Poverty…shows ignorance of the first elements of natural morality"),[lx] by proposing a largely voluntarist version of freedom that hinged on the provision of consent to contract.[lxi]

While the British and American working class seized upon a similar metaphor not to justify but to explain the severity of their own condition, they did not (and, continuing into the present

tense, do not), begin with the historical conditions of racial slavery, instead focusing their analysis on enclosures that could encompass the expropriation of Native American land but not the expropriation of African capacity writ-large.[lxii] This disjuncture puts a strain on the deployment of the "wage slave" metaphor, which actually first gained traction in the US through the phrase "white slavery."[lxiii] Insofar as labor requires the capacity for self-determination, the relative comportment to and acquiescence in the moral imperative to work is itself a mediation of racial difference. Much like my previous chapter, wage slavery may empirically resemble other forms of bondage but the greater this proximity, the greater its containment and deferral. In this way, it appears that, as Du Bois writes, "the old difficulties and paradoxes appeared in new dress."[lxiv]

Abstract Labor

Marx, defender of Radical Republicanism and sympathizer of abolitionism, represents the culmination of this critical spirit, re-expressing and intensifying its fault lines.[lxv] From *The German Ideology* to *The Poverty of Philosophy* to *The Economic Manuscripts of 1844* to *Capital*, his critique of bourgeoisie ideology and abstract idealism has telescoped the coercion implicit in the formal category of freedom. Repeated in various iterations, becoming arguably more sophisticated as his work became more reflexive, the basic premise echoes, because it was informed by, Anglo-American labor organizers. In short, liberal voluntarism, where "no one seized hold of another's property by force," is but a "surface process, beneath which, however, in the depths, entirely different processes go on, in which this apparent individual equality and liberty disappear."[lxvi] But when Marx lifts off from the world those like Locke, Hegel, and Smith struggle to represent—the realm of freedom that is civil society—he does not merely set out to uncover the subjection and violence hiding beneath juridical freedom and equality.

Marx is certainly interested in exposing the historicity of violence lurking behind a logic of bourgeois accumulation that conveniently takes its own position as universal. Economic categories, he writes, "bear a historical imprint": wrested from "the idyllic reigns from time immemorial," this history is "written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire."[lxvii] The opposition characteristic of capitalist production—that between the owners of money and the owners of "nothing but their own labour-power"—is not universal but, rather, violently social. Prolonged and uneven expropriations and enclosures divorce people from their means of production and the conditions of their realization. The imposition of value, moreover, is backed by an *existential* imperative: sell your labor or be crushed, decimated, destroyed. Its reproduction, and this is his stunning intervention still being untangled by theorists of subjectivity, "produces not only commodities, not only surplus-value, but it also produces and reproduces the capital-relation itself; on the one hand the capitalist, on the other the wage-labourer."[lxviii]

Both vulgar economists and classical political economists in the liberal tradition build from "the imagined concrete" of their Robinson Crusoe-styled myths "towards ever thinner abstractions" which, culminating in "a chaotic conception of the whole," fail to discover what should be rudimentary: the source of wealth.[lxix] Locke can stand in as a particular example of how liberalism, Marx's more expansive target, fetishizes the concrete, uncritically naturalizing phenomena such as labor or private ownership.[lxx] His liberal logic throws up the state as a mere instrument of law, an external regulator of imbalances brought about by broken contracts among naturally free and consenting property-owners.[lxxi] In facilitating the fiction of freedom, private property, and equality, the state can pose as an abstract arbiter of justice unencumbered by the biases of the feudal past. By claiming that "Locke's view is all the more important because it was the classical expression of bourgeois society's ideas of right as against feudal society, and

moreover his philosophy served as the basis for all the ideas of the whole of subsequent English political economy,"[lxxii] Marx means not only that Locke's ideas were utilized by political actants and economists—rather, they announce and reflect certain tensions internal to an emergent capitalist totality. That is, seemingly befuddled or political economists are not merely constrained by problems of thought, they are also determinately expressing what they attempt to analyze.[lxxiii]

Marx argues that when capitalist mythology crafts the past of so-called primitive accumulation in order to legitimate the fallenness of some, it plays "approximately the same role in political economy as original sin does in theology:" the laboring poor become the Adam that bit the apple.[lxxiv] But this is a complicated theodicy. Does Marxist metaphysics go beyond the secularization thesis, to become more than a diviner for a newly repeating religious imaginary? His section on commodity fetishism—on the "metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties" of the commodity form—has been conceived as an implicit working out of how social relations of domination get imputed to the realm of natural necessity beyond the simple charge of "false consciousness."[lxxv] When Marx opens *Capital* with the simple appearance of the commodity—not as a transhistorically abstract, useful object, but as the most historically general expression of capitalism's characteristic social form—it is not to reveal the hidden truth behind appearances.[lxxvi] The task of research, as Marx writes in the Second Postscript to *Capital*, is instead "to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection."[lxxvii] Only then, with a sense of the structural and the abstract in hand, can "the real movement be appropriately presented." This presentation, contrary to its historical and empirical mode of inquiry, works to relativize what came before it, "rising from the abstract to the concrete" and reflexively demonstrating the opening simplicity of the commodity as presupposed by the network of capitalist relations.[lxxviii] Instead of merely idealizing his way out of social relations,

Marx's theorization of the relationship between specific forms of social interdependence and forms of thought attempts to move from "the actual, given relations of life," to "the forms in which these have been apotheosized," by illustrating what specific aspect of given relations has primed some specific theoretical articulation within political economy, including his own.[lxxix]

Labor, under the sign of freedom and property, represents a liberation from domination and violence.[lxxx] The logic of transition leaps ahead of itself, over an excess it requires but cannot rhetorically manage except by condensing the present into ahistorical and asocial exchange. Its erasure of violent expropriation presupposes both the existence of surplus populations and the social reality of labor itself and is what naturalizes "this race of peculiar commodity-owners."[lxxxi] But against empiricist abstractions, which in proceeding from senses to concepts retains the presupposition of the discrete individual, Marx interrogates a logic of capital that is not perceptible, but supersensible.[lxxxii] Abstract labor is abstract because of the concrete practice of exchange: "Not only the category, labour, but labour in reality has here become the means of creating wealth in general, and has ceased to be organically linked with particular individuals in any specific form."[lxxxiii] Exchange proceeds only by negating use-value into an abstract substance, value, without any content of its own. Although "not an atom of matter" enters into value, it posits its presuppositions by valuing labor not as determinate activity but in its capacity for negation: opposing one another in commodity-exchange, what is exchanged is the objectification of labor as value, abstracted from labor's heterogeneity and the particularity of the object labor produces.[lxxxiv] It is equalization that renders the concrete (use-value) into an ideal representation, which is more than "merely the mental product" of laborers.

Such "spectral objectivity" becomes the social synthesis that generates the theoretical terms driving its own reproduction. [lxxxv] For when abstract bourgeois morality, exemplified early in

natural law, divorces itself from the analysis of its own concrete historical structures of inequality and injustice, it is expressing what appears to be a socially valid relationship: a representation of the economy and recognized and reenacted by economists and owners of commodities alike. With this value-form of domination, modern relations actually "appear as what they are," that is, as independent things or forces autonomous of individuals—money and labor and commodities—even as labor only appears stripped of sociability and estranged from its activity because of a social process of individuation and alienation.[lxxxvi] Because the oppositions we encounter between the individual and society, matter and mind, are for Marx real, historically constituted abstractions, not just dreamed up in a philosopher's head but hypostatized by and for determinate social formations, then it is only at a certain stage that the individual appears as such. Only under certain conditions would the framework that links Locke's empiricism to an abstract state and subject even be possible.[lxxxvii]

Subverting the transhistoricism of labor, the mystification of exchange-value, and the supposed immediacy of use-value, Marx has given us much to consider: a version of epistemology and a methodological procedure that incorporates history without counterpoising it to nature, reconfigures appearances into absent presences, challenges economic theodicy and the political animal (his sixth thesis on Feuerbach situates human essence not as an "abstraction inherent in each single individual" but instead "in its reality…is the ensemble of social relations"), and situates itself in its own production.[lxxxviii] By investigating the manner in which abstractions are "caught up in the social whole," Marx complicates (if not resolves, as some may claim) the realism/nominalism divide that has been haunting this dissertation *and* is able to relativize the secular liberal worldview that grants itself the position of transcendental reason.[lxxxix]

But if labor undergoes a transmutation of such qualitative scale that the mode of production (the production of knowledge and objects) shifts accordingly, what happens to slavery? Can slavery also (or differently) ascend to the status of a category that challenges the metaphysical binding of the ideal and the material, freedom and necessity? For historian Walter Johnson, slavery remains the "unthought" of political economy—the "historical and conceptual backdrop for the main event": capitalism.[xc] But it is altogether unclear what the theoretical occlusion of slavery might mean, given that it has also been said, with much truth, that "Karl Marx recognized the capitalist nature of American slavery long before American historians."[xci] It is certainly not the case that Marx merely did not *think* slavery. A study akin to Buck-Morss's revision of Hegel—one attentive to the various political and intellectual milieus shaping his world-view—would reveal that the problem of slavery litters Marx's numerous articles and correspondences[xcii] and appears in every chapter of *Capital v1* (even if relegated to rhetoric and marginalia).[xciii] Marx's engagement with the abolitionist cause and his study of the American Civil War, "the one great event of contemporary history,"[xciv] studs his journalistic pursuits, even serving as an example of the relationship between crisis and revolution.[xcv]

Historically, indeed, Marx's capitalism has a scope that cannot but be global: he pinpoints "the first sporadic traces of capitalist production as early as the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries in certain towns of the Mediterranean";[xcvi] situates Italy circa the fifteenth century as, historically, the earliest development of capitalist production;[xcvii] designates the violent, "man-stealing" Dutch as the "model capitalist nation of the seventeenth century,"[xcviii] and, more broadly and famously still, postulates that

> the discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all things which characterize the *dawn of the era of capitalist production*.

> These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. Hard on their heels follows the commercial war of the European nations, which has the globe as its battlefield.[xcix]

In a letter to Pavel Annenkov, dated 1846, Marx draws these lines even more emphatically:

> Freedom and slavery constitute an antagonism…We are not dealing with indirect slavery, the slavery of the proletariat, but with direct slavery, the slavery of the black races in Surinam, in Brazil, in the southern states of North America. Direct slavery is *as much the pivot* of our industrialism today as machinery, credit, etc. Without slavery, no cotton; without cotton no modern industry. Slavery has given their value to the colonies; the colonies have created world trade; world trade is the necessary condition of large-scale machine industry. Before the traffic in Negroes began the colonies supplied the Old World with very few products and made no visible change in the face of the earth. Thus *slavery is an economic category of the highest importance*.[c]

But because his theoretical account of capitalism's historical origins in so-called primitive accumulation only figures in at the close of his dense text, with pre-conditions that seem to be more about materially kick-starting capitalism, the question remains as to how and to what extent they are taken up in Marx's abstract forms. How might *Das Capital* be read if the site of production is situated not in the industrial factory but in the plantations spanning the Atlantic, or more radically, the slave-ships, or more radically still, the modes of capture prior to the corraling mechanisms at the littoral, in which bodies were abstracted and exteriorized from a receding interior? To ask the question from another angle, how might the sustenance of capitalism and the form of capitalist critique be challenged when primitive accumulation is tied, not first to the enclosure of the commons, but to the continuous violent capture of slaves?

As Marx is fairly explicit about his methodology in his mature works, beginning with the general commodity form *as it appears to us as commonplace*, only to unfurl from this general scene something of immense complexity, it is necessary to take care to grasp not only *what* he says about slavery, but *how* (methodologically) and *when* (in the order of presentation) he does so. The remaining sections will move slowly from slavery in the context of Marx's philosophical abstractions to the historical context of abolition, from the abstract to the concrete, to explore how

Marx and prominent Marxist interpretations reduplicate and reinforce the inclusive exclusion of the "wage slavery" metaphor. Critically deploying Marx's method of presentation, I chart a reading of "abstract slavery" as the logical and historical presupposition of abstract labor's absent presence.

Chains and Threads

Internal to Marxism, the position of slavery vis-à-vis capitalism takes shape along vectors of commensurability and incommensurability that adjudicate the historical-logical relations between 1) modes of production and 2) forms of exploitation. In an evocative passage of *Capital,* Marx appears to collapse the two: "The Roman slave was held by chains; the wage laborer is bound to his owner by invisible threads."[ci] By distilling modes of labor extraction through forms of domination, a conceptual confrontation is set between the direct subordination of slaves and serfs of the peasant economy and the mystification of exchange relations (and the abstraction of and alienation of one's labor) for the wage-slave under capitalism. On the one hand is excessive, spectacular, and bloody feudal violence; on the other, the quotidian mechanisms of "silent compulsion."[cii] But it is not easy to make an aphorism of this quote, appearing in a discussion of how workers, as "instruments of production who are possessed of consciousness," are compelled to reproduce themselves under capitalism. Read as either a logical opposition (personalistic chains *versus* invisible threads) or a historical development (chains *subsumed by* threads), the route by which direct domination is or is not subsumed by impersonal relations of dependence in the expanded reproduction of capital, and the problem of how forms of domination characteristic of slavery and capitalism may historically and theoretically inter-articulate, is incredibly complex, especially internal to Marx's method and mode of presentation.

A basic contrast between freedom and dependence may be clear for theorists of classical republicanism: "The man that cannot live upon his own must be a servant; but he that can live upon his own may be a freeman."[ciii] Slavery triangulates this contrast because as Locke puts it, although a "Free-man makes himself a Servant to another, by selling him for a certain time," this servant should not, under the neo-republican ideology of liberalism, be considered the same as the slave. [civ] Indeed, while "*Master* and *Servant* are Names as old as History," they are "given to those of far different condition." What is granted to the master by the wage-laborer is only "a Temporary Power…and no greater, than what is contained in the *Contract* between 'em."[cv] Like Locke, Marx observes that under capitalism, the capacity to labor is never completely alienated, but rented. If, on the other hand, "the proprietor of labor-power…were to sell it in a lump, once and for all, he would be selling himself, converting himself from a free man into a slave, from an owner of a commodity into a commodity."[cvi] Of course, Marx is quite distinct from Locke in that the appearance of a contract is a historically new relation, of such significance that the limit of time expended, and the freedom of expression it potentially affords, has lasting implications for the subjectivity and futurity of the laborer, informing even our critical tools of apprehension. The question is whether, for Marx, this significant status could cut both ways. If, as Sandro Mezzadra memorably diagnoses, "the ghost of slavery" is thought to be inscribed "within the very structure of 'free' wage labor," the status of this inscription, this haunting, is doubled.[cvii] Does labor represent a partial liberation from slavery (progress) or an internal intensification of it (stasis)? Does slavery's ghostliness accent that its structure is past or present, different or same?

As a logically oppositional relation, the metaphor of the "wage slave" can dramatize an apparent truth—the proximity of formal freedom and its apparent opposite. The wage-laborer is conditioned by a double freedom, a positive freedom to "dispose of his labor-power as his own

commodity" and a negative freedom from dependency, "having no other commodity for sale."[cviii] Although free wage-labor is often celebrated as an advancement on "unfree labor," "free" labor does not necessarily mean an absence of coercion. As contingent positions emergent from protracted legal and social struggles, "free" and "unfree" might be seen as united through a continuum of coercion, where "'free' simply meant dispossessed, divorced from the means of production."[cix] Indeed, as Mark Neocleous puts it, for Marx, "The 'freeing' of the peasantry into wage labour is the *forcing* of the peasantry into wage slavery; liberation is subjugation."[cx] The logical distinction between labor and slavery is poised to reveal a more abiding commensurability, albeit one that carries ambiguous rhetorical and structural weight insofar as it also deems slavery of less theoretical interest. This ambiguity of attention has fostered equally ambiguous interpretations. David Graeber, for instance, has resituated the marked resemblance between the violent capture of the "sheer capacity to work" under slavery and the sale of wage-labor as a function of the time of the contract.[cxi] Although the morning commute and the Middle Passage "structurally…seem to play exactly the same role," the difference is that "What is accomplished once, and violently and catastrophically, in one variant, is repeated with endless mind-numbing drudgery in the other."[cxii] Graeber, however, declines to elaborate on the substance of these parallels, cautioning that "when I say one mode of production is a transformation of the other, I am talking about the permutation of logical terms. It doesn't necessarily imply that one grew out of the other, or even that there was any historical connection at all."[cxiii]

Graeber's theoretical refusal should be understood as a strategic agnosticism of one of the most readily identifiable and recurrently disputed feature of Marx's sketch of capitalism: its teleology. Because Marx identifies bourgeois society (and English manufacture in particular)[cxiv] as the "most developed and complex," his slice of the present is granted immanent potential to

reveal something of the "ruins" of "vanished social formations," if only in contradictory, stunted, or vacated form.[cxv] While this backwards view might be only illustrative, Marx's epochal sketch of capitalist reproduction takes on evolutionary hues, as when he posits the capitalist social relation as "a result of a past historical development, the product of many economic revolutions, of the *extinction* of a whole series of older formations of social production."[cxvi] With this language of extinction, slavery, as a "relation of domination,"[cxvii] seemingly falls out of the totality, a mere relic in the realm of limitless accumulation. In its priority to capitalism, slavery becomes posited as a consequence of the reduction of laborers to a natural condition of production. Unlike human actors distinguishable by the will of their praxis, the slave is classified "along with other natural beings, such as cattle, as an accessory of the earth."[cxviii]

When Marx does address how slavery gets "drawn into the whirlpool of an international market dominated by the capitalistic mode of production," the basic premise and problem of slavery remains static, even ahistorical.[cxix] In *Theories of Surplus Value,* for instance, plantations are conceived as only *formally* capitalist in their mode of production: although commercial, speculative and global "from the start," for Marx, "slavery of Negroes precludes free wage labor," and thus any incipient capitalist orientation on the part of slave holders and merchants "has not arisen out of slavery but is grafted onto it."[cxx] The difference is that when slaves become compelled to produce commodities, instead of products for immediate consumption, and when, that is, "the business in which slaves are used is conducted by *capitalists*," the "civilized horrors of over-work" can become "grafted" onto slavery, and the slave can suffer problems proximate to those confronted by the wage-laborer.[cxxi] This is not because of any historical shift in the system of slavery itself but because of an external process induced when temporalities collide and slaves are subjected, for the first and only time, to the mercy of capitalists. As Marx writes in the *Grundrisse,*

"The fact that we now not only call the plantation owners in America capitalists, but that they *are* capitalists, is based on their existence as anomalies within a world market based on free labor."[cxxii] As anomalies, the slave can become a commodity and a "direct instrument of production," but nonetheless retains their approximation to nature.[cxxiii] The substantive difference between labor and slavery is instead presupposed by the degree of mystification, and hence historical movement, one has towards the conditions of one's own labor.

Marx's naturalization of the slave condition is, as Cedric Robinson has pointed out, not all that different from Aristotle.[cxxiv] It is as if no time has passed between the "genius" of Antiquity and the great critic of capitalist modernity. But even though Marx's laborers may resemble the freedoms of Aristotle's citizens vis-à-vis slaves, capitalism is unique in how it effects mystification as the social reality of freedom and equality through exchange and for its own perpetual future. If "the *production of capitalists and wage labourers is…a chief product of capital's realization process*,"[cxxv] Marx's appropriation of masters and "natural slaves" remains non- (and even anti-) productive with regards to capitalism. The form of exploitation of slavery remains theorized as a residual or resistant core (and this distinction, given the concerns of post-colonial studies and world-systems theory *does* matter),[cxxvi] tethered to the personal domination of individuals amidst the contrasting formal freedom of capitalism, and only *ideologically* impinging on relations of production. Indeed, Marx could only appropriate natural slavery because of the anti-black abstraction of slavery, the realization of the philosophical speculation of the natural slave, has given us the forms of freedom on which Robinson's oppositional freedom still relies.

Marx is also not far from Patterson's "social death." Patterson, remember, distills slavery as an external "socio-political structure," insisting that though it may be possible to "arrive at a typology of *orders* of slavery," slavery should instead generally be defined as an "order of power."

