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Blood of a Nation: Politics, Medicine, and Race in U.S. Literature, 1848-1900

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of

the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Literature

by

Sören Fröhlich

Committee in charge:

Professor Michael Davidson, Co-Chair
Professor Nicole Tonkovich, Co-Chair
Professor Lisa Cartwright
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2016

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Co-Chair

Co-Chair

University of California, San Diego

2016

Dedication

This dissertation would not exist if not for my family. I dedicate this study to my parents, my wife, our children, and my sisters and brothers. Thank you for your love and support all these years.

Thanks also to all my teachers, the good and the bad, who showed me what a joy it is to learn and grow and what a great force teaching can be.

Epigraph

Like the *pharmikon*, the blood is both the antidote and the poison.

Hortense J. Spillers

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List of Abbreviations

Fr	Emily Dickinson. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson.* Ed. Ralph William Franklin. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1998. Print.
JP	Emily Dickinson. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1955. Print.
MB	Emily Dickinson. *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. Ralph William Franklin. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981. Print.
Fascicle	Emily Dickinson. *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. Ralph William Franklin. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981. Print.
TYC	*The Youth's Companion* (1827-1929, Boston: Perry Mason.)
Geheimnisse	Ludwig von Reizenstein. *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans*. 1855. Ed. Steve Rowan. Shreveport: Tintamarre, 2004. Print.
Wilson	Mark Twain. *Puddn'head Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins*. Ed. Sidney E. Berger. New York: Norton, 2005. Print.
Mysteries	Edward H. Dixon. *The Terrible Mysteries of the Ku-Klux Klan*. New York: n.p., 1868. Print.
House	Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The House of the Seven Gables*. 1851. Ed. Robert S. Levine. New York: Norton, 2006. Print.
LG	Walt Whitman. *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings*. Ed. Michael Moon. New York: Norton, 2002. Print.
Blood	Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins. *Of One Blood*. Ed. Hazel V. Carby. *The Magazine Novels of Pauline Hopkins*. New York: Oxford UP, 1988. 439-623. Print.
MHS	Joseph K. Barnes, Joseph J. Woodward, Charles Smart, George A. Otis, and D L. Huntington. *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion (1861-65)*. Washington: G.P.O, 1870. Print.
"Report"	Samuel Adolphus Cartwrigth. "Report on the Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race." *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* 7 (1851): 691-715. Print.
Son	---. The Rising Son; or, The Antecedents and Advancement of The Colored Race. 1874. Miami: Mnemosyne, 1969. Print.

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A number of other colleagues and scholars have influenced my thinking about blood and helped me think through some of the twists and turns this topic takes. I will miss the friendship and constant curiosity of my mentor in Eichstätt, Prof. Dr. Hermann Josef Schnackertz. Alfred Bammesberger, Claudia Neudecker, Christine Strobl, Joachim Grzega, and Günther Blaicher showed what collegial scholarship can be and gave me the room to grow and the guidance not to stray.

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scholars and colleagues who make this work more than just a personal obsession. Especially the Dickinson scholars family has been a constant source of support and encouragement, and so I thank Martha Nell Smith, Ben Friedlander, Eliza Richards, and Faith Barrett. I thank Joe Fruscione, Josh Lukin, Sarah Chinn, Ellen Samuels, and Martin Japtok for their kindness and steady friendship. Beyond the classroom I have been fortunate to spend many days in the enriching company and wise counsel of Sabrina Starnamann, Kate Slater, John Higgins, Kedar A. Kulkarni, Michael James Lundell, Alberto Garcia, Chien-ting Lin, Alexander Ezekiel Chang, and Ben Chapin.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

Blood of a Nation: Politics, Medicine, and Race in U.S. Literature, 1848-1900

by

Sören Fröhlich

Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

University of California, San Diego, 2016

Professor Michael Davidson, Co-Chair

Professor Nicole Tonkovich, Co-Chair

In "Blood of a Nation" I argue that U.S. authors' writing about human blood (both metaphorical and literal blood) changed during the second half of the nineteenth century. The chosen texts range from poetry to medical manuals to illustrate how authors

increasingly superimposed medical blood tropes on Romantic metaphors. Medical language helped them bridge the conceptual gap between bodily fluid and social metaphor. By saddling aristocracy with medicine, writers created new fictions about blood, especially occult blood, which anchors metaphors of race and gender in the bodily fluid. I argue that they supplemented political blood metaphors in support of the new nation state with medicalized blood metaphors and thus made possible scientific racism, blood quanta, and their legal codification.

Chapter one examines political blood metaphors, namely Nathaniel Hawthorne's erasure of the nation state's history of sovereign bloodshed in *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and Ludwig von Reizenstein's emphasis on the resulting uncanny nation filled with bloodshed in *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans* (1853). Chapter two follows the rise of medical vocabulary from a school textbook to Civil War poetry and finally to a nationalist magazine. Emily Dickinson's Civil War poem "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'" (1862) rejects both contemporary Romantic blood metaphors and her anatomy textbook's taxonomy because neither adequately addresses the blood on the battlefield, a critique edited out in the poem's posthumous publication. Chapter three shows that Walt Whitman focused his collection *Drum-Taps* (1865) on the absorption of blood and hospital practice to reconcile the blood of the Civil War with his national vision. Chapter four argues medical texts about blood in practice really present political arguments. While William Wells Brown avoided blood in practice and theory, Edward H. Dixon made blood an occult sign for race and gender. Chapter five explores blood in scientific racism. Samuel A. Cartwright foreclosed individual agency and the freedom to change in the assertion that "black blood" is eternal and immutable. In his *The Rising Son* (1873),

William Wells Brown ripostes that blood is a shared and mutable part of humanity. Chapter six considers the blood quanta of chattel slavery as laid out by Thomas Jefferson in 1815 as the root of the Jim Crow racism in Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1893), and Pauline E. Hopkins' *Of One Blood* (1903). Against the resistance of black mothers, familial blood became an unknowable truth of the legal and social erasure of black families.

Introduction: Why Blood?

This is not a study in closure or resolution, but in the continuation of inconsistencies over half a century. During the second half of the nineteenth century, U.S. authors reinterpreted the relation between the nation and blood, i.e. the relation of the nation state, citizens, and non-citizens to blood in its social, political, and cultural senses, but also in its medical, theological, and historical senses. "Blood of a Nation: Politics, Medicine, and Race in U.S. Literature, 1848-1900" traces this ongoing process of negotiating political, social, cultural, and medical meanings of blood between 1848 and the turn of the twentieth century in texts that deploy blood as a means to either support or critique the nation state. This study compares such negotiations of meaning in different kinds of novels, poems, medical narratives, reports, and letters written by professional writers, poets, and physicians who wrote in regions spanning from New England to the Gulf of Mexico. All of these texts emphasize the importance of blood as a central social, political, and cultural concept during the nineteenth century.

"Blood": A Semantic Spectrum

The word "blood" can mean many different things. I want to first consider this semantic slipperiness and then offer a two brief passages to illustrate the limits of "Blood of a Nation." For at the heart of this study lies the question how the meaning of "blood" changed during this period, with regard to political, social, cultural, and medical transformations, but also to economic and technological developments.

"Blood" is a construct, much like race, class, and gender and stands in a mutually-influencing relation of modification and reinterpretation to other social constructs. And yet "blood" also means something that exists, a liquid tissue, to put it in today's scientific

terms, that has always existed in humans, a somatic dimension of life, a part of humans' sentient existence.[1] As this is a study of literature, however, even this real blood is never real, but always textually mediated.

In what follows, I first lay out the challenge of how to write about blood as a term—"blood"—but also how we can think about the bodily liquid. This liquid is sometimes no more than a metaphor to us, though often a metaphor that seems to touch the blood inside us. I focus this introduction first on the two extreme semantic boundaries of metaphor and bodily fluid that limit my study. Metaphor and fluid are ways of expressing the nation and the blood, or, more generally speaking, of discussing politics and medicine. Beginning with its political meanings in 1848, this introduction then outlines the medical meanings of blood by 1900. It thereafter focuses on meanings of blood regarding war and race to highlight the complicated and overlapping aspects of these two formative dimensions of the nineteenth-century United States.[2] The next section unpacks the term "national imaginaries" as the description of ways U.S. authors write about the nation in relation to blood. To indicate the broad historical and