More definitively, Patterson writes, "in twelve years of diligent searching I have not found a slave mode of production. It does not exist."[cxxvii] In this way, Patterson skirts the opposition of modes of production: for Patterson, slave labor is inessential to slave status, as "in a great many slave-holding societies masters were not interested in what their slaves produced."[cxxviii] Patterson then can abstract from history to identify similar combinations of capitalism and slavery in the United States, Brazil, the Caribbean, late Rome, seventeenth-century Iraq, *ad infinitum*. As the inverse of Marx, Patterson's social death is secured through the abstract opposition between the (political) master-slave relation and that of the (economic) capitalist-wage laborer.

Meanwhile, Patterson's early argument for the centrality of "American slave capitalisms" demonstrates how the displacement of slavery from the question of labor will necessarily also involve some elaboration of their inter-articulation.[cxxix] For him, capitalism, "exclusively a product of the modern world," can be conceived as having (at least) two variants: free and slave, which are "historically and structurally tied."[cxxx] The predominance of force, both "precondition and continuous part" of the slave relation in *Slavery and Social Death*, registers only as a "vital precondition" of wage labor. Indeed, his approach to slavery turns on an interpretation of Marx that identifies two such "idioms of power"—the "personalistic" and the "materialistic"—whose ordering, in the last instance, relegates the place of slavery in the wider world to the outside of capitalism.[cxxxi] Patterson's generalized "social death," averse to thinking of slavery as anything but "personalistic" at its core, subordinates the complexities of political economy to those of what Afro-pessimism describes as a "libidinal economy," wrenching slavery from the capitalist totality's purportedly more sophisticated ideological ruses. Following Eric Williams, Patterson specifies in this essay that the slave trade can act as a "sociopolitical multiplier" and can be importantly "preconditional and catalytic"; yet, ultimately, for Patterson slavery is "in no way

constitutive" of capitalism.[cxxxii] If, to follow Williams further, the slave trade "provided one of the main streams of the accumulation of capital in England which financed the Industrial Revolution," [cxxxiii] that does not necessarily mean that the slave relation was essentially a matter of accumulation, only that it was appropriated to that end.[cxxxiv] Although Marx would obviously dispute the excision of a slave mode of production, in key moments his slavery/capitalism conjunction remarkably echoes Patterson's "American slave capitalisms," both in terms of its degree of differentiation and its character of articulation.[cxxxv]

A critical encounter between social death and abstract labor, slavery and capitalism, has been forestalled, however, by conflicting approaches towards the problem of abstraction. On the one hand are Marxists who want to redeem Marx's abstractions and, consequently, his totality; on the other are post-colonial and critical race scholars who reject the theoretically validity and political purchase of "abstraction" altogether. Robinson, celebrated theorist of (one version of) the black radical tradition, pathologizes Marx's drive "to achieve the scientific elegance and interpretive economy demanded by theory" as synonymous with its consignment of "race, gender, culture and history to the dustbin," lobbed into the "imagined abyss signified by pre-capitalist, non-capitalist and primitive accumulation."[cxxxvi] In its place are calls to pluralize political economy by re-introducing historical particularities of difference—what Lisa Lowe abbreviates as "race, nation, geographical origin, and gender."[cxxxvii] Slave historians, in particular, have sought to capture the Kopytoffian "commodity-as-process," which Nicholas Rinehart contends can not only counteract "the static and normative paradigms buttressed by 'social death,' Marxian commodity fetish, or any other inadequate theoretical position," but also would clarify that "the very word 'slavery' itself" is "meaningless insofar as it attempts to describe abstractly what was historically a set of changing, disparate, and transitional circumstances and experiences."[cxxxviii] On the surface,

this valorization of the concrete resembles early Marxism. Consider these fragments from "The German Ideology": "In direct contrast to German philosophy, which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven;"[cxxxix] and "This method of approach…starts out from the real premises…Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation or abstract definition, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions."[cxl] But if we are, as Rinehart contends, "condemn[ed] to the realm of pure abstraction, and thereby recklessly obscure, the material, embodied, and mundane processes of enslavement in the modern era," it is because I propose, in a real sense, slavery has risen to the realm of pure abstraction insofar as it is a real abstraction.[cxli] What is needed is an encounter that could historicize Patterson's social death as *a more complex,* not more concrete, abstraction preceding and priming the commodity form.

The Unity of the Diverse

If historians seek to abandon the abstract, critical Marxist interpretations have attempted to redeem it, or at least, to redeem those abstractions that shape Marxist totality. Animated by subaltern, postcolonial, and feminist studies, this redemption approaches the capitalist totality—"the concentration of many determinations, hence unity of the diverse"—[cxlii] through two broad repositionings of unity and difference. The first programmatic, which I will call the *expansionist thesis*, expands the totality, challenging the implicit Marxist supersessionist reading of history by introducing alternate moments in Marx—overlapping historical examples, tertiary texts, ambiguous language, residues of difference—to stretch the conceits of his abstractions. The second *sufficiency thesis* maintains faith in the totality, reinterpreting Marx's theoretical presentation to

argue that Marxist categories *already* include historical differences like slavery, and that what is required is a modification of our understanding of Marx.

The expansionist thesis grapples with the apparent "non-correspondence"[cxliii] between abstractions and history in an attempt to maintain the possibility of a unified analytic, one that can 1) avoid collapsing relations of production and forms of exploitation (such that either slavery, serfdom, or wage-labor could be taken to characterize complex epochal processes), and 2) determinatively ground the complex ways in which the world market is historically reproduced through both wage and non-wage relations of production.[cxliv] Unlike vulgar Marxism, which would reduce slavery, feudalism, and capitalism to modes of supersession, attendant to their content, Jarius Banaji contends that "deployments of labour, the organisation and control of the labour-process, 'correlates' with historical relations of production in complex ways."[cxlv] Dale Tomich's rethinking of totality similarly turns on a refrain—that of "unevenness, asymmetry and tension," a heterogeneous layering of the interrelations of the world economy, inducing perspective on the multiplicity of modes of production under capitalism.[cxlvi] In conversation with the critique unleashed by *Black Marxism*'s analytic "racial capitalism," critics of Eurocentrism more broadly, from Alexander Anievas and Kerem Nişancioğlu to Kevin Anderson to Dipesh Chakrabarty, seek to avoid the spatial and temporal "tunneling" that takes Europe as the capitalist origin, in order to move from a unilinear to "multilinear" account, or to "may once again be imagined as radically heterogeneous."[cxlvii]

Take another of Marx's much debated fragments, which may seem to give credence to the withering away of old forms of slavery via primitive accumulation: "The veiled slavery of the wageworkers in Europe needed, for its pedestal, slavery pure and simple in the new world."[cxlviii] The archaeo-teleological schema at work here, incorporating "slavery pure and simple" as a

necessary historico-theoretical moment for "veiled slavery," most obviously makes the wage laborer the concrete and historically developed form of the model of simple slavery. Walter Johnson suggests that the passage immediately preceding this infamous image might challenge a straight-forward teleological interpretation. Marx writes, "*Whilst* the cotton industry introduced child-slavery in England, it gave in the United States a stimulus to the transformation of the earlier, more or less patriarchal slavery, into a system of commercial exploitation."[cxlix] For Johnson this "whilst" provides an opening for a structural account of the "dynamic simultaneity" of the Atlantic economy, by bringing attention to the way that, for Marx, capital was global at its inception and could not but include slavery in its orbit.[cl]

In addition to this creative hermeneutic, a variety of other salvic reading methods have been employed to make theory responsive to history. Tomich argues that capitalism is not additive, but integrative (interestingly, following closely the conceptual premises of intersectionality), and, in his reading necessitates the Benjaminian "*going against the grain*" of Marx's presentation to recover those "historical contingencies and disturbing accidents" left out of Marx's process of abstraction.[cli] He claims that his insights follow more closely from the *Grundrisse*'s "unity of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption" than *Capital*'s "wage-centered totality."[clii] Banaji also advises looking at *Capital* askance: in continuing to trouble the valorization of free labor, Banaji argues that "free labour, so-called, *cannot* be an essential moment of capital, not if the self-expansion of value is intrinsically indifferent to the forms in which it dominates labour."[cliii] Kevin Anderson, meanwhile, has led the recent charge to broaden what is considered canonical Marx, and turns to sources like Marx's 1879–82 excerpt notebooks, as well as newspaper articles, letters, and lesser known editions and translations of *Capital*.[cliv]

While these calls for differential unity incorporate alternate space-times and open counter-trends of explicit un-freedom internal to the Marxist tradition, capitalism's *tendency* toward universalizing wage-labor remains relatively undisputed, at least in avowed Marxist discourse. As Anderson elaborates, "Marx was not a philosopher of difference in the postmodernist sense, for the critique of a single overarching entity, capital, was at the center of his entire intellectual enterprise."[clv] This centrality certainly leaves the dynamics of a correlation or inter-articulation (as well as Marx's representational linkage between logic and history) continuously up for dispute, such that interventions on its behalf are a perennial necessity.[clvi] If slavery did transform from the "more or less patriarchal" to a "system of commercial exploitation," Marx certainly doesn't seem to give us much insight into the significance of the transformation. Even when Marx attempts to theorize the two together as a global process, writing "As long as the English cotton manufactures depended on slave-grown cotton, it could be truthfully asserted that they rested on a twofold slavery, the indirect slavery of the white man in England and the direct slavery of the black men on the other side of the Atlantic," indirect slavery remains the target proposition in the linkage.[clvii] The empirical and hermeneutic inclusion of scenes of difference secures a desire for redemption that operates by expanding Marx's framework, but does not fundamentally alter it. Anievas and Nişancioğlu's recent "spatial widening of our analytical imaginary,"[clviii] for instance, reconstructs a complex Atlantic amalgam in which plantation economies were the catalyst for the industrial revolution—the source of surplus goods and the outlet for surplus population that, in turn, hardened forms of market dependence and accentuated the exploitation of the European laboring poor. Yet their new combination of "English capital, American land and African slavery" does not represent a reimagining of each term, as racism remains a "class relation," an afterthought to the real subsumption of Africa as one point of a triangle of interlocking dependence.[clix]

In tension and often overlapping with active projects to re-think the unthought of capitalism (the expansionist thesis) are more emphatic Marxist currents that insist, in one way or another, that slavery, colonialism, and difference writ large have already been sufficiently thought, at least by Marx. At the heart of this "sufficiency thesis" is the problem of Marx's mode of presentation in *Capital*. Remember, Marx gives primacy to logical form only insofar as it can be shown that this logical form is an aggregate practice given by the social history of capitalism: "the concrete is concrete because it is the concentration of many determinations, hence the unity of the diverse."[clx] If supplemental material is necessary for a genealogist like Anderson to argue that Marx's "notions of capital and class…were open and broad enough to encompass the particularities of nationalism, race, and ethnicity,"[clxi] for a theorist like David Harvey, this flexibility should instead be seen as a built-in feature of Marx's presentation, a "tribute to his genius": "Not only could he communicate a universal message, but he could do so in a multitude of voices that engaged different people's attention."[clxii] As such, Marx's abstractions may yet be critically capacious containers for locating different modes of production and forms of domination. The failure would lie not with Marx or his limited historical scope, but rather with the reader who needs to be more adequately grounded in Marxist methodology. It is important to note that while more historically sensitive proponents of this sufficiency thesis range from being pessimistic to agnostic on the intentionality of Marx's inclusion—David Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, for instance, expose the gaps in the history and structure of "labor" to incorporate difference[clxiii]—they nonetheless affirm the explanatory power and gravitas of the Marxist method for disclosing the frame of the totality.

The key critical edge for the bulk of sufficiency theorizing comes with the introduction of primitive accumulation at the end of *Capital* first volume, meant to then be re-integrated backward into an understanding of its early, abstract premises.[clxiv] Because Marx's logical unfolding does

not map onto its historical one—instead mimicking capitalist representation in a critical project of undoing—his logic, it is argued, can include and embed difference. The being of capitalism, to draw from Chakrabarty, can encode the historical process of its "becoming."[clxv] Lucia Pradella is a sophisticated and innovative defender of Marx in this regard, taking aim at parochial readings that would reduce "the world of commerce" to "one nation" (such as Brenner and even Harvey), and argues that Marx's first abstraction—the commodity—presupposes global relations of production in a totality capacious enough for "analyzing the multiplicity of states…as a totality, and not as a sum of national units."[clxvi] Even at its most ahistorical, historical realities have been accounted for, as one astute commentator puts it, but they merely "disappeared into Marx's system as the work of a tailor disappears into a finished coat."[clxvii] And Marx's finished coat, as Nicole Pepperell's work has brilliantly shown, gives signs of its own construction: like a play within a play, analysis of *Capital*'s literary techniques—its "subtle gestures," its "voicing and tone, characters, dramatic structure, and plot"—call attention to how "the artificiality of the performance playing out in the main text, destabilising and relativising the claims that the main text puts forward."[clxviii] To continue the tailor metaphor, *Capital*'s seams and lining, while finished, don't merely display construction, technique, and process, its mimicry of social taste and style exposes the threads for its own unravelling. By opening the section on "so-called primitive accumulation" with "original sin," Marx can then be read as ironically cuing us to the possibility that this origin story relays more accurately the origin story that capitalism tells to itself, in its replication of an a-historical reading of human nature.[clxix]

This broadening of primitive accumulation rewrites the significance and character of violence as not only the transition to but reproduction of capitalism, harkening back to Rosa Luxemburg's famous argument that "Force is the only solution open to capital; the accumulation

of capital, seen as an historical process, employs force as a permanent weapon, not only at its genesis, but further on down to the present day."[clxx] Marx may seem to disagree when he situates "direct extra-economic force" in the form of the power of the state and law at the "historical genesis of capitalist production" and dismisses the direct force under capitalism as only expelled in "exceptional" instances.[clxxi] But given that capitalism's normal functioning is compelled to prop up the separation of the laborer from his means, every moment of accumulation might be considered as the continuous reproduction of processes of primitive accumulation.[clxxii] Marx's "Force is the midwife of every old society which is pregnant with a new one. It is itself an economic power,"[clxxiii] would be a signal of the continuity of this determinant and constituent force.[clxxiv] Because racial subjects represent "*dependent subjects of expropriation,*" according to Nancy Fraser, they can assume the role of revealing the force that is also behind "*free subjects of exploitation.*"[clxxv]

Recuperating Marx in these ways means, however, downplaying his insistence on the historical distinctiveness of labor, the radical shift in the totality induced by increasing degrees of mystification toward labor's conditions of possibility.[clxxvi] While Marx undoubtedly *does* theorize the transparent violence in the State's concentrated executive function, especially as a mechanistic engine for transition, capitalism's characteristic form of violence is situated *immanently* with regards to its processes of reproduction. Insofar as commodity-producing labor expresses a social facticity of abstraction—real and not merely thought—it exerts an impersonal imperative generated not by intersubjective domination but, as Moishe Postone puts it, "the domination of people by abstract social structures that people themselves constitute."[clxxvii] More than just constitutive of the capitalist epoch, this immanent violence, what Postone calls "abstract domination," is formative of capitalism's mode of mediation itself, and the key to commodity

fetishism. The commodity-form's immaterial abstractions, arising out of aggregate material and concrete practices, are strikingly written not as the effect of direct (physical or moral) coercion, unshakeable tradition, or conscious intent. Rather than being mediated by objective and overt social relations, in Marx's theory, labor under capitalism is objectified in and as social relationality, becoming the unrecognized presupposition by which society mediates itself.

It is, moreover, irreducible to class struggle. There need be no sinister Mr. Money-bags, out to expropriate the surplus, property, and means of production from the meek, for regardless of any malevolent or benevolent intent, the "immanent laws of capitalist production" confront even "the individual capitalist as a coercive force external to him."[clxxviii] That is to say, even the capitalist and political economist become alienated and objectified by the tautological demands of value.[clxxix] From the standpoint of abstract domination, where modes of production are theoretically presented as themselves producing forms of violence, primitive accumulation might be more comprehensively grasped as, in Jason Read's figuration, itself a "transformation of the form of violence."[clxxx] As such, direct force cannot be considered the primary target of critique, else we misapprehend capitalism's ground.[clxxxi]

Again, we repeat the oscillation between commensurability and incommensurability. On the one hand, this transformation may be thought of as telic. Marx does overwhelmingly situate abstract violence at the end of a progression, where primitive accumulation marks the passage of violence from direct relations of domination to those maintained by overt mechanisms of law and, finally, to the abstract domination of labor that Marx, in some moments, associated with "the normal European level."[clxxxii] And, especially with slavery, Marx overlays particular inhabitations of violence with relations of production, despite the disarticulation the likes of Banaji might like to induce. In the *Grundrisse*, he has wage labor arising "out of the dissolution of slavery and

serfdom,"[clxxxiii] implying that any continuation of slavery into capitalism would be merely the result of a stubborn persistence on slavery's part—an "anomaly opposite the bourgeois system itself."[clxxxiv] In this dissolution, the oppressive and enabling capacities of abstraction are rendered the conservation and generalization of direct violence. The "external relations" of independent producers, Marx insists, are "very far from being an abolition of 'relations of dependence'; they are rather the dissolution of these relations into a general form; they are merely the elaboration and emergence of the general *foundation* of the relations of personal dependence."[clxxxv] He continues in a very crystallizing fashion: "individuals are now ruled by *abstractions*, whereas earlier they depended on one another." Abstract domination, in this theorization, at least, is very neatly the dialectical synthesis after which every Hegelian dreams. Only a comprehension of abstract domination could secure the grounds for its overcoming.

A more Marxist spin on this synthesis might situate abstract domination as a hypostatization internal to capitalism's mode of representation. In this light, Marx's complex compendium of backward glances at capitalism's "pre-history" would do more than merely rhetorically or historically clarify the terms of capitalism's revolutionary upheaval: they performatively reenact it. After all, as Chakrabarty writes, "Becoming" is "not simply the calendrical or chronological past that precedes capital but the past that the category retrospectively posits."[clxxxvi] What this retroactive causality means becomes more apparent when returning to what has been referred to as the "immaculate conception" of abstract labor, born out of immense historical violence, but posited as an apparently natural, ahistorical commodity.[clxxxvii] If labor power becomes a commodity, capitalism cannot expose the production of this commodity—the dramatic interventions of force and discipline at its genesis that, external to the smooth functioning promised by exchange, have to be foreclosed for its continuation—else it expose the violence at

its origin. Instead, it crafts a past whose presuppositions naturalize accumulation in order to rationalize the present. Meanwhile, Marx contends that "accumulation merely presents as a continuous process what in primitive accumulation appears as a distinct historical process."[clxxxviii] In other words, "history constructs the logic with which history is understood."[clxxxix] It is not only, as Werner Bonefeld clarifies, that Marx generalizes primitive accumulation as "the presupposition of capital and the result of its reproduction" and, thus, "the social constitution of capitalist social relations"[cxc]: the continuation of these social relations would seem to be a fetish itself, and abstract domination, its mode of functioning—a "domination over thought itself."[cxci]

Into a Finished Coat?

After a preponderance of Marx's explicit statements on difference, we seem to swing back to continuity. While the unique theoretical challenges represented by capitalism's materialistic and mystifying abstract domination are simplified in the brute force—the "gratuitous violence"—of slavery, it is nevertheless the case that celebrating this emptying as freedom and maintaining an absolute distinction between free and unfree labor in effect valorizes the fiction of possessive individualism in particular, and subjectivity in general, under the banner of liberal ideology.[cxcii] Thought historically, abstract domination might work as a reverse magnet for the domination of slavery *because capitalism itself enjoins it*. It shines a spotlight on hierarchy and domination to stage its own relative progress. "The abstraction, or idea," Marx seems to confirm, "is nothing more than the theoretical expression of those material relations which are their lord and master."[cxciii] The most charitable reading of the finished coat of *Capital* could from these premises comprehend the conjuring of violent, abject, backwards, mute slavery within a (critical) capitalist representation as a means to both capture the indirect tyranny experienced by the wage slave *and*

express the coevalness of force with the complex realization of capitalism's forms. If this is Marx's point, we would then be required to situate almost every citation of slavery as a parodic voicing of capital's own positionality, with as many self-referential asides, literary allusions, and cheeky footnotes to tip us off to its theatricality as elaborately as with capital. We would have to rethink the supersessionist inheritance of "extinction," "dissolution," "pedestal," and "grafting" to lean more heavily on the "whilst," to not only substitute "the dawn" for "the pivot," but to rethink "threads" and "chains," "veiled slavery" and "slavery pure and simple."