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1 The entry for "blood" in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) fills pages, but illustrates that blood is semantically slippery. The basic definition of the general sense in the entry is "The red fluid flowing in the arteries, capillaries, and veins of humans and other vertebrates, carrying oxygen and nutrients to, and carbon dioxide and waste metabolites away from, the organs and tissues of the body. Also (as a count noun): the blood of an individual, species, etc." This definition of general meanings then expands to include sub-meanings like violence, the sacrificial blood of Christ's atonement, a vital principle, inherited characteristics of a group, and a euphemistic curse. The wealth of historical, theological, legal, medical, social, and cultural associations just in this first category of "blood" in its general sense indicates the complexity of the problem at hand: blood is never just one thing.

2 "Race" in this study largely describes the conception of white bodies against the backdrop of the enslaved black body. So we could speak of so-called blackness, especially since the fourth chapter illustrates the shift of blood as a carrier of medico-social concepts to social theory via scripture in Samuel A. Cartwright's theory of what he calls black blood. However, while I focus on the development of white blood as the invisible or neutral social marker of normalcy these same theories also applied to any Chinese, Japanese, Pacific Islander, and Native American heritage. See Jennifer Snow for the application of the same race ideologies in the construction of so-called Asian bodies (69-71).

philosophical position of this study, I explain how the process of expulsion of blood from some national imaginaries turned blood into the most important element of these ideas of the nation. This introduction ends with chapter summaries.

Of course I cull representative examples. Not all texts about the nation were interested in blood, but I argue that quite a few were. In U.S. texts throughout the nineteenth century, blood is central to narrative constructions of the nation state, but what "blood" means changes drastically. Yet the problem of change in what "blood" means is not only a question of usage, of meanings coming and going. Rather, blood comes to mean more and more things over time. Of course, sometimes what "blood" can mean simply changes. For example, by 1889 "blood work" no longer means "the shedding of blood" as it had in 1815, but "the scientific study or laboratory testing of blood" (OED). In this specific instance, blood is a liquid that experts examine and no longer a political metaphor for violence.

Yet I argue that this change itself is quite telling of the ways that new meanings compliment and complicate prior ones. As we will see, blood in the early to mid-nineteenth century overtly connoted belonging, power, and aristocratic lineage with reference to sovereign monarchs. By the end of the century it also increasingly connoted theories of different kinds of blood in distinct human races. The meaning changed from the bloody work to the work on blood. This change runs throughout "Blood of a Nation." Especially the first chapter considers blood in the first sense of sovereign blood while the last three chapters focus on blood-as-race. The second and third chapters elaborating the Civil War as a catalyst for this change in understanding.

This semantic spectrum also relates to a philosophical-theoretical arc I explore

below. French historian Michel Foucault, in his 1976 *The History of Sexuality*, posits that at some time during the long nineteenth century, sexuality moved to the center of the social order in the western world (123-6). Before this late eighteenth-century shift to bourgeois heredity, blood in sovereign monarchies stood for social, political, and cultural aristocratic heredity. I address Foucault's theory in more detail below, but for now want to point out that we ought to read nineteenth-century political preoccupations with blood in the U.S. with an eye to a socio-political context in which blood was both, exhaustive symbol for and material reality of sovereign power.

Only by virtue of its many related meanings is "blood" so important to the overlap between social, political, and cultural systems.[3] This also means, though, that writing about blood is challenging. Even scholars fall prey to this semantic slipperiness. "Blood of a Nation" therefore in part aims to point out the pitfalls of scholarship about blood, the ways assumptions about the semantics of blood can distort arguments.

For instance, in an unusually focused inquiry into the relation between war as blood sacrifice and national identity, "Blood Sacrifice and the Nation," Carolyn Marvin and David W. Ingle claim that the two "most unifying bloodlettings in American history, the Civil War and World War II, sacrificed the largest number of the nation's own"

3 Here I allude loosely to Jurij Tynjanov's notion of literature as, in the words of David Duff, "a vast, evolving 'system of systems' in which every part is in dynamic tension with other parts" ("Tensions" 560). My point is not to enter into a formalist debate about the nature of literature, but to relate my expansive inclusion of many different forms of writing into the corpus of so-called literature. In order to parse "blood," we need to pay close attention to an author's context of usage, the relation to prior usage of the term in the same sense as well as in other senses. Finally, we must also pay attention to the influence of seemingly unrelated meanings that may nevertheless prove important to understand the function of "blood" in a national imaginary. For more, see Tynianov ("Evolution" 67-9).

(772).[4] While the numbers may bear out this claim, the authors' semantic assumptions erase differences inherent in blood, differences that are of great consequence when we consider that they write about U.S. nationalism.

Marvin and Ingle assume that it is obvious what it meant for somebody to spill blood on the battlefield in 1863 and in 1943, and that they can directly compare these two meanings. As chapters two and three demonstrate, the shock concerning the amount of blood shed during the Civil War was indeed immense, and perhaps similar to that civilians experienced two generations later. However, even this assertion harbors many semantic shadings and definite distinctions of "blood." For one, there is no mention of blood as a racialized substance even though there is a significant difference between the blood of African-American and Anglo soldiers in both wars that must be taken into account. Also, the authors do not account for the First World War, which was probably just as shocking and disturbing to many civilians, but which can be eclipsed by the memory of the Second World War. Nor do they mention the difference that blood transfusion, blood storage, or the presence of advanced military surgery make in the Second World War. The differences between the socio-political, cultural, and medical aspects of blood between the two wars outweigh the similarities. The equation loses its usefulness with regard to blood even though it relies on blood to make its case.

As I stress throughout this study, to write about blood, we must mark which blood we are speaking of while acknowledging that every sense in which we can speak of the

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4 Marvin and Ingle later revised this article into a chapter of their book *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag* (1999). I choose the shorter article for the sake of illustration, not to invalidate their entire, much more nuanced examination that provides a useful reviving of Émile Durkheim's concept of the totem.

word "blood" is always contradictory, fraught with historical tensions and tangential relations that undermine the stability of metaphors.[5] It is this inherent instability and slipperiness of blood "Blood of a Nation" explores. As we see, "blood" is slippery. Relying on unstated assumptions and an unquestioned supposed common knowledge of what blood is, scholars run the risk of relying on "blood" as a stand-in without noticing. Blood can become a shortcut for complex social processes that can suddenly skip millennia, continents, and languages. That is why Marvin and Ingle's analytic equation or strong parallel of opaque blood rites from the Hebrew bible and twentieth-century warfare is held together *only* by "blood." As will become clear throughout this study, "blood" always exists with reference to time and history, especially to its own past in Judeo-Christian scripture. While Leviticus contains opaque blood rites of smearing and sprinkling blood, the gospels have little use for any ritualistic use of blood (8:22-4).[6]

This is no exercise in faultfinding, but an argument to take seriously the insights into the structures of thought that scholars gain by placing blood at the center of scholarship. Chapters four and five illustrate that it is exactly this semantic slipperiness that allows especially skilled writers in medicine to oscillate between meanings to make a case ofr distinct human races. Chapter six asks the question of whether such semantic palimpsests can ever be undone again, especially with regard to blood-as-race.

Not all examples are as obvious and grave as the ones I found in Marvin and

---

5 In another notable case, the widely-cited *Nationalisms* (1996) by political scientist Montserrat Guibernau (a tour-de-force summary of the history and development of nationalism and nationalist movements) rightly points to the importance under aristocratic monarchy, Romantic nationalism, and fascism, but every time leaves "blood" undifferentiated (52, 56, 99). The difference between just the two of these is, so I argue, big enough to justify a separate book.

6 For more on the ritual use of blood, see Biale (9-43) and Milgrom (42). Unless noted, the translations are from the 1985 New JPS Translation for the *Tanakh* and the *NRSV* for other biblical texts.

Ingle's article.[7] In his *Necro Citizenship* (2001), a seminal study of antebellum citizenship as disembodied and abstract, Russ Castronovo points out the link between reform discourses surrounding masturbation and debates about slavery (70-100). I do not dispute Castronovo's findings, but see a danger in the way he uses an antebellum health reform movement that targeted masturbation as a moral, social, and political evil to illustrate the politics of radical abstraction. These so-called anti-masturbation crusades were certainly interested in self-control and reinvestment of sexual desire into political desire, but they were not quite as disconnected from the material body as a lived reality. While the ideal may be disembodied, the therapeutic response to the evils of masturbation stressed in most texts was, as Vincent Bertonlini points out, aimed to instill "discipline within the flesh" (708).