As a problem of the social and the subject, racial slavery could sit at a nexus mediating what is historically new about capitalism—its "fungible flux."[cxciv] Most immediately, we could extend Marx's blueprint to natural law, whose ambiguous use of slavery, at turns reliant on conquest and trade, reflects mercantilist debates on the limits of terrestrial wealth. If wealth is zero-sum, then international relations would be but a competition to acquire a piece of the pie. If it isn't, then wealth is potentially infinite, and slaves, whose origins come not from winning a territorial dispute, but from trade and trade's reproductive capacities, could represent this potential: chattel as "self-augmenting capital."[cxcv] In this sense, then, we might say that racial slavery represents the shift from preoccupations with wealth in land to preoccupations in wealth in trade, such that wealth rests in its self-valorization. This very preliminary reading, however, is not induced by critical cues on Marx's part. Marx does empirically provide examples of the coexistence of abstract and concrete domination, and free and unfree labor, as well as of concrete domination being used as a political tool, especially against workers' rebellions. But unlike Immanuel Wallerstein who calls the plantation the "original factory," Sidney Mintz who argues for the large-scale and capital-intensive force of the plantation as the "synthesis of factory and field," and Sylvia Wynter who insists on the secret of capitalism "not in the factory but in the plantation," Marx maintains that

labor, under the sign of industrial production and manufacture, is the representative "unity of the diverse"—the most expansive concretization of capitalist reproduction and the grounds for capitalist revolution.[cxcvi] And although the presence of wage labour may not define capitalism—after all, both slavery *and* wage labor preceded capitalism, only to be rearticulated by it—the main achievement of *Capital* is nonetheless to define how the *social relationship* between capital and wage labor is crucial in making a distinct form of abstract labor that produces and posits capital. Slaves remain empirical protrusions and formal flourishes to the logic of capital; they are not theorized as part of this social relationship.

We can say, for now, that Marx recognizes trans-Atlantic slavery's ostensive "capitalist nature" as a historical particular, *important* for the development of capital and the theoretical means by which it is reproduced, yet ultimately *inessential* to his critical presentation of capitalist totality. Even though an immanent critique can be made to recuperate Marx from some of the errors of evolutionism, slavery's modes of subjection are not the Marxist premise from which to re-think the condition of production of knowledge and social life, of mind and matter, of freedom and possibility. Capitalism, the "full flower of the African slave trade," that, in the words of Du Bois, "made the investment in human flesh the first experiment in organized modern capitalism; which indeed made capitalism possible,"[cxcvii] does not take slavery as its measure. Slavery's relations of domination are theoretically abstracted out of the capitalist totality, and contingently reinserted as mute and inert forms, even though the purveyors of personal domination—masters, purportedly—are recognized in their transformation into those capitalists who, in Marx's articulation, are themselves sufferers of abstract domination. Indeed, in the second volume of *Capital*, Marx again affirms that the slave market "retains an element of natural economy" and "receives supplies of the commodity labour-power from war, piracy, etc., and this pillage is not

mediated by a process of circulation, but is rather the appropriation in kind of other people's labour-power by direct physical compulsion."[cxcviii] The difference that noted historiographers have identified in the slave market, where slaves were being produced *for* circulation on the market in a complicated causal relationship to their blackness, is explicitly disavowed, its qualitative difference repressed, even when the dilemma of the "African slave trade" is tentatively broached.

A large determinant of this repression is that Marx never theorizes race as a productive force. Revealing is the key fragment found in Marx's "Wage Labor and Capital," where Marx Marx parrots Pierre-Joseph Proudhon to write "What is a Negro slave? A man of the black race. The one explanation is as good as the other."[cxcix] His critique of Proudhon's tautology does not fare much better, as Marx continues: "A Negro is a Negro. He becomes a *slave* only in certain relationships."[cc] Blackness is naturalized apart from the economy, and slaveness is contingent on broader relations of production. Marx's grafting method is incongruous with his major methodological innovation—real abstraction—which insists on submitting labor, money, and value to a dynamic realization of their practical truth. Incorporating both slavery and race into this engine of abstraction would be a spanner in its works. By naturalizing, and thus neutralizing, the power of racial slavery, I am arguing that capitalism's disavowal of its own conditions of production is theoretically carried over into Marxism, insofar as, to be a little glib, Marx is himself a product of capitalism and immanent to its standpoint. Or, as Hortense Spillers suggests with respect to Freud, Marx "could not 'see' his own connection to the 'race'/culture orbit, or could not theorize it, because the place of their elision marked the vantage point from which he spoke."[cci] Because Marx's method expresses the political ontology of the human, it is one-sided: slavery, as a real abstraction, goes behind Marx and Marxists' backs.

The endemic reading of race as exogenous to the modern landscape—a super-structural justification for economic subjection, a tool implemented to complicate any incipient unity of laborers—continues to be shot through Marxism, even its critical race variants, to the present day.[ccii] In one attempt to correct Marx, and situate race at capitalism's cellular level, John Preston's version of the expansionist thesis returns to Postone's "abstract domination" to propose what he calls a "new form of racism—abstract racial domination—which is based upon race as part of the social relations of capitalism *as a form of capital* rather than as a peculiarity or property of labour (racialisation or a racial project) as in concrete racial domination (the subordination of one racial group by another)."[cciii] His proposal is compelling, especially in identifying what he calls racial slavery's "infinite extension," the process where branding skin as black racialises all other bodies, an insight especially key to helping situate how the suffering of the free laborer (and, consequently, the capitalist) cannot be understood without the perspective of race.[cciv] However, Preston still assumes that the paradigm is capitalism, albeit in a revised version: race is "a form of capital." But if Marx constitutively unthinks racial slavery, then the problem of racial slavery cannot simply be integrated into the theorization of capitalism without the entire constellations of the abstract and concrete undergoing a dramatic modification.

Nor can Marx's powerful critique be destabilized merely at the level of what Marx calls his mode of "inquiry," as with Robinson's substitution of the Anglo proletariat for the Atlantic maroon, without also intervening at the abstraction engendered by Marx's dialectical "mode of presentation."[ccv] Because Robinson 1) positions "racial capitalism" as a problem of the appropriation and extraction of black labor power and 2) reduces race to an "epistemology" for the "rationale and cultural mechanisms of domination," his rejection of Marx's abstractions all too easily translates into their redemption.[ccvi] With race as a ruse approximate to the pseudo-Marxist

sense of ideology as "false consciousness," Robinson can assert that the black radical tradition has increasingly made strides in rendering the problem of race "more transparent," acquiring awareness and clarity with "each historical moment."[ccvii] But in his progressive enthusiasm, Robinson misses that "transparency" and "history" are part and parcel of anti-black violence. While Robinson does identify that "racialism," both material and ideal, "insinuated not only medieval, feudal, and capitalist social structures, forms of property, and modes of production, but as well the very values and traditions of consciousness through which the peoples of these ages came to understand their worlds and their experiences," the traditions of consciousness to which he alludes do not challenge the formal predicates of consciousness itself.[ccviii]

Despite approaching the depth of the structure of anti-blackness, the new differential unity of "Black Marxism" delivers an oppositional consciousness whose immanent outside ("Africanity"), predicated on a stagial ordering of history, invested in sovereignty, and proselytizing an arc of redemption, keeps Marx's abstract premises intact. Instead of the corrective of the concrete, I argue that we need, to repeat Marx, to re-diagnose the "general illumination," that which "bathes all the other colours and modifies their particularity."[ccix]

Labour in White Skin

The limits of the Marxist totality and the efficacy of a re-diagnosis can be tested through an examination of *Capital*'s lengthy chapter on the struggle over the working day. With its relatively unusual preponderance of historical details, "The Working Day" exposes the dynamic between the elevation of working class consciousness and the intensification of capital. Marx warns that capital tends to threaten the very life of the labor it needs to extract: "in its blind and measureless drive, its insatiable appetite for surplus labour, capital oversteps not only the moral but even the merely

physical limits of the working day."[ccx] His awareness of the necroeconomic trajectory of value is double-edged, an expression of capital's "living contradiction."[ccxi] If the wage contract conceals exploitation and if abstract labor imposes an alienation from the collective conditions of social life, capital's invasion of the very life of the worker can potentially pierce the veil of abstract domination. The struggle over the working day, and its exposition of the constructedness of the freedom to contract, mobilizes a class consciousness aware of its own position "not as an object, but as activity; not as itself *value*, but as the *living source* of value."[ccxii] Working class reflective activity can thus hold the potential to reanimate their spectral erasure and to revolutionize the social life that was made bare: "[w]hen the worker co-operates in a planned way with others, he strips off the fetters of his individuality, and develops the capabilities of his species."[ccxiii] Indeed, a weighty portion of Marxist critique proceeds through a notion of an objective, developmental dynamic—an eschatology—targeting those contradictions in relations of production that also hold what Nicole Pepperell calls "tacit *potentials* generated by the forces of production."[ccxiv] Although this telos, which Marx characterizes as "the negation of the negation,"[ccxv] has been criticized as all too Hegelian, the chapter on the working day continues to garner praise because its dialectics evolved through grounded attention to "the voice of the worker."[ccxvi]

Such attention derives in part from an aberrance in Marx's method. "The Working Day" was a late edition to *Capital*, itself informed and inspired by contemporaneous political events—namely, the historical emancipation of slaves in the United States, the growth of the First International, and the wider intercourse between British labor and the American North.[ccxvii] Given this historical and textual interlay, several readers have gone so far as to suggest that it was in the international abolitionist movement, more than (as is so often supposed) the restricted Tory-Radical critique filtered through Engels, that Marx's analysis of wage labor and its rhetorical twin,

"wage slavery," fundamentally took shape.[ccxviii] The abolitionist origin story synthesizes the sufficiency and expansionist theses, as slavery can only be supposed to suffuse Marxist categories through an expansion of our canonical understanding of Marx, *à la* Anderson. Evidence of Marx's interest in slavery can be found first in his role in the 1850s as a noted correspondent for the abolitionist newspaper *The New York Daily Tribune*, and such interest spills into his private research notebooks which includes, among other references, excerpts and notes on British abolitionist Thomas Buxton.[ccxix] Andrew Zimmerman, editor of the most recent volume on Marx's Civil War writings, argues that this body of work represents not just extraneous historical material; it "reveal[s] the co-evolution of Marxism and the American Civil War."[ccxx] Given that "The Working Day" chapter was appended to an already largely formed speculative method *after* significant events in the Civil War, there is reason to think that his method not only already included elements of Robinson's historiographical corrective but may yet evolve to expose a new "general illumination" given the incorporation of shifting historical particulars. Marxism may need yet again "to appropriate the material in detail, to analyse its different forms of development and to track down their inner connection," for, as Marx claims, "[o]nly after this work has been done can the real movement be appropriately presented."[ccxxi]

The Civil War is key because, alongside the Paris Commune, it provided an instructive model of a variant of primitive accumulation—what Pradella calls "competitive accumulation"—that critically paired revolution and crisis.[ccxxii] The global reverberation of the war undermined the role of cotton in the international division of labor, threatening Britain with "the greatest economic catastrophe," and catapulted US industrialization to advance far beyond Marx's previous assessment that "[i]n its present form (1866) the United States must still be considered a European colony."[ccxxiii] Relatively unencumbered by the contradictory compositions of capital and

machinery in the more developed England, the US blend of state intervention, protectionism, and industrial stimulus seized new technologies and "brought a very rapid centralization of capital. The great republic has therefore ceased to be the promised land for emigrating workers. Capitalist production advances there with gigantic strides."[ccxxiv] Its consolidation as a capitalist stronghold nonetheless coincided with its position as a source of class consciousness, represented in the founding of the National Labor Union in 1866 and memorialized in the struggle for a shorter working day.[ccxxv] Marx explains the global transformative effects of the Civil War on the First International in his 1867 preface: "Just as the in the eighteenth century the American War of Independence sounded the tocsin for the European middle class, so in the nineteenth century the American Civil War did the same for the European working class."[ccxxvi] This claim, in particular, has been used to internationalize what is usually thought of as Marx's restricted British vision and, when put in conversation with his broader sentiments on slavery and labor, is made to elaborate an internally differentiated and intersectional internationalism.[ccxxvii] Note, however, that the Civil War is positioned primarily as a teaching tool for a non-black working class, with slavery as a drag on the (contradictory) advancement of both competitive accumulation and working class consciousness. For this paradigm, abolition, I will explain, *can* inform English workers but only if it moves the slave *from* the problematic of blackness and *to* the position of the worker and potential revolutionary subject.

The analysis of time in "The Working Day" already set the stage for one means of historicizing the logical link between capitalism and slavery: remember that Marx positioned a fundamental difference between labor and slavery through the formal freedom and conditional temporality of the labor contract. The fight for the working day begins with the infringement of this freedom, which Marx compares with the historical instance of racial slavery:

> If labor is prolonged beyond a certain period—or labor capacity is valorized to more than a certain extent—labor capacity will be temporarily or definitively destroyed, instead of being preserved...This is still at this moment the case in Cuba, where after 12 hours in the fields the Negroes have a further two hours of manufacturing labor to perform in connection with the preparation of sugar or tobacco.[ccxxviii]

With capitalism set to engulf the very life of the laborer it simultaneously enshrines in freedom, Marx reinvokes the rhetorical register of wage slavery, except that this time, the threat of such a reduction is not merely theoretical, it is an imminent encroachment of forces that would appear to reduce the worker to a contemporary slave. Marx recognizes the contradictory potential of this reduction in his newspaper articles: workers were inclined to consider their position a comparative advantage over slavery—"while before the Negro, mastered and sold without his concurrence, [the worker] boasted it the highest prerogative of the white-skinned labourer to sell himself and choose his own master."[ccxxix] In an earlier dispatch, Marx centers this racial celebration of choice in the South and proceeds to project this cultural region into the past, by encouraging the comparison of those he refers to as the "many millions of so-called poor whites" with "the Roman plebeians in the period of Rome's extreme decline."[ccxxx] Southern slaveowners maintained their minority position by promising freedom in an ideological deflection which ultimately culminated in "not a war of defense, but a war of conquest, a war of conquest for the extension and perpetuation of slavery."[ccxxxi] As the exhaustion of land was one of the prime problems of Southern slavery, the necessary "acquisition of new Territories" was held as a carrot, an incentive making it possible to "square the interests of these poor whites with those of the slaveholders, to give their restless thirst for action a harmless direction and to tame them with the prospect of one day becoming slaveholders themselves."[ccxxxii] A year later, Marx observes how this dynamic filters into the consciousness of the freeworker of the North, who "sees in the Negro a dangerous competitor" and comes to "hate the Negro second only to the slaveowner. For them he is the symbol of slavery and the debasement of the working class, and the Democratic press threatens them daily with an

inundation of their territories by the 'nigger.'"[ccxxxiii] Workers, then, were not only threatened by the potential reduction to the status of the slave, they were threatened both by the potential liberation of slaves (the end of slavery) and the liberation of slavery from its geographical limits (the continuation of slavery).

However, at this level of analysis, they were not as a whole constituted by slaves. Though the raw materials of Southern slavery can be a stimulus to Northern commodity production, it remained theorized along the lines of an economic "pedestal." It is because poor whites, especially poor Southern whites, are only *formally* subsumed by capital that they can be said to bear more resemblance to Roman plebeians than to capitalist subjects primed with revolutionary potential. In inducing an illusory freedom from comparison, instead of a fetishistic relation to freedom, slavery's ideological intercourse only *incidentally* contributes to capitalism's reproduction and does not form the internal dynamic of emergent capitalist markets. Southern slavery did retard the progress of freedom, as with Marx's heralded quip that "In the United States of America, every independent workers' movement was paralyzed as long as slavery disfigured a part of the republic. Labour in a white skin cannot emancipate itself where it is branded in the black skin."[ccxxxiv] It is important to differentiate this dialectic of impediments and emancipation from Patterson's idealist conception in which

> The [slave] relation, even while promoting capitalism, undermined its major ideological rationalization: the indirect [power relation] expressed in the notion of a free wage labor force. The use of personally dominated individuals for the production and reproduction of wealth exposed the reality behind the so-called free labor. The laborer came to see his work for others for what it really was—alienation from the means of production and exploitation by the employer. Faced with the stark reality of personal power exercised over slaves, the worker could easily see that his much-vaunted freedom to change employers was simply a meaningless freedom to change masters.[ccxxxv]

From a Marxist perspective, Patterson can pose slavery as self-evidentially a threat to so-called free labor only because he underestimates the "real" objective domination of capitalism. What is

a promise for Patterson is for Marx a profound problem: when direct slavery becomes absorbed by the capitalist superstructure, only collective praxis, not any transparent reflection into the slave relation, could stimulate consciousness of waged domination.

It is in this vein that Marx celebrates abolition, and abolitionists, as a social precipitate for the wage struggle. Marx's *Tribune* writings venerated the "iron character…and purest conviction" of abolitionists like Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison and Gerrit Smith—peculiar praise given that abolitionists tended towards liberalism at best.[ccxxxvi] Abolitionist acceptance of capitalist freedom became a key feature of Gilded Age jurisprudence, retracting the radical potentials of Reconstruction around the constitutional "unrestricted right of every man to the fruits of his labor,"[ccxxxvii] a limit from a more broadly defined republicanism of productive property to mere ownership of self. Because abolitionists saw capitalism as the most important step towards black liberation, the prime boon for emancipated slaves was that "labor is no longer the badge of his servitude, and the consummation of his misery: it is the evidence of his liberty…For the first time in his life, he is a party to a contract."[ccxxxviii] It may seem strange that Marx would endorse such reformist moralism as more than hypocrisy or masked class interest. After all, Marx chides those liberals who "overflowed with moral indignation at the preposterous notion of making a man work for nothing" but who could not perceive the domination of waged work.[ccxxxix] While Genovese has famously positioned Marx's Civil War writing as a sign of "the retreat of Marx, Engels, and too many Marxists into liberalism,"[ccxl] other commentators take a more consistent Marxist vein, arguing, rightly so, that Marx can sympathize with the abolitionist failure to penetrate the veil of wage slavery because his method is able to recognize in them the "immanent dynamic that restricts vision in capitalist society," being themselves beholden to the beguiling commodity fetish.[ccxli]

If no such sympathy was extended, however, to the misapprehensions of the slave-holders, it is because slaveholders' techniques represented outdated modes of coercion: "Alongside the modern evils, we are oppressed by a whole series of inherited evils, arising from the passive survival of archaic and outmoded modes of production, with their accompanying train of anachronistic social and political relations. We suffer not only from the living, but from the dead. *Le mort saisit le vif!* ['The dead man clutches onto the living!']."[ccxlii] From this grafting perspective, the white skin of abolitionists and workers alike could not move past the ideological wedge of slavery, its dead weight, to recognize the domination implicit in the "freedom" of the market, the contract, and labor *until slavery was abolished*. Meanwhile, the paralysis of "labor in a white skin" continues to be invoked as an indication of Marx's early insights on class and race and a precursor to Du Bois's wages of whiteness—for August H. Nimtz Jr., for instance, Marx should be taken as a beacon of inter-racial class solidarity for advising that the liberation of white workers "from the exploitation of capital couldn't be accomplished at the expense or denial of the fullest equality for fellow workers of a different skin color."[ccxliii] But the promise of abolition is that it can clarify a truth about labor, not slavery or slave experience or those of "different skin color"; it can lead to a revolution which means first a revolutionizing of working conditions by workers. Unlike Du Bois, who insisted on a general strike that would reveal slaves as revolutionary agents, when Marx speaks of slave revolution, agency is given to the North which "has a last card up its sleeve in the shape of a slave revolution."[ccxliv] Slaves cannot be actors precisely because despite appearing to face an oppression similar to that faced by the wage laborer, slaves remain a token of what was once a visible oppression but has now become invisible. As value, they cannot produce the means for their overcoming.