Because he is interested in the abstraction of bodily discourses, Castronovo does not explore the broader medical theories in which many anti-masturbation reformers found solutions to social problems. Chapter four of this study recovers a prominent member of the anti-masturbation physicians, Edward H. Dixon (1808-80), not for his contribution to an abstraction of political desire, but for his obsession with blood.[8] By finding the blood, we see that at least some authors who targeted masturbation were on the contrary quite invested in the body. Dixon develops blood and digestion into the physiological matrix for his social theory and shortly thereafter writes a sensationalist novella about the Ku Klux Klan that sinks all abstraction of politics in liquid, dripping

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7 I bracket some publishers' apparent interested in the attention-grabbing quality of the word "blood" in a book title. While misleading, such sales tactics usually remain limited to titles.

8 For Dixon and masturbation, see Carroll Smith-Rosenberg ("Hysterical Woman"), also Harold Aspiz' connection to Whitman's poetics ("Spermatic Imagination"), and Frederick M. Hodges' examination of antebellum medicine.

blood, beyond distinction, beyond language, and beyond reform. The political desires of an author who writes about drinking the blood of decapitated freedmen were certainly not predominantly abstract and disembodied.[9]

I argue that when blood appears it often plays a specific and important role and that this is often true for its conspicuous absence, when it pulses just beneath the text's surface.[10] We must be careful when writing about blood because it tempts us with a shortcut. Too often it is a self-referential metaphor that demonstrates little but a reliance upon itself: blood is the nation, the nation is its blood. In other words, when we examine blood as a metaphor for race, the nation, the totality of the nation's people, for violence, and so on, we must also keep in mind the bodily fluid with its history in medicine and in religious practice and theory.

Though I aim to warn, I also want to laud the few scholars whose work has consistently engaged blood as a complex phenomenon in both its metaphoric and its material dimension. Most notably, Susan K. Gillman has provided some groundbreaking readings of blood, which I will especially address in the last few chapters, but which stands parent to many of my ideas. Gillman more than other literary critics has taken seriously blood as a chiffre that entwines medicine, cultural products, and politics. She wisely frames her findings with reference to specific texts and authors, as the chapters on

---

9

10 One last minor example is Walter Benn Michaels' discussion of relations between anti-imperialism and white supremacy in "Anti-Imperialist Americanism." While his otherwise brilliant discussion touches upon blood several times, he never pauses to consider the political and ideological work that blood performs between the Ku Klux Klan in the repudiation of assimilation and the repudiation of the possibility of African-American cultural assimilation (369-70, 383). As Susan K. Gillman has explained and as I demonstrate in chapters four and five, the KKK depended on blood-occultism, the same occult notion of blood that informed the medical theories which in turn influenced scientific racism (*Blood Talk* 114). Their claims to interpretations of blood one way or another by white supremacists and physicians is a crucial rhetorical move, but one that never leaves behind the bodily liquid.

Pauline Hopkins, Mark Twain, and W.E.B. DuBois in her classic *Blood Talk: American Race Melodrama and the Culture of the Occult* (2003) indicate. However, this approach makes it difficult to extricate the breadth and over-arching importance of blood to nineteenth-century debates beyond race, which is what I add to her contributions.

Trying to unravel the at times chaotic influences of blood requires help in many fields, and so I draw on the medical histories of Todd L. Savitt as well as the seminal contributions of the late Scott L. Malcomson to the study of the legal and social context of what came to be known as the one-drop rule. Yet despite these insightful and vital texts, their informational value was eclipsed by the guidance that the thoughts of Hortense J. Spillers provided. Spillers' work on blood and race confronts that murky territory in which much of my study lives, between the material and the metaphorical, the legal and the cultural. The essays collected in her *Black, White, and in Color* (2003) gave a direction and a model to my thoughts even when I ventured far off the canon Spillers addresses.

Political Blood in 1848

To return to the problem at hand, though, how should we define blood? For the purposes of this study, blood is primarily of political, social, cultural, religious, and medical significance. Particularly the political and medical dimensions of blood create a broad tension across the selected texts in which we can see the arc of my narrative unfold, from legal, social, cultural, and political struggles over the legacy of sovereignty in 1848 to the legal, social, cultural, and political results of the medicalization of blood by 1900. These two dimensions of blood divide my study into two parts. The first considers the usage of blood as a social and political metaphor up to the rise of its

medicalization, the second one focuses on the legacies of this medicalization.

Let us begin with an illustration of some important connotations of blood in 1848. The postbellum writings of William Wells Brown (1814-84) occupy chapters four and five of this study, but the well-known African-American writer, abolitionist activist, lecturer, and physician also published *The Anti-Slavery Harp* in 1848, the first antislavery songster published by a black U.S. author. One of the songs he culls from the abolitionist *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* is an 1836 song called "Jefferson's Daughter," which contrasts the U.S. Revolutionary War with chattel slavery:

> Can the blood that, at Lexington, poured o'er the plain,
> When the sons warred with tyrants their rights to uphold,
> Can the tide of Niagara wipe out the stain?
> No! Jefferson's child has been bartered for gold! (24)

"Blood' here is overtly political, concerned with the United States' national history and a boast about the vast nation's natural wonders, which it contrasts to the vast inhumanity of slavery. Abolitionist texts often mentioned in graphic detail how enslavers shed the blood of the enslaved. Such allusions to Christian martyrdom also condensed complicated flows of capital, stressing that consumer products brought the bloodshed of evil of slavery into every home.[11] Songs like "Jefferson's Daughter" themselves became part of an abolitionist circulation of texts, the lifeblood, so to speak, of resistance against enslavement. As printed texts circulated, they also carried blood into the domestic spaces

11 Especially pertinent was the antebellum image of "blood sugar." It is likely that abolitionists were correct in pointing out that the sugar consumed in coffee and tea contained the blood of enslaved persons working the sugar mills. This image tinges the positive association with sugar with horror at the blood slaves shed and the implied vampiric ingestion human blood. For more detail on blood sugar, see Timothy Morton's history of the concept. Also see Michele Speitz's article on salt and sugar in Mary Prince's *History*, and Carl Plasa's article on anxieties surrounding enslavement and cannibalism. For a broader view on the Latin-American sugar circuit, see Miguel Barnet and Naomi Lindstrom. Mimi Sheller places the sugar boycotts into a broader history of ethical consumerism.

of the reading public.

By 1848, readers were also increasingly familiar with discussions of so-called black blood and the corresponding white blood.[12] Chapter six elaborates notions of blood quantum before the Civil War and after Emancipation. Chapters four and five discuss the idea of "black blood" in its relation to medical practice and theory. The allusion in "Jefferson's Daughter" is clear. Since the early 1800s, a rumor had been circulating that Thomas Jefferson, founding father and President of the United States had children with an enslaved woman, Sarah "Sally" Hemings.[13] Even though these rumors were not of the same kind as the racist propaganda decrying mixed-race children as degenerate that we see by the 1860s, Jefferson was likely condemned on moral grounds for his infidelity, abuse of power, lack of sel-control, and the violation of social mores. Thanks to historian Annette Gordon-Reed's *The Hemingses of Monticello* (2008), we know that Jefferson did have this second family, though he did not go so far as to sell his children in slave markets as the poem alleges; he freed the core of the Hemings branch family with the exception of Sarah.

The poem takes liberties to construct a plausible legal case. Jefferson's daughter would have inherited the status of slave from her mother. Had he freed neither mother nor children, the President's daughter could feasibly have been "bartered for gold" at a slave auction. In this way, the literary image of Jefferson's daughter on the auctioning block points an accusing finger at chattel slavery as a horrendous violation of familial bonds

12 See A. Leon Higginbotham and Barbara Kopytoff for a genealogy of legal concepts that were widely debated.

13 Journalist James T. Callender exposed the relationship in 1802, but it took until a DNA test in 1998 to convince most historians who were not convinced by scholarship (Gordon-Reed 12, 718).I revisit the relations in chapter six and in my conclusion.

and human love. Even if Jefferson's legal culpability would have been limited to marital infidelity, selling a child on the slave market would have signaled callous indifference for the well-being of this child and a peculiarly intimate form of support for the institution of slavery. Chapter six returns to the question of the role constructions of so-called black blood play in questions of personhood, agency, and familial lineages.