Indeed, Marx's prioritization of capitalism can only proceed from a "chains versus threads" style that pits a purely slave-based society against one dominated by the capital relation. One the one hand, the abolition of slave-holders can and does abolish the domination characteristic of slavery; on the other, the abolition of capitalists would not do away with the abstract domination of capital. The abolition of a slavery that persists internal to capitalism presupposes the transformation from slave to worker. Because capitalist self-valorization is not intrinsically constituted by factors like race or gender (as real subsumption will reveal that abstract labor is, in Ellen Wood's vantage, structurally indifferent to differences of identity),[ccxlv] abolition is its potential equalizer, capable of overcoming the paralysis of ideological deflections of equality to pass into a recognition of labor itself (not contingent experiences of exploitation and discrimination) as the problem.[ccxlvi] Only with the distortions of race removed, the argument implies, could class consciousness cohere to focus on a critique of the value-form, to return to a mobilization of species-being instead of the regression of species spectrality. And this is precisely the prophetic vision that immediately follows the famed quote about the emancipation of labor in white skin: "a new life immediately arose from the death of slavery. The first fruit of the American Civil War was the eight hours' agitation, which ran from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California, with the seven-league boots of the locomotive."[ccxlvii] But Marx underestimates the "death of slavery." He has, more to the point, no account of its afterlife because he has no account of its life.

First, Marx elides the deeper sense in which class consciousness grew through the firmament of pro-slavery. Slaveholders were formative voices in the critique of free labor.[ccxlviii] In a quote that echoes Marx almost too closely, the famous proslavery ideologue George Fitzhugh proposed in his 1857 *Cannibals All! Or Slaves without Masters* that "Capital exercises a more

perfect compulsion over free laborers than human masters over slaves; for free laborers must at all times work or starve, and slaves are supported whether they work or not."[ccxlix] The Northern laborer was positioned as a "slave of the community," subject to the indifferent whims of the market, instead of those of one individual master. And while free laborers have less freedom, dignity, protection, care, and rights, slaves, Fitzhugh argued, enjoy more actual practical liberty, ampler allowance, and constant protection. A footnote in *Capital* mocks a similar defense in the *Times* of London: "'Very many of us think,' says a leading article of 2 July 1863, 'that, while we work our own young women to death, using the scourge of starvation, instead of the crack of the whip, as the instrument of compulsion, we have scarcely a right to hound on fire and slaughter against families who were born slaveowners, and who, at least, feed their slaves well, and work them lightly.'"[ccl] While Marx would likely situate Fitzhugh's position as mere deflection, akin to the rhetoric of an ancient Roman politician, Fitzhugh's logic is the synthesis that could unite the radically egalitarian gesture of neo-Republicanism with the hierarchy of the Republicanism of the past. Ever the exemplary firebrand, Fitzhugh broke with a liberal emphasis on rights to reassert the supremacy of a generalized slavery, with a newfound gesture to "slavery in the abstract": "Whatever rights he has are subordinate to the good of the whole and he has never ceded rights to it, for he was born its slave, and had no rights to cede."[ccli] In Republican sentiment, subordination was ambiguously embraced for its potential to express the organic truth of natural hierarchy, and in this fundamental respect, slaveholders may seem to resemble the promise of ancient days.[cclii] But this announcement of abstract slavery, the specter of the general possibility that everyone be subordinated to slavery, was historically and logically new. The possibility of total slavery is the inverse of natural slavery: natural slavery was raised under the old Republic to protect the general encroachment of slavery and stand in for unexplained problems of difference and degree, but now

that natural slavery was *a priori* configured as black, abstract slavery can be posed with all the safeguards that would keep the hierarchy intact.

Thinking through how "property in slaves becomes a metaphor for rights of all kinds, as the idea of estates in persons grounds liberal rights of self-ownership," Brenna Bhandar convincingly describes how the commodification incumbent from racial slavery entailed securing property no longer through possession or occupation, use or memory, but "on a concept of ownership *as a relation*, based on an *expectation* of being able to use the property as one wishes."[ccliii] It is in this sense that Fitzhugh's critique, though pitting abolitionists on the side of free labor proponents against slaveholders and unionists, also joined them. Abolitionists, like liberals, wanted to free space to recognize the potential of this relational capacity while the more militant movement (grouped loosely under the banner of Radical Republicanism) sought to revive the real structures in which this expectation could actually be activated. These moves were united in the reinvigoration of sovereignty through the belief in human potential—that fulsome life and liberty are within our grasp, if not for the looming reduction to a bygone form of coercion. They accept, that is, the logics of natural law as well as its aporias. The same can be said of slaveholders. Slaveholders and non-slaveholders are united not because all could potentially be reduced to general slaves; rather, all were elevated to a freedom of expectation. As such, this confluence was uniquely post-racial in all directions—liberals who claimed the slave could move beyond slavery without addressing its structural and substantive dimensions, southern apologists who sought to protect slavery even in its most abstract form, and radicals who organized to overturn labor—linked by a certain enunciation of personhood whose wellspring remains the tradition of anti-blackness.

It is only if we conceive slavery as a form of labor attendant to its mode of exploitation that 1865 can appear as a moment more emancipatory than Du Bois's succinct "The slave went free; stood a brief moment in the sun; then moved back into slavery."[ccliv] It is only if the problem is labor that when Fitzhugh prophesizes "One set of ideas will govern and control after awhile the civilized world. Slavery will every where be abolished or every where be re-instituted" we can celebrate the achievement of the former instead of the ascendency of the latter.[cclv] For Marx, of course, the abolition of slavery is an empirical fact whose outcome generalized labor and stimulated labor-consciousness.[cclvi] In his journalist voice, Marx does recognize an alternate history *à la* Fitzhugh in which what would take place is "not a dissolution of the Union, but a *reorganization* of it, a *reorganization on the basis of slavery*, under the recognized control of the slaveholding oligarchy."[cclvii] But his reorganization rejects the specificity of blackness. If the slave system were to "infect the whole Union" then, Marx claims:

> In the northern states, where Negro slavery is unworkable in practice, the white working class would be gradually depressed to the level of helotry. This would be in accord with the loudly proclaimed principle that only certain races are capable of freedom, and that as in the South the real labor is the lot of the Negro, so in the North it is the lot of the German and the Irishman, or their direct descendants.[cclviii]

Marx here repeats a logic of race as super-structural exclusion. But if, as Du Bois contended, southern slaveholders "died as a class" in the Civil War, "decimated," submerged in "bitter disappointment and frustration," disappearing as a separate aristocracy, imperceptibly submerged into the ranks of poor whites, the violence of Reconstruction reveals not merely the fallen status of planters thrust into the degraded position of workers, but the inversion of expectation in which slaves could potentially upend abstract slavery and undermine the non-black union of political, economic, and libidinal capacity.[cclix] The paramilitary violence of Reconstruction, "its lynching and mob law, its murders and cruelty, its insensibility to the finer things of civilization,"[cclx] was an exercise in and reassertion of such capacity. The abstraction of slavery, not that of labor, can better

account for the fault lines that followed the period. In turn, Marx's misunderstanding of slavery only accumulates in late-capital: his analysis of "real subsumption" carries his faith in abolition into the intensification of abstract labor as that which is bare, without quality, and without race.

Real Subsumption and The Abstract Slave

Not all Marxist interpretations celebrate the working day as the emergent site for a revolutionary proletariat. As Marx explains, capital's reduction of workers to bare life almost exhausts its source of self-valorization, revealing limits to absolute surplus value. Capital instead becomes reinvested in spurring sources of *relative* surplus value.[cclxi] The unintended industrialization and machination resultant from this dynamic means, for value-form thinkers like Postone, that laborers' collective self-awareness of themselves as owners of commodities instead becomes a "powerful force in the democratization and humanization of capitalism."[cclxii] As Jason Read characterizes the two-fold generalized subsumption of subjectivity: in production, work becomes not the labor of a craftsman, but labor that "engages the knowledge and desire of humanity in general"; in consumption, the world is reduced "to what can be possessed, owned, viewed in the comfort of one's home," thus generating "a massive privatisation of desire."[cclxiii] The antagonism generative at the heart of real subsumption means that liberation from capital might require not a liberation *of* laborers but a liberation *from* labor, the abolition of alienated necessity. An abolition of this order can be critically confronted most when capital becomes interested less in appropriating the abstract labor of the commons and instead in "directly appropriat[ing] the singularity and commonality of existence."[cclxiv] Within this accelerated dialectic, the hope remains that the utopian promises of the commons can be realized in the struggle to reorganize capital's "transindividual production of subjectivity" into a "positive condition for new freedoms and a new sociality."[cclxv] The category

of "real subsumption," by extending the spectral value-form into the very essence of the laborer, can reveal counterfactual potential insofar as "its ceaseless revolutionizing of the conditions of production…exposes the produced nature of sociality as such."[cclxvi]

Late capital's appropriation of existence may seem to point to the fundamental truth of the "wage slave" analytic, with the wage slave no longer signaling a concealed form of past domination and instead evolving into a new and intensified slavery that ensnares everyone in its invisible threads. Indeed, Marx writes that "In contrast to the slave, [the wage-laborer's] labour becomes more intensive, since the slave works only under the spur of external fear but not for *his existence* which is *guaranteed* even though it does not belong to him. The free worker, however, is impelled by his wants."[cclxvii] The doubly-free worker not only labors for their existence, their self-determination produces the wealth that dominates their existence and culminates in what Deleuze and Guattari call their "machinic enslavement."[cclxviii] Indeed, for Marx this existential thrust is immeasurably more effective than overt power because the "consciousness (or better: the *idea*) of free self-determination, of liberty, makes a much better worker of one than of the other."[cclxix] And Marx grounds the transformation of the labor process and the laborer to the mechanical transformations consequent from the Civil War—the "galloping pace of improvements in machinery, and the corresponding displacement of manual labor"[cclxx] are what reduce the laborer to objectification and experimentation: "*Experimenta in corpore vili* [Experiments on a worthless body], like those of anatomists on frogs, were actually being made here."[cclxxi]

Even critically minded historians of race and slavery repeat elements of this alignment. Stephanie Smallwood marks a moment when Marx unites capitalism and the slave trade—"*Mutato nomine de fabula narratur* (The name is changed, but the tale is told of you!)"[cclxxii]—as one of "analytical slippage," given his predominant tendency towards differentiation. Because of a

historical failure in perception, Marx is led away from what Smallwood deems "an obvious interpretive conclusion: that slave-trading was analogous to the capitalist labor market because it gave birth to the capitalist mode of production."[cclxxiii] By "birth," Smallwood also implies death. At the threshold of life and death, the bare life of the capitalist subject builds on processes resembling what was first accomplished on the slave ships, "a watershed," as Smallwood details in *Saltwater Slavery*, "in what would become an enduring project in the modern Western world: probing the limits up to which it is possible to discipline the body without extinguishing the life within"[cclxxiv] However, this shared genealogy, which correctly positions slavery as a historical root for the constitution of capitalist ontology, does not excuse a collapse that would make the slave either the interpretative analogue, secret truth, or intensive future of the labor. What Smallwood does not quite arrive at theoretically is how abstract labor's potentiality—its "transindividual production of subjectivity"—is in structural, historical, and *reproductive* tension with what Smallwood elsewhere quite effectively exposes as the "anomalous intimacy" of the slave's social death.[cclxxv]

First, autopoesis as the "production of the one producing—a production of subjectivity,"[cclxxvi] is not a product of late capitalism, as Read would have it. Sylvia Wynter's sociogenic principle puts the production of subjectivity at the very heart of the problem of modernity: "the goal of our mode of production is *not* to produce for human beings in general, it's to provide the material conditions of existence for the production and reproduction of our present conception of being human."[cclxxvii] When Wynter writes that the "expropriation of the means of production by the bourgeoisie is only a means of its more total purpose—the expropriation of the means of socialization, and thereby, of the expropriation of the means of the constitution of social reality," this means of socialization does not socialize equally.[cclxxviii] For the slave, the

appropriation of existence has always already passed: the global totality after which capitalism strives (but never can reach in its continuous self-valorization) is already prefigured, and made tactically available as their flesh, in the real signifying strategies of anti-blackness. Nor does the joint expropriation of the means of socialization indicate, as Nancy Fraser contends, that the financialization of labor reorients the divide between the exploitable and expropriatable into a continuum where, although "people of color are still disproportionately represented at the expropriative end of the spectrum," a range of problems converge in the "formally free but acutely vulnerable" hybrid figure at the center.[cclxxix] This figuration returns slavery to a freedom-less past. With slavery conceptualized as pre-capitalist—in the sense that it relies on brute, personalistic force, not the abstract and immaterial exploitation implied in exchange—and with the social form of violence being a productive spur for subjectivities, the slave can only generate for the social whole desire for a negative measure of freedom, a freedom incommensurate with the mystification of capitalism.

What we have been thinking here, however, following a critical strand in black studies, is how the freedom for self-mastery may itself be what the slave is compelled to produce for the collectivity of capitalist subjects. In what Saidiya Hartman calls a "racist optics," black flesh signifies simultaneously "the source of opacity, the denial of black humanity, and the effacement of sentience integral to the wanton use of the captive body"; the mode of abstractness and immateriality reveals that "the figurative capacities of blackness and the fungibility of the commodity are directly linked."[cclxxx] Denise Ferreira da Silva suggests that we might follow the passage on the fetishism of commodities to examine the "exchange value" of race; that is, its productive power and not merely a hue on a continuum.[cclxxxi] In Marxist terms, the force present and continuously identifiable as slavery's characteristic feature participates in labor's

simultaneous homogenization and differentiation. This force may be conceived, as Lindon Barrett puts it in his work on the "increasingly intricate and arresting" problem of value for slavery and its apparent abolition, as an excess both produced by and reproducing a logic that constitutes the outside to the circuit of capital.[cclxxxii] Postulating a "twofold action or structure, a presentation and representation of value," the objective non-contingency of the value-form "reserves for itself an Other—a negative resource."[cclxxxiii] Though value condeses itself in certain privileged elements (such as abstract labor), the "mysterious genesis of this privilege is effaced,"[cclxxxiv] and the promiscuous bursting forth of "value as force" becomes an unthinkable third term.[cclxxxv] Value immanently creates a boundary between itself and violence. As a formlessness un-impeded by specific social formations, value can "invest itself everywhere and in everything, so that even inside itself—insofar as value has an inside and an outside—value is ceaselessly in operation."[cclxxxvi] Put differently, the division we've encountered between personal brutalism and abstract domination depends on the position value posits for itself in dissimulating its secretion.

Barrett here seems to still privilege a Marxist mode of value, such that "the concept of racial blackness…can be understood as a powerful analogy of the complex of commodity fetishism," but black studies suggests more than mere homologies between blackness and fetishism, or race and class generically speaking, that would retain the conceptual apparatus of the latter.[cclxxxvii] If, as Wynter maintains, "the nigger-breaking model of exploitation reveals this strategy, lays bare the mechanism of domination," it is revelatory on the level on genesis and structure not simply analogy, for the Black/white code "is the central inscription and division that generates all the other hierarchies."[cclxxxviii] The need to produce labor, as if it always existed and was always exchangeable, is achieved in a writing of history that naturalizes slavery as "the *singular commodification of human* existence"[cclxxxix] before it is able to naturalize labor as the

commodification of one's labor power. Under Marxism, slaves do not confront their phantasmatic objective conditions (form), as in the case of commodity fetishism, and instead remain in a unity with those conditions (force). While the wage-laborer is dominated by his own spectral production of value, bound by metaphorical chains to his alienation, and is joined by the capitalist in the production of value and erasure of their materiality, as a gratuitous, fungible outside to this production, the racial slave cannot produce value and fails to spiritualize matter altogether. The failure of slaves to produce value is directly linked with the *ontological* figuration and fungibility of blackness, serving as an explanation of racist difference (its precondition) and a justification for the continuation of anti-black violence (its effect).

It is here that the "great civilizing influence of capital"[ccxc] makes its mark, for the liberatory potential of form need first engage the power of labor that encourages self-determination, the production of freedom and liberty that abstract labor holds out as a powerful measure but that the abstract slave produces. Although Marx removes the subject from the source of ideality, and reintroduces the possibility that representation and subjectivity are the *effects* of specific social histories, Marx retains, as Silva notes, the "transparency thesis"—resolving the "a priori Law of Material Production (the necessity that moves history)" into the "a posteriori Life of Freedom (the social conditions emerging 'after' history, i.e. communism)."[ccxci] The transparent and self-determined "I" that lurks behind labor sublates slavery into determinate negativity for its future. For the laborer, that is, freedom would mean the emancipation from the force of form, in a synthesis that bodes a new becoming. For the slave, however, freedom only intensifies the form of force, the inertia of their non-being. The logic of the wage slave is an emblem of this antagonism—the distance between being and non-being—which is nothing but the problem of anti-blackness.

Value, then, fetishizes its occluded originary moment through the boundary between then and now, black and non-black, force and form and makes impossible their resolution, for making (socially, historically, theoretically) proximate the first two sets of oppositions reveals how the last—force and form—is always already collapsed by the excess that binds them. Although the visible distinction between black and non-black *appears* to have little to do with form or value, the othering of slavery as a system of production writes itself through a compound fiction—on the one hand, pre-posing and signifying (thus stabilizing) slavery's racial schema, and on the other, as in most Marxism, sketching a metanarrative of the subsumption of the personalistic violence of slavery by the materialistic promise of value, such that the black/non-black distinction is anticipated as no longer substantively operative in political economy, though the fact of race (insofar as its biological underpinnings are reified in Marx), remains and may exercise occasional ideological and empirical distortion. Anti-blackness is the excess that throws up racial slavery in order to, as Sylvester Johnson contends, effect "a revolution in European materiality."[ccxcii]

In this respect, blacks were not meant to be laborers, but rather the force that gives form to value. Thus, when the slave enters the market for the first time, as a Black Worker freely exchanging his commodity as labor-power, he brings the force of slavery with him. The formal subsumption of slavery into capitalism will never become real subsumption, insofar as the "the reshaping of all social relationships according to the dictates of capital"[ccxciii] *precedes*, for racial blackness, the formal subsumption presented by slavery's abolition. Empirical examinations of history may want to relegate this interplay to an imaginary representation or false consciousness, as if "enslavers *wrongly* perceived *persons* as *things*," or they may want to "repatriate the *human*" and return us to the scene preceding the formal subsumption of slaves to workers—the formal subsumption of humans to slaves.[ccxciv] If the formal subsumption of humans to slaves was never

"real" subsumption, if slaves, that is, retained their humanness despite their slaveness or, more dramatically still, if capitalism was "built upon" the (disavowed) truth of slave humanity,[ccxcv] then this unsubsumed humanness could be leveraged for the possibility of postbellum racial progress.

But slavery does not, as historian Rinehart assumes, become "yet more heinous" as it becomes "less unthinkable."[ccxcvi] It becomes truly abstract *as* unthinkability, reproduced by every attempt to think its material and embodied dimensions. The "set of competing claims made for and against" the "binary opposition between *person* and *thing*," the attempt to try to theoretically, politically, or historically realign the slave to the human is not an oscillation that demonstrates the originary truth of slavery, it is the effect of its materialization.[ccxcvii] The real subsumption of slavery and all social relationships by anti-blackness is the very condition of possibility for the formal subsumption of capital; there is no outside to this conflux, it is the unthought condition of thought, our empirical presupposition. David Marriott's ordering here is instructive: "…it was because the condition of the black slave was that of a zero sum that s/he could be so decadently stripped of human being and turned into a commodity."[ccxcviii] It is as this zero-sum that the slave labors not only in the production of commodities, not only as a commodity, but in the further circulation of labor-power insofar as the slave regulates between non-waged work and wage labor, past and present, nature and history, expropriation and exploitation, force and form, nothingness and species-being. The abolition of slavery does not change the stasis of black non-being—its objective concretization of slavery in the past does not propel slaves into the future, it "perfects" abstract slavery in making truly opaque the workings of anti-blackness. As Anthony Paul Farley has written, "white-over-black," the colorline, *is* slavery, such that "the movement from slavery to segregation to neosegregation is the movement of slavery perfecting itself."[ccxcix] Slavery's perfection, its telos towards an absolutely divisive, demonstrative power, proceeds in the erasure

of its own conditions of possibility—the density sustaining the verb "to be" in the logic "white-over-black *is* slavery" disappears, such that slavery no longer appears as slavery, violence becomes infinite, and murder so quotidian that it is the very force that makes the world spin.