As legal historian Ariela Gross points out in *What Blood Won't Tell* (2010), the legal codification of race was in flux, liable to challenge, and constantly reinterpreted in order to support the nation state, much like the medical one we encounter in the second half of this study. The laws of property and inheritance regulated all enslaved persons and their blood as chattel, including the blood shed in their maltreatment, torture, and murder, but also, as we will see in chapter four, in medical therapy. It is here that "Blood of a Nation" offers a distinct approach from recent scholarship like that of Gross or Jeffory Clymer's *Family Property* (2013). Instead of retelling legal history of blood, my argument places the process of forming laws about blood in a broader relational network of changing definitions of what blood meant. Chapter six especially explores the possibility of bearing witness to the indelible stain of slavery in a nation state that bases its laws on the immutable inferiority of racialized blood. Legal concepts of blood exist in relation to especially medical and theological theories of blood. In the changing understanding of blood, we come to see that no law based on blood can be more coherent or semantically sound than blood.

Finally, "Jefferson's Daughter" addresses history beyond social and legal offenses, though. It contrasts Jefferson's dual paternity—the charismatic founding father of the nation state and the morally corrupt father of enslaved children—referencing blood

shed during the Battle of Lexington, the first battle of the U.S. Revolutionary War (1775-83). This blood is the only one mentioned explicitly and in this way underlines the contrast between celebrations of the blood shed during heroic battles against the unjust sovereign George III and the deafening silence regarding the blood shed by enslaved persons bereft of legal, political, and social personhood.

Even the ingenious condensation in "Jefferson's Daughter" cannot express all things blood was in 1848, however. 1848 saw the end of the bloody U.S.-Mexican War (1846-8), which further increased the already large United States territory. As a result, Native Americans and Mexican citizens living in this space were displaced or robbed of their land by squatters who claimed farm lands, pitting possession against ownership.[14] For some authors this conflict would likely to have been reminiscent of the British colonists' incorporation of Native lands since the seventeenth century.[15] Chapters one and six discuss the role blood plays in questions of inheritance, ownership, and possession. I argue that some authors defended the nation state's history and territory by limiting and in effect erasing Native American blood and the blood of enslaved persons from the nation.

As Shelley Streeby reminds us, 1848 is a transformative marker in the long history of U.S. empire building. At this point contingent forces of industrialized urbanization, class, and empire found a common language in mass culture, especially the

14 For more on this history, see Alexandra Stern, Jesse Alemán ("Gothic"), and Robert R. Alvarez.
15 For more on colonial territorial history, see Alden T. Vaughn and Jean M. O'Brien (1-90).

inscription of racialized and gendered identities in sensational texts about empire.[16] I explain that in sensational texts about blood transgressed national boundaries. Blood as a political metaphor circulated different conceptions of empire, destabilizing the simple alignment of domestic nation state and blood, even reiterating and amplifying notions of occult blood and blood-as-race.

By beginning with 1848 rather than other dates (say Andrew Jackson's second term in 1833, James K. Polk's first in 1845, or the Civil War in 1861), this study therefore stresses the antebellum moment in order to read blood as both historically contingent and relative to specific moments in the history of the nation state. Blood does not have to be in alignment with the chronology or boundary of the nation state, but can bridge time and space as a nodal connection. For example, 1848 brings together the authors in my first chapter, New England author Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-64), who writes about Franklin Pierce's exploits during the U.S.-Mexican War, and Ludwig von Reizenstein (1826-85), an exile of the 1848 democratic uprisings in Bavaria, who wrote in German and had was more interested in Spanish colonial history and the Gulf of Mexico than Salem Puritans. Reading their texts about blood with an eye toward 1848 contrasts Hawthorne's interest in Puritan violence-as-sin with his apparent lack of concern for the very real presence of the United States' colonial and imperial history, especially after the U.S. victory over Mexico that Reizenstein stresses.