If there is any counter-factual potential in uncovering *this* production, we do not find it in either Marx's commodity-form, Patterson's social death, Aristotle's natural slave, or the historian's commodity-as-process, as they can only relegate race to the logic of "use value," the most apparent general sense which the "most disparate epochs of production…have in common."[ccc] Perhaps this is all race is—an infinite extension that itself "intervenes to determine the economic category."[ccci] But with this reading, Marxism cannot position, for instance, the continuity that leads Wynter to assert "The ghettoes and prisons of today's North America are the new forms of the plantation archipelago."[cccii] For Marxist methodology, the union of slave with worker would expose and heighten generic forms of abstract domination, including the intervention of legal-form analysis in which the state-backed imposition of property relations unites the abstract laborer with the abstract criminal. If the state-form actually follows from the commodity-form, as Marxists legal theorists propose, the problem of punishment crystallizes in natural law as a medium for equalization: incarceration can rectify imbalances and disturbances in social wealth by imagining abstract freedom through abstract labor time.[ccciii] On this basis, Marxism is rife with the sort of analyses that identify the Thirteenth Amendment's prison-slavery imposition as the state protection of capital, purportedly uniting the post-racial slave and worker in the project of their joint liberation.[ccciv] Incarceration as we know it would be, as with the struggle over the working day, an objective example of abstract labor's capacity to capture existence.

A reading of the "abstract slave" clarifies that the post-emancipation debt of the black worker/criminal is not just the residual effect of congealed historical barriers to access, like

segregation in housing and healthcare, or subjective bias, like racial profiling, such that the only difference between the abstract laborer and the black laborer would be the historically specific accumulation of interlocking exclusions. Rather, a more fundamental political ontological forcefield—anti-blackness—frames labor and blackness as antagonistic, such that only the (rehabilitated) non-black criminal can transcend his abstract criminality to become the (revolutionized) productive laborer capable of then transcending abstract labor. Although non-black citizens could "blacken" themselves by threatening the peace and property of the republic, their punishment ultimately reinvigorates it, reasserting the sanctity of property through the possibility of redemption and the reclamation of possession in the self proper to labor. The generic post-Reconstruction criminal, like the logic of the wage slave, reinscribes the objective capacity for freedom, the anti-blackness of capital. Its credit is black debt; both are equalized and commodified but by incommensurate circuits. The slave in Hartman's formulation can only relate to itself as self through an *a priori* criminal possession: as in the case of "stealing away," "The relation of the enslaved to the self is possible only by way of wrongful possession or possession without right or permission."[cccv] This negative relation is never brought into a dialectical operation of sublation that could render it present for itself and with others. Abstract freedom is perfected through abstract slavery. As such, the struggles within civil society for a commons, a transindividual subjectivity, are zones whose animating possibility denies the force of their own race-making and cannot extend to include black subjects.

Conclusion

None of this can be easily re-synthesized by Marxist method, logic, or historicity alone. With anti-blackness equated with any number of discriminatory, prejudicial formations (religious

intolerance, xenophobia, etc.) as but one form of super-structural false consciousness, Marx's totality, and the potential for the transformation of that totality, is not capacious enough to understand the processes that generate and subsume the slave. In effect, I have been implying, neither can he comprehend the processes of capitalism or the plight of the laborer. A critique of capitalism offers insight into the "recursive logic" of property and self-possession,[cccvi] but forecloses these insights by foreclosing the slave. In Wilderson's words:

> one could say that slavery — the 'accumulation' of black bodies regardless of their utility as labourers through an idiom of despotic power (Patterson) — is closer to capital's primal desire than is waged oppression — the 'exploitation' of unraced bodies (Marx, Lenin, Gramsci) that labour through an idiom of rational/symbolic (the wage) power: A relation of terror as opposed to a relation of hegemony.[cccvii]

The despotic terror of slavery *is* capitalism's (repressed) form, which capitalism unthinks to stage its temporal progression and mystify, not only exploitation, but the immanent violence of "rational/symbolic power." But this repression is not merely illusory, it is real: the violence of abstract domination participates in sealing the past from the present by projecting force to the past, to the state, to the exception, to externality, to mute affectable bodies. It is in this way that the most immaterial of violences is the most material. Abstract domination is the internal effect of the excessive mediation of anti-blackness, its present, not its past. Its future locks the laborer in a mystifying transparency, doomed to reconstitute a species-being whose becoming forever wavers internally between freedom and domination, individuality and collectivity, being and non-being, as more and more abstract and immaterial forms of each expand and are realized anew.

Meanwhile, abstract domination, the ontological ground for capitalist revolution, becomes the fetish that occludes its own condition of production. When slavery's constitutive violence is concealed, and the fantasies around which it coalesces are presented as empirical fact, the collapse of force and form is mystified, slavery appears as personalistic, and race alternates in appearance between contingent effect and congenital defect, making the biological reification of race the

flipside to the incidental ideological distortion of an immanent power for which no one is culpable and from which everyone can be saved. Insofar as the abstract slave doesn't merely substitute but rather enfolds the speculative totality of one frame (the global capitalism of Marx) into another (the anti-blackness of racial slavery), the theoretical adumbrations within—the inherited questions of abstraction, value, materiality, and freedom—begin to shift, rearrange, mutate, or explode.[cccviii] And such an exercise, to put it mildly, points to unresolved contradictions within Marxism itself, within discourses always already bearing the trace of what they are not. For an immanent critique of immanent critique points not to the positivist difference of the abstract slave but its negativity, not the fullness of Robinson's Africanity and the imperative to "preserve the collective being, the ontological totality" but, following another of Robinson's conclusions, "the consciousness that there remains nothing to which it may return."[cccix] In the gap between the displacement of the capitalist totality with anti-blackness and the displacement of totality itself, the abstract slave elaborates a black radical tradition whose refusal of the world might just take up "nothing" as its aim.[cccx]

[i] David Scott, "Antinomies of Slavery, Enlightenment, and Universal History," *Small Axe* 14, no. 3 (2010): 152-162; 155.

[ii] Hence, we can have highly illuminating books on the history of higher education in America whose detailing of the material contributions of slave labor to hallowed halls makes no attempt to contribute to an understanding of slavery as an ideological production. See Craig Steven Wilder's *Ebony and Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America's Universities* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2013). This contrast, and its prioritization of the material world, has recently reappeared in a Barnor Hesse's essay, "Of Race: The Exorbitant Du Bois": "Our attention is drawn to the colonial assemblage of race through practices (e.g., enforced groupings, administrative classifications, spatial segregations, labor regimes) that constitute it prior to its signification as a naturalized, self-evident bodily or human category. In other words, this idea of race governance suggests race is *practically constituted as the condition of possibility for its discursive codification*," in *Small Axe* 20, no. 2 (2016): 14-27; 26. For a more constitutive account of the university in particular, see T. Elon Dancy, II, Kirsten T. Edwards, and James Earl Davis, "Historically White Universities and Plantation Politics: Anti-Blackness and Higher Education in the Black Lives Matter Era," *Urban Education* 53, no. 2 (2018): 176-195.

[iii] See Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944). Malachy Postlethwayt, "The African Trade the Great Pillar and Support of the British Plantation Trade in America, by a British merchant (1745)" in *English Historical Documents, Vol. X, 1714-1783*, eds. D. B. Horn and Mary Ransome (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 824-26 and *A Treatise Upon the Trade from Great-Britain to Africa; Humbly Recommended to the Attention of Government, by an African Merchant* (London: R. Baldwin, 1772), 4.

[iv] *Some Considerations: Humbly Offered to Demonstrate how prejudicial it would be to the* English *Plantations...that the sole Trade for Negroes should be granted to a Company with a Joynt-Stock exclusive to all others* (London, in *The American Historical Record, and Repertory of Notes and Queries. Vol. 1* [1698?], ed. Benson J. Lossing (Philadelphia: Chase & Town, 1872), 24.

[v] Quoted in "Introduction, Slavery's Capitalism," *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development,* Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 2. For their part, Beckert and Rockman emphasize that "Nineteenth-century Americans had little difficulty grasping slavery's capitalism" and "that the plantation and the factory composed a coherent national economy was less controversial 175 years ago than it is today," 3. They would likely dispute Scott's assessment in the American context where, they argue, slavery's connection to the American Republic has been well recently contended with much more than its economic import where, compared to the British it remains "episodic," 4. Their edited edition represents a new branch of influential historians, the "New Historians of Capitalism," whose mission is to return the debate to questions of material processes. See Sven Beckert's *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014); Edward Baptist's *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); and Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

[vi] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 52.

[vii] See Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011). And, because consumption was already primed by processes of reproduction, there is an explanatory limit to the prevalent demand-side arguments that accentuate how "New World slave societies came into existence to serve the needs of this exploding population of consumers stretched along the rim of the North Atlantic basin," James Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 45.

[viii] See Abigail Swingen, "Labor: Employment, Colonial Servitude, and Slavery in the Seventeenth-Century Atlantic," in *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and Its Empire,* eds. Philip J. Stern and Carl Wennerlind (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 46-73; Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); William Pettigrew, "Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and Local in Seventeenth Century English History," *Itinerario* 39, no. 2 (2015): 487-501; Jack P. Greene, *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Polities of the British Empire and the United States, 1607–1788* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990).

[ix] See Christopher L. Brown's argument that "the emergence of slavery in the English colonies depended heavily upon the liberation of the English colonists from the control of the metropolitan overseers," in "The Politics of Slavery," *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800,* eds. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2002), 240. See also Brown's "Empire Without Slaves: British Concepts of Emancipation in the Age of the American Revolution," where he argues that "Metropolitan officials proceeded as if the local custom of slavery established a private right upon which they agreed not to intrude. And this tradition of near-purposeful neglect instilled an unspoken belief among American slaveholders that imperial administrators could not interfere in the possession and management of slaves in the British colonies," in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (1999): 273-306; 295. Much of Brown's argument comes from a reading of W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870* [1896] (New York, 1969), 7-37. See also, Jonathan A. Bush, "Free to Enslave: The Foundations of Colonial American Slave Law," *Yale Journal of Law and the Humanities* 5 (1993): 417-70.

[x] See Alexander Anievas and Kerem Nişancioğlu who argue that "the absorption of the surplus population, and the expanded reproduction of capital as such, was therefore dependent – as its precondition – on the exploitation of a widened sphere of activity beyond the boundaries of the domestic market. That is, if it were not for the specifically international conditions created by Europe's expansion into the Atlantic, it is likely that capitalism would have been choked off by the limits of English agrarian capitalism. In this respect, we might be able to construct an 'inside-out' argument that attributes the growth of English (and later British) colonialism to the ways in which it overcame the limits of domestic capitalist production. But it is also possible to go beyond this orthodoxy, and demonstrate how intersocietal determinations arising from the Atlantic fed back into and decisively reordered the configuration of a capitalism based on agrarian production, and prefigured the industrial capitalism that drove Britain to global dominance. In particular, the combination of the sociologically uneven sources of English capital, African (slave)

labour and American land – concentrated in the institution of plantation slavery – would provide both the international conditions and the spur to British domestic development," *How the West Came to Rule: The Geopolitical Origins of Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2015), 152.

[xi] Even *Slavery's Capitalism*, which has capitalism being possessed by slavery and not the other way around, ultimately poses the relationship between capitalism and slavery through insights into how "slavery became central to and perhaps even constitutive of a particular moment in the history of capitalism, and how slavery helped constitute capitalist modernity in the workplace, the counting house, the countryside, and the factory," 10. Indeed, their interest in challenging the definition of slavery is primarily in expanding its scope from a "regional institution" to the "interstate highway system of the American past," 6.

[xii] Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965); Eugene D. Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (New York: Pantheon Press, 1969); Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese, *Fruits of Merchant Capital: Slavery and Bourgeois Property in the Rise and Expansion of Capitalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983). See an updated version of this argument that attempts to correct Genovese's failure to "present a rigorous concept of the necessary relations that constitute slavery as a form of production," in Charles Post's *The American Road to Capitalism: Studies in Class-Structure, Economic Development, and Political Conflict, 1620-1877* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 12. See also, Post's critique of the "New Historians of Capitalism" in "Slavery and the New History of Capitalism," *Catalyst* 1, no. 1 (2017).

[xiii] See C.L.R. James, on how Haitian slaves were "closer to a modern proletariat than any group of workers in existence at the time" when he writes of the slaves, "they were closer to a modern proletariat than any group of workers in existence at the time," in *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* [1938] (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 76; Sidney W. Mintz "Was the Plantation Slave a Proletarian?" *Review (Fernand Braudel Center*) 2, no. 1 (1978): 81-98.

[xiv] Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 1946); Paul M. Sweezy and Dobb, "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism," *Science & Society* 14, no. 2 (1950), 134-167; Sweezy, "'Feudalism-to-Capitalism revisited," *Science & Society*, 50, no. 1 (1986), 81-84. The form of this interlocution ricochets through the years, re-worked in the underdevelopment debates of the 1960s and 1970s between Ernesto Laclau and Andre Gunder Frank, and then the world-system debate between Robert Brenner and Immanuel Wallerstein. See Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); Ernesto Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America," *New Left Review*, I, 67 (1971): 19–38; Robert Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-Industrial Europe," P*ast & Present* 70 (1976): 30-75; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974); Wallerstein, "American Slavery and the Capitalist World-Economy," *American Journal of Sociology* 81 (1976): 1199-1213. My reading of this debate is based on Dale Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 32-55 and Anievas and Nişancioğlu, *How the West Came to Rule*, 13-27. This debate itself was streamlining questions animating antebellum-era slaveholders themselves. See Harold D. Woodman, "The Profitability of Slavery: A Historical Perennial," in *Did Slavery Pay?: Readings in the Economics of Black Slavery in the United States* eds. Hugh G. J. Aitken (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971), 1-25.

[xv] Robert Miles, *Capitalism and Unfree Labour: Anomaly or Necessity?* (New York: Tavistock Books, 1987). See also, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy,* ed. and trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 513.

[xvi] On capitalism and "embeddedness," see Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1944).

[xvii] The pairing of these terms is indebted to the generative essay by Onus Ulas Ince, "Bringing the Economy Back In: Hannah Arendt, Karl Marx, and the Politics of Capitalism," *The Journal of Politics* 78, no. 2. (2016): 411-426. See also, Nancy Fraser, "Expropriation and Exploitation in Racialized Capitalism: A Reply to Michael Dawson," *Critical Historical Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 163-178.

[xviii] Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 50.

[xix] *Ibid.,* 56

[xx] On Haiti as unthought, see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

[xxi] Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History*, 60.

[xxii] Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 69-90.

[xxiii] Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 564.
[xxiv] See Jack Amariglio and Antonio Callari, "Marxian Value Theory and the Problem of the Subject: The Role of Commodity Fetishism," in *Fetishism as Cultural Discourse,* eds. Emily Apter and William Pietz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 186-216; 190. See also Lindon Barrett's discussion of this essay in *Racial Blackness and the Discontinuity of Western Modernity,* eds. Justin A. Joyce, Dwight A. McBride, and John Carlos Rowe (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 12-3; 29; 168.
[xxv] Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 Until Today* [1958] (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982), 42.
[xxvi] Alberto Toscano, "Materialism Without Matter: Abstraction, Absence and Social Form," *Textual Practice* 28, no. 7 (2014): 1221-1240.
[xxvii] Christopher J. Arthur, *The New Dialectic and Marx's Capital* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 153-173.
[xxviii] Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom,* 42.
[xxix] Frank B. Wilderson III, "Gramsci's Black Marx: Whither the Slave in Civil Society?," *Social Identities* 9, no. 2 (2003): 225-240; 230. For a more recent, and mighty, challenge to the paradigm of labor, see Tiffany Lethabo King, "The Labor of (Re)reading Plantation Landscapes Fungible(ly)," *Antipode*, 48, no. 4 (2016): 1022–1039.
[xxx] On "libidinal economy," see Jared Sexton, *Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiracialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 192-3 and Frank B. Wilderson III, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2010), 7-17 and 24-8.
[xxxi] See Onur Ulas Ince, *Colonial Capitalism and the Dilemmas of Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
[xxxii] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* [1651], ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), 2.24.4, pg. 160.
[xxxiii] *Ibid*., 160.
[xxxiv] Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* [1689], ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.5.42, pgs. 297-8 and 2.5.40, pg. 296. See Onur Ulas Ince, Chapter Two, "In the Beginning, All the World Was America: John Locke's Global Theory of Property," in *Colonial Capitalism,* 38-73; Karen I. Vaughn, "John Locke and the Labor Theory of Value," *Journal of Libertarian Studies* 2, No.4 (1978): 311-326; and Charles D. Tarlton, "Does Chapter 5 of Locke's Second Treatise, 'Of PROPERTY,' Deconstruct Itself?," *Philosophy* 81, no. 1 (2006): 107-127.
[xxxv] *Two Treatises,* 2.5.42, pg. 297. The following paragraph argues that "'Tis *Labour* then which *puts the greatest part of Value upon Land,*" 2.5.43, pg. 298.
[xxxvi] C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* [1962] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).
[xxxvii] Marcus Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context, 1830-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 56. See W.E.B. Du Bois's argument that a "growing exploitation of white labor in Europe, the rise of the factory system, the increased monopoly of land, and the problem of the distribution of political power, began to send wave after wave of immigrants to America, looking for new freedom, new opportunity and democracy," in *Black Reconstruction: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* [1935] (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co, 1962), 5. In Sean Wilentz's work, "These social and economic changes in turn forced workers to reconsider their own view of property, exchange, and the Republic," in "Against Exceptionalism: Class Consciousness and the American Labor Movement, 1790-1920," *International Labor and Class History* 26 (1984): 1-24; 10.
[xxxviii] Alexander Gourevitch, *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 82-6. See a review of classical political economist Sir James Steuart that argues "by one way or another, men are made slaves by statesmen, in order that the useful may feed the useless. This is, indeed, the present state of what is called liberty in England. But, in fact, they are not made slaves to their passions and desires, for that is common to all men. It is the hard hand of necessity at present, like that of the taskmasters in preceding times, which compels them to work. The hired husbandman has, indeed, one passion that engages him to become a slave, and to labour; it is the goading dread of starving that enslaves him, and urges him to toil without desire. [Reviewers 1767, 127]," quoted in Michael Perelman, *The Invention of Capitalism: Classical Political Economy and the Secret History of Primitive Accumulation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 150-1.
[xxxix] Roland Berthoff, "Independence and Attachment, Virtue and Interest: From Republican Citizen to Free Enterpriser, I787-1837," in *Uprooted Americans: Essays to Honor Oscar Handlin,* eds. Richard L. Bushman et al. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 97-124; Berthoff and John M. Murrin, "Feudalism, Communalism, and the Yeoman

Freeholder: The American Revolution Considered as a Social Accident," in eds. Stephen G. Kurtz and James H. Hutson *Essays on the Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 256-288; Robert E. Shalhope, "Republicanism and Early American Historiography," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1982): 334-356.

[xl] See Amy Dru Stanley: "antislavery rendered freedom abstract by enshrining ownership of self, at the expense of an older republican emphasis on ownership of productive property," *From Bondage to Contract: Wage Labor, Marriage, and the Market in the Age of Slave Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 23.

[xli] Étienne Balibar: "If there is an enigma in the Lockean formula, this is because it succeeded in creating an absolute convertibility between a discourse on the *liberation of the individual* from every form of 'subjection' or 'slavery' and a discourse on the *power of appropriation* of this same very individual, so that he can identify himself consciously with the property which is his *rasion d'etre*…" The same person, then, can be "simultaneously *alienable and inalienable,* separable and inseparable," in "The Reversal of Possessive Individualism: From Locke to Derrida," *Constellations* 9, no. 3 (2002): 299-317; 304.

[xlii] *Two Treatises,* 2.5.28, pg. 289. He continues, "thus the grass my horse has bit; the turfs my servant has cut and the ore I have dug in any place where I have a right to them in common with others, becomes my property."

[xliii] Locke writes, "And thus *came in the use of Money,* some lasting thing that Men might keep without spoiling, and that by mutual consent Men would take in exchange for the truly useful, but perishable Supports of Life," 2.5.47, pgs. 300-1. Money is based on consent: "But since Gold and Silver, being little useful to the Life of Man in proportion to Food, Rayment, and Carriage, has its *value* only from the consent of Men, whereof Labour yet makes, in great part, *the measure,* it is plain, that Men have agreed to disproportionate and unequal Possession of the Earth, they having by a tacit and voluntary consent found out a way, how a man may fairly possess more land than he himself can use the product of, by receiving in exchange for the overplus, Gold and Silver, which may be hoarded up without injury to any one, these metalls not spoileing or decaying in the hands of the possessor," 2.5.50, pgs. 301-2. See Murat Birdal, "A crucial step in this legitimization is the introduction of tacit consent in relation to money. With the invention of money it becomes rational for a man to accumulate capital and to own more than he needs since money does not spoil. This leads the way to growing inequality of wealth and increases the possibility of conflict among individuals; therefore creates a need for civil society in order to protect unequal possessions," in "Locke's Theory of Property and Its Marxist Critique: Locke and Marx on Property Rights and Individual Liberties," *Istanbul Journal of Economics* 27, no. 1 (2007): 39-61; 59. See also Onur Ulas Ince, "Enclosing in God's Name, Accumulating for Mankind: Money, Morality, and Accumulation in John Locke's Theory of Property," *Review of Politics* 73, no. 1 (2011): 29-54; Patrick H. Kelly, "General Introduction: Locke on Money," in *Locke on Money*, *Vol. 1,* ed. Patrick H. Kelly (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 1-15; Gianna Englert, "Liberty and Industry: John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and the Economic Foundations of Political Membership," *Polity* 48, no. 4 (2016): 551-579; and Constantine George Caffentzis, *Clipped Coins, Abused Words, and Civil Government: John Locke's Philosophy of Money* (New York: Autonomedia, 1989). On the long history of improvement and waste in political economy, see Mark Neocleous: "These two categories take us to the heart of the property issues surrounding enclosures and the creation of the modern proletariat. The 'gentleman's desire', noted the House of Lords in 1607, was 'improvement', and the century which followed proved the Lords right. Francis Bacon had set the scene in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) with the idea of learning being 'improved and converted by the industry of man', which kick-starts a whole 'improvement industry': Walter Blith's *The English Improver, Or a New Survey of Husbandry* (1649), which then became *The English Improver Improved* (1652); an anonymous tract called *Waste Land's Improvement* (1653); Andrew Yarranton's *The Improvement Improved* (1663); Samuel Fortrey's *England's Interest and Improvement* (also 1663); William Carter's *England's Interest Asserted, in the Improvement of its Native Commodities* (1669); John Smith's *England's Improvement Revived* (1670); Carew Reynell's *The True English Interest, or An Account of the Chief National Improvements* (1674); Roger Coke's *England's Improvements* (1675); another work by Yarranton called *England's Improvement by Sea and Land* (1677); John Houghton's *A Collection of Letters for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade* (1681), and so it goes on, well into the 18th century. According to Paul Slack, the British Library catalogue reveals that the number of holdings including 'improve', 'improvement' and related terms in their titles rises from nine published before 1641, to 55 published between 1641 and 1660, 72 published between 1661 and 1680, 109 published between 1681 and 1700, 139 published between 1701 and 1720, and then 185 published between 1721 and 1740. 'Improvement' in its original meaning, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, referred to 'the turning of a thing to profit or good account' and 'making the most of a thing for one's own profit', and the main connotation was in agricultural innovations to increase productivity. Some of the meaning was therefore a reference to technology, but some of it was a reference to the enclosure of waste land: the *OED*'s second definition of 'improvement' is 'the turning of land to better account, the reclamation of waste or unoccupied land by inclosing'. 'Improvement of wastes and forests' became the slogan of the age, notes Joan Thirsk. As the slogan of the age, it underpinned the whole enclosures

movement, which was argued for on the grounds that if left unimproved the wasted commons would generate a masterless, idle and disorderly mass," in "International Law as Primitive Accumulation; Or, the Secret of Systematic Colonization," *European Journal of International Law* 23, no. 4 (2012): 941–962; 952-3.

[xliv] *Two Treatises,* 2.5.34, pg. 291. By setting up this distinction, Macpherson identifies a "class differential in rationality in the state of nature: those who were left without property after the land was all appropriated could not be accounted fully rational. They had no opportunity to be so," *Possessive Individualism,* 246.

[xlv] Locke: "For the Labourer's share, being seldom more than a bare subsistence, never allows that Body of Men time or opportunity to raise their Thoughts above that, or struggle with the Richer for theirs," in "Some Considerations of the Consequences of the Lowering of Interest, and Raising the Value of Money," in *Locke on Money*, 290-1. See also, Locke's "An Essay on the Poor Law," in *Locke: Political Essays* [1697], ed. Mark Goldie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and Nancy Hirschmann, "Liberal Conservativism, Once and Again: Locke's 'Essay on the Poor Law' and Contemporary US Welfare Reform," *Constellations* 9, no. 3 (2002): 335-55.

[xlvi] See David Norman Smith: "The central tenet of the 'free labor' doctrine in this period was that wage labor, freely chosen, is an exemplary and irreplaceable form of moral education. Workers, forced to confront the realities of the factory and the labor market, will either learn thrift, diligence and discipline or fall by the wayside," in "Abolition and Social Theory: Slavery, 'Wage Slavery,' and the Visibility of Oppression," *Social Theory* 21 (2002): 143-181; 154. Shalhope argues that "Civic virtue came, ironically, to be measured in terms of personal ambition and devotion to the acquisition of wealth, as the spirit of free enterprise, entirely detached from its eighteenth-century context, emerged as the essence of the republican ethic," in "Republicanism and Early American Historiography," 349. As William E. Forbath puts it, "working class liberty of contract was to be written in the language of middle class antislavery. Does the crowded competition of the cities reduce their wages? They have only to stay at home, devoted to other pursuits, and soon diminished supply will bring the remedy .... To economy, self-denial, temperance, education, and moral and religious character, the laboring class, and every other class in this country, must owe its elevation and improvement," in "The Ambiguities of Free Labor: Labor and the Law in the Gilded Age," *Wisconsin Law Review* 4 (1985):767-817; 786.

[xlvii] Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations, Vol. 2,* 2.

[xlviii] See Miguel Vatter, *The Republic of the Living: Biopolitics and the Critique of Civil Society* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 209-215.

[xlix] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction,* 183.

[l] Joyce Appleby: "Freedom now could be construed as a universal liberation wherein men-and, of course, it was a white male vision-were free to define and pursue their own goals," in "Republicanism in Old and New Contexts," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 43, no. 1 (1986): 20-34; 33. Du Bois: "Birth began to count for less and less and America became to the world a land of opportunity. So the world came to America," *Black Reconstruction,* 17.

[li] The British labor movements, in their turn, called out the Chartists, "That damning stain upon the American escutcheon is one that has caused the Republicans of Europe to weep for every shame and mortification; and the people of the United States have much to answer for at the bar of humanity for this indecent, cruel, revolting, and fiendish violation of their boasted principle—that 'All men are born free and equal,'" Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery,* 24.

[lii] See Mark Neocleous, "International Law as Primitive Accumulation," 954-956 and Christopher Hill, *Liberty Against the Law: Some Seventeenth-Century Controversies* (London: Allen Lane, 1996), 156.

[liii] This is especially so given, as Englert claims, Locke's "focus on labor suggests that the divide between member and outsider (or for Macpherson, member and subject) is not necessarily permanent and enduring for individual persons. Laborers are not necessarily permanently 'subjected,' forever denied the benefits of political life. Locke indeed places a great deal of hope in the reformative power of workhouses to encourage industrious habits and form good citizens, who may eventually find places in the commonwealth," in Englert, "Liberty and Industry," 564.

[liv] On the "Wage Slave" metaphor, see its elaboration in Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* [1845], trans. W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958), where he argues that "the philanthropic Tories were right when they gave the operatives the name *white slaves*," See also, its genealogical specification in Joseph Persky, "Wage Slavery," *History of Political Economy* 30, no. 5 (1998): 627-51 and Robbie Shilliam, "Decolonizing the *Manifesto*: Communism and the Slave Analogy," in *The Cambridge Companion to 'The Communist Manifesto*,' eds. Terrell Carver and James Farr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 195-213; 201-7.

[lv] See Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery,* 32-68. See also the argument that "Partly because of their Revolutionary heritage Americans could not really face the possibility that their liberty—their freedom to compete—was undermining their equality," in Berthoff and Murrin's "Feudalism, Communalism, and the Yeoman Freeholder," 283.

[lvi] Quoted in Lawrence B. Glickman, *A Living Wage: American Workers and the Making of Consumer Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997), 12.
[lvii] On "free labor," see Eric Foner, "The Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation," *The Journal of American History* 81, no. 2 (1994): 435-460. On "artisan republicanism," see Sean Wlientz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 14-15. On these conflicts in conversation with abolition see also, Alexander Gourevitch, *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[lviii] This phrase in particular comes from Langdon Byllesby's 1826 *Observations on the Sources and Effects of Unequal Wealth*, quoted in Gourevitch, *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth*, 78.
[lix] William Lloyd Garrison, "Free and Slave Labor," *The Liberator* 27, no. 13 (March 26, 1847), 50.
[lx] Garrison, "Wendell Phillips and 'Young America,'" *The Liberator* 16, no. 36 (September 4, 1846), 143.
[lxi] Philips argued that wage slavery was rhetorically misguided, "utterly unintelligible to an audience of laboring people" who are "neither wronged nor oppressed" and only need appeal to "economy, self-denial, temperance, education, and moral and religious character" for their "elevation and improvement," Wendell Phillips on Labor, *The Liberator*, July 9, 1847, in *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society: Labor Movement, 1840-1860*, eds. John R. Commons et al. (Cleveland, OH: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1910), 220-1. See Du Bois: "…the crucial point was the matter of freedom; that a free laborer in America had an even chance to make his fortune as a worker or a farmer; but, on the other hand, if the laborer was not free, as in the case of the Negro, he had no opportunity, and he inevitably degraded white labor," 25. For an overview of these rhetorical exchanges, see Gourevitch, *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth*, 41-6; Stanley, *From Bondage to Contract*, 3-4; and Foner, "The Meaning of Freedom," 446-9.
[lxii] As Du Bois noted, labor organizations like the German *Arbeiterbund* often did not seek the abolition of slavery but more simply the prevention of its extension, *Black Reconstruction*, 23-4.
[lxiii] David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991), 66-74.
[lxiv] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 5.
[lxv] On Marx and the Republican tradition, see William Clare Roberts, *Marx's Inferno: The Political Theory of Capital* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).
[lxvi] *Grundrisse*, 247.
[lxvii] *Capital, Vol. 1*, 273 and 874-5.
[lxviii] *Ibid.*, 724.
[lxix] *Grundrisse*, 173. As Marx will denounce in the *Theories of Surplus Value, Part 1*: "Crass empiricism turns into false metaphysics, scholasticism, which toils painfully to deduce undeniable empirical phenomena by simple formal abstraction directly from the general law, or to show by cunning argument that they are in accordance with that law," [1863] (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969), 259.
[lxx] E.V. Ilyenkov argues that because "bourgeois capitalist form of ownership was by no means universal and dominant…the conception of wealth as the starting point of bourgeois political economy could not itself be formed by inductive generalization of all the particular instances and kinds of ownership without exception." Rather, "to make even a single inductive generalization, an economist would have to have some conception, at least implied, of the universal genuine nature (substance) of the phenomena under consideration." Thus, just as man abstraction, the principles of private ownership became the yardstick to measure the "genuine, natural, and therefore objective nature of man," *Dialectics of the Abstract and the Concrete in Marx's Capital* [1960], trans. Sergei Syrovatkin (Delhi: Aakar Books, 2008), 180.
[lxxi] China Miéville, *Between Equal Rights: A Marxist Theory of International Law* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 87.
[lxxii] Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value, Part 1* [1861-3], trans. Emile Burns (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1969), 367. For other attempts to link the natural law tradition and early liberalism, see Marxist jurist Evgeny Pashukanis, who wrote that that natural law "was the revolutionary banner under which the bourgeoisie conducted its revolutionary battle with feudal society," *Selected Writings on Marxism and Law*, eds. Piers Beirne and Robert Sharlet, trans. Peter B. Maggs (London: Academic Press, 1980), 144-5. Macpherson writes that "the result of Locke's work was to provide a moral basis for a class state from postulates of equal individual natural rights," *Possessive Individualism*, 250.
[lxxiii] As Nicole Pepperell writes, "concepts therefore capture—although perhaps only in a partial or one-sided way—the qualitative properties of the real social experiences they attempt to express," *Disassembling Capital*, PhD thesis (2010), 136.

[lxxiv] *Ibid.,* 873. On the linguistic and intellectual genealogy of "primitive accumulation," see Richard Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 61–62.
[lxxv] Moishe Postone, *Time, Labour and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 372
[lxxvi] *Capital, Vol.* 1 125.
[lxxvii] *Ibid.,* 102.
[lxxviii] *Grundrisse,* 101, See also, his comments in *Capital* that "It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly kernel of the misty creations of religion than to do the opposite, i.e. to develop from the actual, given relations of life the forms in which these have been apotheosized. The latter method is the only materialist, and therefore the only scientific one. The weaknesses of the abstract materialism of natural science, a materialism which excludes the historical process, are immediately evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions expressed by its spokesmen whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own specialty," 494n4.
[lxxix] *Grundrisse,* 101. See *Capital, Vol. 1,* "...if we consider societies where *capitalist production* is *highly developed*, we find that the commodity is both the constant elementary premises (precondition) of capital and also the immediate result of the capitalist process of production," 949.
[lxxx] See Miguel Vatter's comment that "if labor-power is a commodity and is reduced to the capacity of an individual to do his or her assigned job, if, in short, the process of production is deprived of all power over its products, then living labor thereby forfeits all power to change its situation and, thus, all power to make history. When labor-power is a commodity, and society is based on the exchange of such a commodity, history fixates itself in the eternal present of historicism," *The Republic of the Living,* 295. On the specific role of absolutism in this transition, see Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: New Left Books, 1974), 42.
[lxxxi] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 275.
[lxxxii] Bryan Nelson, "Politics of the Senses: Karl Marx and Empirical Subjectivity," *Subjectivity* 4, no. 4 (2011): 395–412.
[lxxxiii] *Grundrisse,* 104.
[lxxxiv] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 138.
[lxxxv] Arthur, *The New Dialectic and Marx's Capital,* 153-173.
[lxxxvi] *Ibid.,* 165.
[lxxxvii] Thus, while Locke can, perhaps, identify labor as the root of accumulation, he cannot identify its significance from empiricism alone. And, given, the limits of his historical inhabitation of early capitalism and formal subsumption, he could perhaps not theorize capitalist accumulation at all. While Locke's thrifty proto-capitalist, situated in ahistorical time, magnifies the fictitious origin story of accumulation, we might consider how Hobbes, by proceeding with violence and doubling the sovereign origin story, instead gives us an abstract, exorbitant subject defined by self-interest who more expansively reflects the violent accumulation of wealth in early bourgeoisie England. The very beacon of primitive accumulation, Hobbes is reflecting a process underway: what seems to be a logical consequence of self-preservation—value—is actually the originary source for self-preservation. Readings of Hobbes's state of nature culminate in a repression of these violent origins, dispersing the tension between absolutism and equality into a progressive logic that maps onto the transition from feudalism to capitalism. See Jason Read, *The Micro-Politics of Capital: Marx and the Prehistory of the Present* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 16-7; Bernard Willms, "Karl Marx—Or the Attempt to Liquidate the Bourgeois Subject," *International Journal of Sociology* 5, no. 1 (1975): 47-61; Ernst Lohoff, "Violence as the Order of Things and the Logic of Extermination," *Mediations: Journal of the Marxist Literary Group* 27, nos. 1-2 (2003); Sandro Mezzadra, "The Topicality of Prehistory: A New Reading of Marx's Analysis of 'So-called Primitive Accumulation,'" *Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society,* 23, no. 1 (2011): 302-321; 305-6.
[lxxxviii] Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," *Marxists Internet Archive* [1845], trans. Cyril Smith (2002), https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/index.htm. See Étienne Balibar, "From Philosophical Anthropology to Social Ontology and Back: What to Do with Marx's Sixth Thesis on Feuerbach?," in *Postmodern Culture: Journal of Interdisciplinary Thought on Contemporary Cultures* 22, no. 3 (2012).
[lxxxix] On the former point, see Alberto Toscano overview of what he calls Marx's "expatriation" of philosophy in "Materialism without Matter," 1227. On the latter, see Sylvester A. Johnson, *African American Religions, 1500-2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 105-6.
[xc] Walter Johnson, "The Pedestal and the Veil: Rethinking the Capitalism/Slavery Question," *Journal of the Early Republic* 24, no. 2 (2004): 299-308; 303. In a similar vein, see how Cedric Robinson's "racial capitalism" explosively pathologizes Marx's drive "to achieve the scientific elegance and interpretive economy demanded by theory," consigning "race, gender, culture and history to the dustbin," lobbed into the "imagined abyss signified by pre-

capitalist, non-capitalist and primitive accumulation," in *Black Marxism*: *The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* [1983] (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), xxix. See also, Sidney Mintz, who identifies how the presence of slavery "disturbed and distracted Marx," in "The So-Called World System: Local Initiative and Local Response," *Dialectical Anthropology* 2, no. 4 (1977): 253-270; 260.

[xci] Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, "Capitalists Without Capital: The Burden of Slavery and the Impact of Emancipation," *Agricultural History* 62 (1988): 133-160; 133.

[xcii] See *The Karl Marx Library,* Vol. II: *On America and the Civil War,* ed. Saul K. Padover (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972); Kevin Anderson, *Marx at the Margins: On Nationalism, Ethnicity, and Non-Western Societies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); August H. Nimtz, Jr., *Marx, Tocqueville, and Race in America: The* '*Absolute Democracy*' *or* '*Defiled Republic*' (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003); and Robin Blackburn, *An Unfinished Revolution: Karl Marx and Abraham Lincoln* (London: Verso, 2011).

[xciii] James Edward Ford III, "From Being to Unrest, from Objectivity to Motion: The Slave in Marx's *Capital*," *Rethinking Marxism* 23, no. 1 (2011): 22-30. See also, Robbie Shilliam's analysis of the slave metaphor in "The Communist Manifesto" in "Decolonizing the *Manifesto.*"

[xciv] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 366n58.

[xcv] Lucia Pradella, "Crisis, Revolution and Hegemonic Transition: The American Civil War and Emancipation in Marx's *Capital*," *Science & Society* 80, no. 4 (2016): 454-467; Kevin Anderson, "Marx's Intertwining of Race and Class During the Civil War in the U.S.," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 17, no. 1 (2017): 24-36.

[xcvi] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 875-6

[xcvii] *Ibid.,* 876n1.

[xcviii] *Ibid.,* 916.

[xcix] *Ibid.,* 915; emphasis added.

[c] "Letter of Karl Marx to P. V. Annenkov, December 28, 1846," in *Karl Marx & Frederick Engels: Selected Works* (New York: International Publishers, 1968), 13-14. Of this passage, Cedric Robinson writes that the point "has not only endured but to some extent dominated attempts to characterize the relationship of slave labor to industrialization: the creation of the Negro, the fiction of a dumb beast of burden fit only for slavery, was closely associated with the economic, technical, and financial requirements of Western development from the sixteenth century on," *Black Marxism,* 81.

[ci] *Capital*, 719. See also the Appendix, "Results of the Immediate Process of Production": "The *continuity in the relations* of slave and slave-owner is based on the fact that the slave is kept in his situation by *direct compulsion.* The free worker, however, must maintain his own position, since his existence and that of his family depends on his ability continuously to renew the sale of his labour-power to the capitalist," 1031.

[cii] *Ibid.,* 899.

[ciii] James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana and a System of Politics* [1770], ed. J. G. A. Pocock (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 269. See also, Philip Pettit, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 32.

[civ] Locke, *Two Treatises,* 2.7.85, pg. 322.

[cv] *Ibid.*

[cvi] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 271.

[cvii] Sandro Mezzadra, "How Many Histories of Labour? Towards a Theory of Postcolonial Capitalism," *Postcolonial Studies* 14, no. 2 (2011): 151-170.

[cviii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 273.

[cix] Jarius Banaji, *Theory as History: Essays on Modes of Production and Exploitation* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 13. See also Robert Steinfeld, *The Invention of Free Labor: The Employment Relation in English and American Law and Culture, 1350-1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

[cx] Neocleous, "International Law as Primitive Accumulation," 950.

[cxi] David Graeber, "Turning Modes of Production Inside Out: or, Why Capitalism is a Transformation of Slavery," *Critique of Anthropology* 26, no. 1 (2006): 61-85; 80. Graeber likewise provides an account of the different definitions proffered by focusing of exchange *or* production: "In the first case, one tends to see what makes capitalism unique as lying in the unlimited need for growth: where most systems of market exchange are full of actors trying to get what they feel they want or need, capitalism occurs when profit becomes an end in itself and 'capital' becomes like a living entity, which constantly seeks to expand; indeed, capitalist firms cannot remain competitive unless they are continually expanding. In the second, the emphasis is on wage labor: capitalism occurs when a significant number of firms are owned or managed by people who hire others to do their bidding in exchange for a direct payment of money, but otherwise have no stake in the enterprise," 77.

[cxii] *Ibid.* Differently put, "a transfer effected just once, by sale, under a regime of slavery is transformed into one that is repeated over and over again under capitalism."
[cxiii] *Ibid.*
[cxiv] See some of his statements in *Capital* to this effect: "…England is used as the main illustration of the theoretical developments I make. If, however, the German reader pharisaically shrugs his shoulders at the condition of the English industrial and agricultural workers, or optimistically comforts himself with the thought that in Germany things are not nearly so bad, I must plainly tell him: *De te fabula narratur*! Intrinsically it is not a question of higher or lower degree of development of the social antagonisms that spring from the natural laws of capitalist production. It is a question of these laws themselves, of these tendencies winning their way through and working themselves out with iron necessity. The country that is the more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future," 90-91. And more affirmatively still, "The expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, is the basis of the whole process. The history of this expropriation assumes different aspects in different countries, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different historical epochs. *Only in England, which we therefore take as our example, has it the classic form,*" 876.
[cxv] *Grundrisse*, 84.
[cxvi] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 273, emphasis added.
[cxvii] *Grundrisse,* 326.
[cxviii] *Ibid.*, 489.
[cxix] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 260.
[cxx] Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value, Part II*, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968), 302-3.
[cxxi] *Ibid.* See the full quote: "In the second type of colonies—plantations—where commercial speculations figure from the start and production is intended for the world market, the capitalist mode of production exists, although only in a formal sense, since the slavery of (blacks) precludes free wage-labour, which is the basis of capitalist production. But the business in which slaves are used is conducted by capitalists. The method of production which they introduce has not arisen out of slavery but is grafted on to it." See Sidney Mintz's analysis in *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 58-61.
[cxxii] *Grundrisse,* 513.
[cxxiii] *Ibid.*, 288-289.
[cxxiv] Robinson writes that both "disqualified [slaves] from historical and political agency in the modern world," *Black Marxism*, xxix.
[cxxv] *Ibid.,* italics in the original, 513.
[cxxvi] See David Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, *Savage Economics: Wealth, Poverty, and the Temporal Walls of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 2010); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 2000); Mezzadra, "How Many Histories of Labor?"; Gayatri Spivak, *Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).
[cxxvii] Orlando Patterson, "Commentary" in *Roots and Branches: Current Direction in Slave Studies,* ed. Michael Craton, (Toronto: Pergamon Press, 1987), 287-292; 289.
[cxxviii]Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 11.
[cxxix] Patterson, "On Slavery and Slave Formations," *New Left Review* 117 (1979): 31-67; 50.
[cxxx] *Ibid.*, 53-54.
[cxxxi] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death,* 27-32.
[cxxxii] Patterson, "On Slavery and Slave Formations," 54; 59.
[cxxxiii] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 52.
[cxxxiv] Patterson credits Stanley Fogel and Robert Engerman's cliometrics with confirming slavery's productivity, insofar as the profits accrued by the institution can be quantitatively shown. See Robert William Fogel and Stanley R. Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Slavery* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974). Fogel and Engerman, however, conform to the neo-classical economic figuration in which capitalists are, ipso facto, rational actors, driven by the insatiable need for profit. Slaves, by contrast, figure in only as technical universals. If Marxism can serve as a corrective, it is, unlike neo-classical economics, in its commitment to understanding products *and* processes in their socio-historical specificity. Patterson, however, relinquishes the generativity of this insight when he analytically distinguishes the relation of slavery—social death—from slavery as it is systemically articulated through "determinate set of social formations," in "On Slavery and Slave Formations," 66.
[cxxxv] Indeed, Marx has used the phrase "capitalistic slavery" when citing a 1866 declaration from the General Congress of Labor in Baltimore that called for its abolition, *Capital,* 414.
[cxxxvi] Robinson, *Black Marxism,* xxix.

[cxxxvii] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 28-29.
[cxxxviii] Nicholas T. Rinehart, "The Man That Was a Thing: Reconsidering Human Commodification," *Journal of Social History* 50, no. 1 (2016): 28-50; 38. See also, Vincent Brown's position on social death in "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," *American History Review* 114, no. 5 (2009): 1231-49.
[cxxxix] Marx and Engels, "The German Ideology [excerpts]," in *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. Lewis Feuer (Garden City: Anchor, 1959), 247.
[cxl] *Ibid.*, 248.
[cxli] Rinehart, "The Man That Was a Thing," 42.
[cxlii] *Grundrisse*, 101.
[cxliii] See Alexander Anievas and Kerem Nişancioğlu, "The Poverty of Political Marxism," *International Socialist Review* 94 (2014): http://isreview.org/issue/94/poverty-political-marxism.
[cxliv] On the problems of conflating modes of production to forms of exploitation, see Colin Mooers, *The Making of Bourgeois Europe: Absolutism, Revolution, and the Rise of Capitalism in England, France, and Germany* (London: Verso, 1991), 22-23. See also, Ricardo Duchense, "Robert Brenner on Political Accumulation and the Transition to Capitalism," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 33 (2001): 79-98 and James M. Blaut, "Robert Brenner in the Tunnel of Time," *Antipode* 26, no. 4 (1991): 351-374.
[cxlv] Banaji, *Theory as History*, 41. See the specification of Banaji's method to the domain of plantation slavery in Rakesh Bhandari, "Remarx: Slavery and Wage Labor in History," *Rethinking Marxism* 19, no. 3 (2007): 396-408.
[cxlvi] Dale Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery,* xv.
[cxlvii] On "tunneling," see Anievas and Nişancioğlu, "The Poverty of Political Marxism." On "multilinearity," see Anderson, *Marx at the Margins,* 154-95. On "heterogeneity," see Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 46. See also the work of Teodor Shanin, *Late Marx and the Russian Road: Marx and 'the Peripheries of Capitalism'* (London: Routledge, 1983).
[cxlviii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 925.
[cxlix] *Ibid.*, emphasis added.
[cl] Johnson, "The Pedestal and the Veil," 305.
[cli] Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery,* 28.
[clii] *Ibid.*, 29.
[cliii] Banaji, *Theory as History,* 11. Anievas and Nişancioğlu come to a similar conclusion in *How the West Came to Rule*. For Marx, indeed, capitalist *circulation*—in the self-expansion of value—drives production, just as "the capitalist production process is the basic pre-condition" of the circuit of capital, *Capital, Vol. 2,* trans. David Fernbach (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 143. See China Miéville, *Between Equal Rights,* 91-96.
[cliv] Anderson, *Marx at the Margins,* 5-7. This scope can, for instance, illuminate the relationship between the universal dynamics of capital and its particular and future forms of expression. Although Marx has England as the classic universal that will subsume the globe, in his French edition, the emphasis shifts; now his description of expropriation is limited to Western Europe, in a specificity of any putative totality that would permit a broader framework that allows for particular modifications: "although in accordance with the particular environment it changes its local color, or confines itself to a narrower sphere, or shows a less pronounced character, or follows a different order of succession," quoted in *Marx at the Margins,* 179. Marx later cautioned against applying his "historical sketch" of primitive accumulation as a mechanical march of predicative and "inexorable laws," Marx and Engels, "Letter to the Editorial Board of *Otechestvenniye Zapitski,* November 1877," in *Selected Correspondence* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), 291-4.; 3. See Perelman, *The Invention of Capitalism,* 25-7.
[clv] Anderson, *Marx at the Margins,* 244.
[clvi] Marx has given way to interpretations such as Bill Warren's, for whom capitalist destruction is heralded as progressive. See Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1980).
[clvii] Marx, "The British Cotton Trade: *New York Daily Tribune*, October 14, 1861," in *On America and the Civil War,* 62-65; 65. See Pradella, "Crisis, Revolution and Hegemonic Transition," 459. See also, his account in *Capital, vol. 1*: "The rapid strides of cotton spinning not only promoted as if in a hot house the growing of cotton in the United States, and with it the African slave trade, but also made slave-breeding the chief business of the so-called border slave states. In 1790, when the first census of slaves was taken in the United States, their number was 697,000; in 1861 it had nearly reached four million," 571.
[clviii] *How the West Came to Rule,* 11.
[clix] *Ibid.*, 158.
[clx] *Grundrisse,* 101.
[clxi] Anderson, *Marx at the Margins,* 6.

[clxii] David Harvey, "Reading Capital," *Jacobin,* 2017, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/03/david-harvey-marxs-inferno-review-capital-grundrisse/

[clxiii] David Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, *Savage Economics*, 145-179. See also their claim that "We do not need a non-Eurocentric story of capitalist development to raise the categorical issue about capitalist social relations and non-waged work, forced labor, patriarchy and racism: these are present in the narrow space of the West and can be accessed without much of a sense of capitalism's history beyond the present," in "The Costs of Weaponizing Emancipatory Politics: Constituting What is Constitutive of Capitalism," *Spectrum Journal of Global Studies* 8, no. 1 (2017): 46-69; 48. A related position is that of Vinay Gidwani, who writes, "The most speculative aspect of my argument is that the figure of 'labor' in *Grundrisse*, because of its radically open formulation as not-value, anticipates the elusive subject of difference in postcolonial theory, 'the subaltern'—that figure which evades dialectical integration, and is in some ontological way inscrutable to the 'master'… the figure of the subaltern as 'space of sheer heterogeneity' can be read as the living, creative potential in labor for becoming *other*wise—*an immanent potential that is both the effaced predicate of capital and, as the possibility of use value-for-itself, capital's differentiated 'other", which persistently exceeds its imperial mediations and objectifications*, "Capitalism's Anxious Whole: Fear, Capture and Escape in the *Grundrisse*," in *Antipode* 40, no. 5 (2008): 857–878; 857, 874. See also Julian Go's argument with regards postcolonial theory, "It is true that Marx cannot be criticized for failing to theorize that which he does not *mean* to theorize. Capital is Marx's main object in his mature social theory; imperialism and colonialism are secondary. But this admits rather than allays the postcolonial critique, and vindicates the cautious yet respectful skepticism with which postcolonial thinkers approach Marx's work. From the postcolonial perspective, the very assumption that imperialism and colonialism are secondary to the operations of capital marks the line of his theoretical occlusions and hence the space of his limitations. In as much as Marx's theory does *not* attend directly to imperialism and colonialism because its main object is Capital, post-colonial thinkers cannot countenance adopting his theoretical categories whole-scale and, therefore, rightfully search for other additional conceptual lenses and theoretical systems. It is just as Cesaire insisted: 'we need to complete Marx,'" in *Postcolonial Thought and Social Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 86.

[clxiv] See this suggestion in Sandro Mezzadra, "The Topicality of Prehistory," 307.

[clxv] Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 62. He wagers that there is enough ambiguity in Marx's work that a world understood in Marxist terms "may once again be imagined as radically heterogeneous," 46.

[clxvi] Lucia Pradella, *Globalisation and the Critique of Political Economy: New Insights from Marx's Writings* (London: Routledge, 2015), 147.

[clxvii] Alfred Schmidt, *History and Structure: An Essay on Hegelian Marxist and Structuralist Theories of History* [1971], trans. Jeffrey Herf (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 99.

[clxviii] Pepperell, *Disassembling Capital,* 73.

[clxix] See Jordana Rosenberg, *Critical Enthusiasm: Capital Accumulation and the Transformation of Religious Passion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 59-63.

[clxx] Rosa Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital* [1913], trans. Agnes Schwarzschild (New York: Routledge, 2003), 351.

[clxxi] *Ibid.,* 899. Michael Perelman asks: "Why does this process…seem to stop so abruptly with the establishment of a capitalist society? Marx himself offered few examples of primitive accumulation that occurred in the nineteenth century outside of colonial lands… In *Capital,* Marx also generally appears to restrict the action of primitive accumulation to a short period in which traditional economies converted to capitalism," *The Invention of Capitalism,* 27-8.

[clxxii] See Fraser, "Expropriation and Exploitation," 167 and Neocleous, "International Law as Primitive Accumulation," 949-950, as well as David Harvey, "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession," *Socialist Register* 40 (2014): 63–87.

[clxxiii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 915.

[clxxiv] As Balibar puts it, the analysis of primitive accumulation is "*the genealogy of the elements which constitute the structure of the capitalist mode of production*," in "The Basic Concepts of Historical Materialism," Louis Althusser and Balibar, *Reading Capital,* trans. Ben Brewster [1968] (New York: New Left Books, 1970), 279 (emphasis in the original). See also, Gavin Walker, "Primitive Accumulation and the Formation of Difference: On Marx and Schmitt," *Rethinking Marxism* 23, no. 3 (2011): 384-404.

[clxxv] Fraser, "Expropriation and Exploitation," 169.

[clxxvi] In an echo of the bourgeoise mind, "*the global war of primitive accumulation"* becomes synonymous with and subsumes "*the archetypal just war*," Neocleous, "International Law as Primitive Accumulation," 957, emphasis in the original.

[clxxvii] Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination,* 30.

[clxxviii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 381.
[clxxix] Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination,* 125. As a result, to be emancipated from capitalist violence, it is not enough to merely re-distribute the products of labor, equalize the organization of labor, or transform the consciousness of the 1%. In Postone's estimation, we need to grapple more carefully with how, "in capitalism social labor is not only the *object* of domination and exploitation but is itself the essential *ground* of domination."
[clxxx] Jason Read, *The Micro-Politics of Capital,* 84.
[clxxxi] See Perelman's argument that "Although Marx accepted that markets were progressive in the long run, insofar as they prepared the ground for socialism, he was convinced that allegedly impartial market forces produced more cruelty than the crude and arbitrary methods of primitive accumulation. To emphasize primitive accumulation would have undermined Marx's critique of capitalism. Marx would not have wished his readers to believe that measures to eliminate 'unjust' instances of primitive accumulation might suffice to bring about a good society. To have stressed the continuing influence of primitive accumulation would have risked throwing readers off track. Certainly, Marx did not want his readers to conclude that the ills of society resulted from unjust actions that were unrelated to the essence of a market society," *The Invention of Capitalism,* 30.
[clxxxii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 940. See Read, *The Micro-Politics of Capital,* 28.
[clxxxiii] *Grundrisse,* 891.
[clxxxiv] *Ibid.,* 464.
[clxxxv] *Ibid.,*164.
[clxxxvi] *Grundrisse,* 459.
[clxxxvii] See Gavin Walker, "Citizen-Subject and the National Question: On the Logic of Capital in Balibar," *Postmodern Culture: Journal of Interdisciplinary Thought on Contemporary Culture* 22, no. 3 (2012), http://www.pomoculture.org/2015/06/10/citizen-subject-and-the-national-question-on-the-logic-of-capital-in-balibar. See, too, Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe,* 62-3.
[clxxxviii] Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value, Vol. III,* 272.
[clxxxix] Michael Ryan, *Marxism and Deconstruction: A Critical Articulation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 62.
[cxc] Werner Bonefeld, "The Permanence of Primitive Accumulation: Commodity Fetishism and Social Constitution," *The Commoner,* 2 (2001): 1-15; 1-2. See also, Massimo De Angelis, "Marx and Primitive Accumulation: the Continuous Character of Capital's Enclosures," *The Commoner,* 2 (2001): 1-22, and Sandro Mezzadra, "Topicality of Pre-History."
[cxci] Bonefeld, "The Permanence of Primitive Accumulation," 9.
[cxcii] See Banaji, *Theory as History,* 153-4.
[cxciii] *Grundrisse,* 164.
[cxciv] For this concept, see Tiffany Lethabo King, "The Labor of (Re)reading Plantation Landscapes Fungible(ly)," 1023. A slightly different conceptualization would see slaves, whose inability to reoccupy or indeed have any claim to land, as ideal proletariats. See Abigail B. Bakan's point that "the problem was not only one of acquiring a labour force completely separated from the land, but also of *keeping* the labourers from resettling on the vast tracts of uncultivated land available for the planters. African labourers were separated from their lands at the moment of capture, and were prevented from settling on Jamaican lands by forced restriction of movement," in "Plantation Slavery and the Capitalist Mode of Production: An Analysis of the Development of the Jamaican Labour Force," *Studies in Political Economy* 22 (1987): 73-101; 84.
[cxcv] Julia Ott, "Slaves: The Capital that Made Capitalism," *Public Seminar,* 2014, http://www.publicseminar.org/2014/04/slavery-the-capital-that-made-capitalism/#.WIFet_krKM8. See Patrick Wolfe: "As observed in relation to the doctrine of *terra nullius*, the mixture of labor and land was central to the ideological edifice of private property. As slaves, blacks were chattels or instruments comparable to plows or horses, whose application to vacant land realized its value and converted it from wilderness into property. Chattel slavery, one's appropriation of another's body, presupposed a prior alienation. One was appropriated, the other expropriated. The twin dimensions of this Janus-faced procedure cannot be appreciated separately," in "Land, Labor, and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race," *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 3 (2001): 866-905; 867, 894. We could also emerge with abstractions clarifying how African slavery abroad enables domestic labor at home, and co-terminus with the shift from thinking of vagrant populations as a threat to an economic opportunity. See Swingen: "By the mid-1600s, the poor, vagrant, and even criminal populations were not necessarily considered threatening to society. Instead, these segments of the populace were increasingly understood to be potential economic opportunities to be exploited through proper training and management. Rather than sending convicts abroad, perhaps they could be rehabilitated into laborers at home. Instead of shipping out its problematic multitudes, the English state should instead work to maintain and increase overall population levels, and focus on how to best employ the population for England's economic 'improvement'...Promoting

the importance of a large domestic labor force and embracing African slavery for the colonies seemed to go hand in hand," "Labor," 53; 63.

[cxcvi] See Wallerstein, "American Slavery," 1202; Mintz, *Sweetness and Power,* 47; and Wynter, "Black Metamorphosis," 582.

[cxcvii] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The World and Africa: An Inquiry Into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History* [1946] (Canada: International Publishers Co., Inc, 2003), 68.

[cxcviii] *Capital, Vol. 2,* 555.

[cxcix] Marx, *Wage Labor and Capital/Value, Price and Profit* [1849] (New York: International Publishers, 1997), 28.

[cc] *Ibid.*

[cci] Hortense Spillers, "'All the Things You Could Be By Now, If Sigmund Freud's Wife Was Your Mother': Psychoanalysis and Race," in *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* [1996] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 376-427; 386. See Cedric Robinson's similar point in *Black Marxism,* 2.

[ccii] See Stuart Hall's "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structure in Dominance," famous for its argument that race "qualifies class" as "the needs of slavery can explain the emerge of attitudes of racial superiority rather than the other way around," in *Black British Cultural Studies* [1980], ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 441-9. For a critical take, see Silva, *Toward a Global Idea,* xxvii.

[cciii] John Preston, "Concrete and Abstract Racial Domination," *Power and Education* 2, no. 2 (2010): 115-125; 118.

[cciv] Otherwise radical approaches to thinking property and race—such as Cheryl Harris's influential and highly quotable "whiteness as property"—are undermined by how they accord property with a pre-capitalist claim to value (as does Patterson), unable to situate race at capitalism's cellular level.

[ccv] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 102.

[ccvi] Robinson, *Black Marxism,* xxxi.

[ccvii] *Ibid*.

[ccviii] Robinson, *Black Marxism,* 66.

[ccix] *Grundrisse,* 107.

[ccx] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 375.

[ccxi] *Grundrisse,* 421. Miguel Vatter's comments are instructive: "The adjective here—'living'—is to be taken biopolitically: capital needs to reduce necessary labor time and thus make the *bios* of the worker more precarious; at the same time capital needs to multiply the working population as a source of living labor. Capital both seeks to impoverish life (of workers) and to multiply this bare life," *The Republic of the Living,* 89.

[ccxii] *Grundrisse,* 296.

[ccxiii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 447.

[ccxiv] Pepperell, *Disassembling Capital,* 7.

[ccxv] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 929.

[ccxvi] Marx: "Suddenly…there arises the voice of the worker, which had previously been stifled in the sound and fury of the production process," *Capital, Vol. 1,* 342. See Dunayevskaya's argument that Marx "*is breaking with the whole concept of theory as something intellectual, a dispute between theoreticians*. Instead of keeping up a running argument with theorists, he goes directly into the labor process itself, and thence to the Working Day. He no sooner relegated the history of theory to the end of the whole work, and began to look at the history of production relations, than he of necessity created a new dialectic instead of applying one. This new dialectic led him to meet, theoretically, the workers' resistance inside the factory and outside of it. The result is the new section of *Capital*, 'The Working Day.' Marx, the theoretician, created new categories out of the impulses from the workers. It wasn't he, however, who decided that the Civil War in the United States was a holy war of labor. It was the working class of England, the very ones who suffered the most, who decided that," *Marxism and Freedom,* 91.

[ccxvii] See Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom,* 81-4 and Anderson, *Marx at the Margins,* 193-4.

[ccxviii] While Joseph Persky argues that it was through Engels that "the Tory-radical critique found its way to Marx," Lewis S. Feuer prioritizes Marx's attention to the development of the labor question in the United States. Persky, "Wage Slavery," 648-9 and Feuer, "The North American Origin of Marx's Socialism," *The Western Political Quarterly* 16, no. 1 (1963): 53-67. Persky's interpretation of this intellectual inheritance comes from John Sherwood's "Engels, Marx, Malthus and the Machine," *American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (1985): 837-65. See Shilliam's synthesis of the two positions, attempting to clarify how the Tory and Chartists' "analogical discourse apprehends plantation slavery as a warning sign of the future social effects of industrialization in England," in "Decolonizing the *Manifesto,*" 196. See also Kelly J. Mays, "Slaves in Heaven, Laborers in Hell: Chartist Poets' Ambivalent Idenficiation with the (Black) Slave," *Victorian Poetry* 39, no. 2 (2001): 137-163. On abolitionists in particular, see

Anderson, *Marx at the Margins,* 79-81 and Smith, "Abolitionism and Social Theory," 157-66. See also, The Symposium on Karl Marx and the US Civil War in *Historical Materialism* 19, no. 4: (2011): 33-206.

[ccxix] See Anderson, "Marx's Intertwining of Race and Class."

[ccxx] Andrew Zimmerman, "Introduction," in *The Civil War in the United States* (New York: International Publishers, 2016), xii.

[ccxxi] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 101.

[ccxxii] Pradella, "Crisis, Revolution and Hegemonic Transition," 462.

[ccxxiii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 580.

[ccxxiv] *Ibid.,* 940. The fruits of primitive accumulation are fungible. For example, he earlier insists that "a great deal of capital, which appears today in the United States without any birth-certificate, was yesterday, in England, the capitalized blood of children," 920.

[ccxxv] As Robin Blackburn notes, for Marx, "Defeating the slave power and freeing the slaves would not destroy capitalism, but it would create conditions far more favorable to organizing and elevating labor, whether white or black" *An Unfinished Revolution,* 13.

[ccxxvi] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 91.

[ccxxvii] See Lucia Pradella, "Crisis, Revolution and Hegemonic Transition."

[ccxxviii] Marx, "Economic Manuscript of 1861-63," *Marx and Engels Collected Works, Volume 30* (New York: International Publishers, 1988), 182-3.

[ccxxix] Marx, "Address of the International Working Men's Association to President Lincoln, November 29, 1864," in *On America and the Civil War,* 237.

[ccxxx] Marx, "The North American Civil War, *Die Presse,* October 25, 1861," in *On America and the Civil War,* 76.

[ccxxxi] Marx, "The Civil War in the United States, *Die Presse,* November 7, 1861," in *On America and the Civil War,* 88.

[ccxxxii] Marx, "The North American Civil War," 76. Du Bois, of course, in "The White Worker" Chapter of *Black Reconstruction* made this the central element of his analysis of the preconditions of the war: "When now the labor question moved West, and became a part of the land question, the competition of black men became of increased importance," 19.

[ccxxxiii] Marx, "The Election Results in the Northern States, *Die Press,* November 23, 1862," in *On America and the Civil War,* 231.

[ccxxxiv] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 414.

[ccxxxv] Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death,* 33-4.

[ccxxxvi] Marx, "Abolitionist Demonstrations in America," in *On America and the Civil War,* 215. Marx then approvingly cites an appraisal by the *Times,* "Anything more violent it is impossible to imagine and anything more daring in a time of Civil War was never said in any country by any sane man who valued his life or liberty."

[ccxxxvii] See Stanley's argument that this emphasis on "antislavery rendered freedom abstract by enshrining ownership of self, at the expense of an older republican emphasis on ownership of productive property," *From Bondage to Contract,* 23.

[ccxxxviii] William Jay, quoted in Gourevitch, *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth,* 43. See David Brion Davis's analysis of how "early British antislavery writing reveals an almost obsessive concern with idealized hierarchical
order," *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution,* 95 and 350. See also, Forbath, "Ambiguities of Free Labor"; Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery,* 34, 111.

[ccxxxix] Marx, *Value, Price, and Profit: Addressed to Working Men* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 1910), 84. See similar language in *Capital, Vol. 1,* 680n8.

[ccxl] Eugene Genovese, "Marxian Interpretations of the Slave South," in *In Red and Black: Marxian Explorations in Southern and Afro-American History* [1968] (New York: Pantheon, 1971), 315-53; 327.

[ccxli] Smith, "Abolitionism and Social Theory," 164.

[ccxlii] *Capital, Vol. 1,* 91.

[ccxliii] August Nimtz, *Marx, Tocqueville, and Race in America,* 146.

[ccxliv] "Marx to his uncle Lion Philips in Zaltbommel, Netherlands, May 6, 1861," in *The Civil War in the United States,* 19. Zimmerman argues that Marx "attributed agency to the white Northern leadership who might play this card rather than to enslaved black workers themselves," *The Civil War in the United States,* xxvi. See Nimtz's affirmative take in *Marx, Tocqueville, and Race in America,* 87-138. My take here contrasts from *Black Marxism*'s assertion of slave agency, which is an external critique grounded in Robinson's reading of marron colonies.

[ccxlv] Ellen Meiksins Wood, "Capitalism and Human Emancipation," *New Left Review* 167 (1988): 3-20; 6.

[ccxlvi] As such, white working people, as Marx's address to Lincoln went on to argue, "were unable to attain the true freedom of labour or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation" as long as they "allowed slavery to defile their own republic," in "Address of the International Working Men's Association," 237.
[ccxlvii] *Capital, Vol. 1*, 414.
[ccxlviii] See Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom*, 179-181 and Smith, "Abolitionism and Social Theory," 161-4.
[ccxlix] George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! or, Slaves without Masters* [1857], ed. C. Vann Woodward (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 32. See Genovese, who calls Fitzhugh "a ruthless and critical theorist who spelled out the logical outcome of the slaveholders' philosophy and laid bare its essence," *The World the Slaveholders Made*, 129.
[ccl] *Capital, Vol. 1*, 365n58.
[ccli] Quoted in Oakes, *Slavery and Freedom*, 180. Du Bois gives some credence to the comparisons that would make slavery "merely a matter of name." See *Black Reconstruction*, 9, 51. But Du Bois insists a certain singularity "represented in a very real sense the ultimate degradation of man" of such power that "we simply cannot grasp it today": for evidence of "his absolute subjection to the individual will of an owner," he provides a striking list of negative sanctions on the slave, prohibitions against ownership, contract, exchange, investment, marriage, family-making, parentage, legal standing, redemption, education, religion, justice, relief. The prime distinction was first that "slaves were not considered men," 9-10. Further, "In this vital respect, the slave laborer differed from all others of his day: he could be sold; he could, at the will of a single individual, be transferred for life a thousand miles or more. His family, wife children could be legally and absolutely taken from him. Free laborers today are compelled to wander in search for work and food; their families are deserted for want of wages; but in all this there is no such direct barter in human flesh. It was a sharp accentuation of control over men beyond the modern labor reserve or the contract coolie system," *Black Reconstruction*, 11. See also, C. Wright Mills, *From 'Class' to Race: Essays in White Marxism and Black Radicalism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 166-7.
[cclii] See Eric Foner's useful summation: "The rapid expansion of slavery and the consolidation of a distinctive southern ruling class promoted the emergence of a proslavery ideology in which the contrast between freedom and slavery became an ideological weapon against the self-proclaimed 'free society' of the North. The northern free laborer, insisted defenders of slavery such as John C. Calhoun and George Fitzhugh, was little more than 'the slave of the community,' a situation far more oppressive than to be owned by an individual master, shielded from the exploitation of the competitive market- place. Repudiating not only Jefferson's rhetoric of universal natural rights but also his conviction that slavery distorted the character of the white population by training it in despotism, southern spokesmen returned to the older idea that freedom was a privilege; Calhoun called it a 'reward to be earned, not a blessing to be gratuitously lavished on all alike.' Slavery allowed propertied men the leisure to cultivate their talents and participate actively in government, thus producing economic, social, and political progress," in "The Meaning of Freedom," 447.
[ccliii] Brenna Bhandar, "Property, Law and Race: Modes of Abstraction," *UC Irvine Law Review* 4, no. 1 (2014): 203-18; 209. For a specification of how, in Hegel, the self-determining subject externalizing himself in private property, see Bhandar's "Disassembling Legal Form: Ownership and the Racial Body," in *New Critical Legal Thinking: Law and the Political*, eds. Matthew Stone, Illan Wall, and Costas Douzinas (Abingdon: Birkbeck Law Press, 2012), 112-127.
[ccliv] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 30.
[cclv] George Fitzhugh, *Sociology for the South or, The Failure of Free Society* (Richmond, VA: A. Morris, 1854), 118. See Genovese, *the World the Slaveowners Made*, 118-150. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese and Eugene Genovese, *Slavery in White and Black: Class and Race in the Southern Slaveholders' New World Order* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[cclvi] See Postone's comments: "if you get rid of aristocrats in a peasant-based society, it's conceivable that the peasants could own their own plots of land and live off of them. However, if you get rid of the capitalists, you are not getting rid of capital. Social domination will continue to exist in that society until the structures that constitute capital are gotten rid of.," in "Marx After Marxism: An Interview with Moishe Postone," Benjamin Blumberg and Pam C. Nogales, *Platypus Review* 3 (2008), https://platypus1917.org/2008/03/01/marx-after-marxism-an-interview-with-moishe-postone/
[cclvii] Marx, "The Civil War in the United States," 93; original emphasis.
[cclviii] *Ibid.*
[cclix] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 54.
[cclx] *Ibid*.
[cclxi] *Capital, Vol. 1*, 438 and 1034-1037.
[cclxii] Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination*, 71 and 324. See also, Axel Kicillof and Guido Starosta, "Value Form and Class Struggle: A Critique of the Autonomist Theory of Value," *Capital and Class* 92 (2007): 13-40.

[cclxiii] Jason Read, "The Production of Subjectivity: From Transindividuality to the Commons," *New Formations: A Journal of Culture/Theory/Politics* 70, no. 1 (2010): 113-131; 120.
[cclxiv] Read, *Micro-Politics of Capital,* 151.
[cclxv] *Ibid.,* 150.
[cclxvi] Read, "The Production of Subjectivity," 127.
[cclxvii] *Capital, Vol.1,* 1031. See also Marx and Engels argument in "The Communist Manifesto" that because laborers (i.e. "chattel servants") are "hourly and daily enslaved by the machine, by the overseer, and above all by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself," this new slave is not guaranteed "any kind of existence within his slavery," 242 and 245.
[cclxviii] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* [1980], trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 451. See also, Maurizio Lazzarato, *Signs and Machines: Capitalism and the Production of Subjectivity,* trans. Joshua David Jordan (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2014).
[cclxix] *Capital, Vol.1,* 1031. Marx continues: "The *continuity* in the relations of slave and slave-owner is based on the fact that the slave is kept in his situation by *direct compulsion*. The free worker, however, must maintain his own position, since his existence and that of his family depends on his ability continuously to renew the sale of his labour-power to the capitalist." A footnote a few pages earlier offers a couple of citations for this reading: a series of quotes from Thomas Rowe Edmonds' 1828 *Practical, Moral and Political Economy,* including "The condition of a labourer is superior to that of a slave, because a labourer *thinks* himself *free;* and this conviction, however, erroneous, has no small influence on the character of a population," as well as from James Steuart's 1770 *An Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy*: "Men were then forced to labour, because they were slaves to others; men are now forced to labour because they are slaves of their own wants," quoted on 1027-8n26.
[cclxx] *Capital, Vol.1,* 560.
[cclxxi] *Ibid.,* 586.
[cclxxii] Marx, from Horace, *Satires,* Bk I, Satire 1, in *Capital, Vol. 1,* 378.
[cclxxiii] Smallwood, "What Slavery Tells Us About Marx," *Race Capitalism Justice,* eds. Walter Johnson with Robin D.G. Kelley (Boston Review Forum 1, 2017), 78-82; 80-81.
[cclxxiv] Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 35-36.
[cclxxv] *Ibid.,* 101.
[cclxxvi] Read, *Micro-Politics of Capital,* 115.
[cclxxvii] In David Scott, "The Re-Enchantment of Humanism: An Interview with Sylvia Wynter," *Small Axe* 8 (2000): 119-207; 160.
[cclxxviii] Wynter, "Black Metamorphosis," 571.
[cclxxix] Fraser, "Expropriation and Exploitation," 176.
[cclxxx] Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 20; 35-6.
[cclxxxi] Silva, "Many Hundred Thousand Bodies Later: An Analysis of the 'Legacy' of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda," in *Events: The Force of International Law,* eds. Sundhya Pahuja, Fleur Johns, and Richard Joyce (London: Cavendish/Routledge, 2010), 165-76; 175. See also, Silva, "To be Announced: Radical Praxis or Knowing (at) the Limits of Justice," *Social Text* 31, no. 1 (2013): 43-62 as well as David Marriott's proposition that the Fanonian fetish is in "*antinomian* relation" to both Marx and Freud's incomplete structures of racial fetishism, in "On Racial Fetishism," *Qui Parle* 18, no. 2 (2010): 215-248; 215.
[cclxxxii] Lindon Barrett, *Blackness and Value: Seeing Double* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 26.
[cclxxxiii] *Ibid*.
[cclxxxiv] Jean-Joseph Goux, in *Blackness and Value,* 28.
[cclxxxv] Barrett, *Blackness and Value,* 28-33.
[cclxxxvi] *Ibid.,* 32.
[cclxxxvii] *Ibid.,* 8. See also C. Wright Mills's dis-imbrication of "racial oppression" as semiautonomous from questions of class and his subsequent lapse into analogizing "white supremacy as "political, in the same way that Marxists see capitalism as dominated by 'a ruling class' and that feminists see patriarchy as male political rule," in *From 'Class' to Race,* 173.
[cclxxxviii] Wynter, "Black Metamorphosis," 582
[cclxxxix] Jared Sexton, "People-of-Color-Blindness: Notes on the Afterlife of Slavery," *Social Text* 28, no. 2 (2010): 31–56; 38.
[ccxc] *Grundrisse,* 409.

[ccxci] Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race*,193.
[ccxcii] Johnson, *African American Religions*, 96. The larger quote is itself noteworthy: "As Atlantic slavery increasingly dominated the nature of commerce, new financial tactics accrued in order to execute the practical demands of human trafficking. Transferability of shares of ownership, collateralized debt (the exchange in debt as a commodity), the principle of joint stock, and the use of capital as an explicit accounting concept (assets now appeared on balance sheets) all marked an important departure from the financial practices that had predated the rise of Atlantic empires and Afro-European commercialism. These changes effected a revolution in European materiality, the registers of which became more complex and regimented under the rationalities of capital and its market reasons. Value, for instance, became a more dynamic category that functioned with global parameters as monetary agents employed new instruments of accounting and finance to manage the new demands of Atlantic empire and commerce. And money, previously tied more strictly to the physical objecthood of currency, now became spiritualized, able to flow from one part of the globe to another, signified through material instruments (such as shareholder certificates of ownership or bills of exchange) that were understood to refer to nonmaterial forms of value. Thus ownership of a stock, discretely scalable in measures of currency, was understood to be identical to neither money nor the physical paper certifying ownership."
[ccxciii] Read, *Micro-Politics of Capital*, 104.
[ccxciv] Rinehart, "The Man That Was a Thing," 41-2.
[ccxcv] *Ibid.,* 40.
[ccxcvi] *Ibid*.
[ccxcvii] *Ibid.,* 42.
[ccxcviii] David Marriott, "On Decadence: *Bling Bling," e-flux* 79 (2017), http://www.e-flux.com/journal/79/94430/on-decadence-bling-bling.
[ccxcix] Anthony Paul Farley, "Perfecting Slavery," *Loyola University Chicago Law Journal* 36 (2004): 221-51; 222.
[ccc] *Grundrisse*, 881.
[ccci] Marx, "Economic Manuscript of 1861–63: A Contribution to A Critique of Political Economy (Continuation)," in *Marx and Engels Collected Works: Volume 33* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1993), 146.
[cccii] Wynter, "Black Metamorphosis," 372.
[ccciii] See Evgeny Pashukanis: "For it to be possible for the idea to emerge that one could make recompense for an offence with a piece of abstract freedom determined in advance, it was necessary for all concrete forms of social wealth to be reduced to the most abstract and simple form, to human labour measured in time," *Law and Marxism: A General Theory*, trans. Barbara Einhorn (London: Ink Links, 1978), 181.
[ccciv] This logic is endemic across the work of critical prison studies. See, for instance, my review of Lisa Guenther's *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and Its Afterlifes*, in *Theoretical Criminology* 19, no. 3 (2015): 438-40.
[cccv] Hartman, "Scenes of Subjection," 110.
[cccvi] See Robert Nichols, "Theft Is Property! The Recursive Logic of Dispossession," *Political Theory* 46, no. 1 (2018): 3-28.
[cccvii] Wilderson, "Gramsci's Black Marx," 229-230.
[cccviii] Or in Frantz Fanon's words: "This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem," *The Wretched of the Earth* [1961], trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 5.
[cccix] Robinson, *Black Marxism*, 171 and 317.
[cccx] See Fred Moten, "Blackness and Nothingness (Mysticism in the Flesh)," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 112 (2013): 737-780.