Medicine and Blood in 1900

From this wealth of political meanings of blood in 1848 I now want to turn to the

16 The study of blood also in part responds to Carolyn Porter, who asked two decades ago how the end of the U.S.-Mexican War can be more than just a foreshadowing of the Civil War and a return to domestic navel gazing ("Remapping" 519).

other boundary of this study by the century's end: medicine and the bodily fluid. Within about fifty years of 1848, "blood" had an undeniable medical overtone, largely due to changes in the relation between the practice and theory of medicine in the U.S. and its relation to politics. I therefore choose 1900 not as a reflection of the nation state's chronicled history, but as a way to draw on historical milestones of medicine. Though slightly unconventional, my choice aims to demonstrate that shifting to a thematic focus like blood offers new ways of conceiving history.

In the medical history of blood, 1900 marks a radical change in the ways humans understand blood. It is the year Karl Landsteiner (1868-1943) established the existence of human blood types in a footnote to observations on immune reactions: "The serum of healthy humans not only acts agglutinating on animal blood cells but frequently also on human ones that stem from other individuals. It remains to be decided whether this phenomenon depends on originally individual differences or the resulting effect of damage, say by bacteria." ("Kenntnis" 361 n. 1, my translation)[17] Landsteiner's observation that serum agglutinins (the antibodies that attack Rh-positive blood cells) and blood group antigens were at work inaugurated a new era of medicine, and gave it a new field: hematology. Medicine had become what we might see as contemporary.

On the surface, there is nothing political to Landsteiner's way of writing about blood. Unlike "Jefferson's Daughter," there is no mention of or allusion to slavery and

17 The full quote in the original German: "Das Serum gesunder Menschen wirkt nicht nur auf tierische Blutkörperchen agglutinierend sondern öfters auch auf menschliche von anderen Individuen stammende. Es bleibt zu entscheiden ob diese Erscheinung durch ursprüngliche individuelle Verschiedenheiten oder durch die erfolgte Einwirkung von Schädigungen etwa bakterieller Natur bedingt ist. Thatsächlich fand ich das erwähnte Verhalten bei Blut das von Schwerkranken herrührte besonders ausgeprägt. Es könnte diese Erscheinung mit dem von Maragliano geschilderten Lösungsvermögen des Serums für Blutkörperchen bei verschiedenen Krankheiten zusammenhängen."

race, battles and revolutions, not even to money. The political reality of 1900 seems far removed once texts describe blood on glass slides and a laboratory's quantitative measurements. By proving an intra-human difference found in blood not in alignment with prior kinds of blood like race or gender, Landsteiner helped put to rest late Enlightenment inquiries into the relation between blood, individuals, and humanity at large. Furthermore, medical laboratory research after 1900 had developed communication networks far beyond the nation state's geographical boundaries. Landsteiner, an Austrian bacteriologist who studied blood in the most prestigious laboratories of Europe, by 1900 had a transnational audience that quickly communicated, echoed, and reproduced his findings across national boundaries.[18] Medical researchers were members of a scientific fraternity who claimed that their findings about blood were objective and thus above the fray of politics—medical sects and schools excepted.

This idea of the transnational lab researcher was new. Medical historian John Harley Warner points out that such observations in the U.S. were impossible in 1848 and even at any time before the 1880s. Not before the end of the nineteenth century did medicine see the first hesitant beginnings of laboratory research as a way of knowing and a source of authority for orthodox physicians, i.e. practitioners who rejected homeopathic or other alternative therapies ("Mystery" 114-5).

But what led to this radical change medical historians note? Warner's *The Therapeutic Perspective: Medical Practice, Knowledge, and Identity in America, 1820-*

[18] There is also an economic dimension to this process of meaning-making and knowledge. Medical research as much as medical practice is a question of production in that laboratory data is also a product that creates its own market, that caters to the "scientific market," as Bruno Latour points out ("Ghastly Kitchen" 299).

1885 (1986) still offers a good overview of the changes nineteenth-century U.S. medicine underwent. For Warner, orthodox physicians' control of the patient continued to lie at the heart of therapy (102). While the social structure of therapy remained steady, its content changed. I argue that this is especially evident with regard to blood. Only toward the 1890s did practitioners take up "the monitoring of deviations from normality and the management of a hygienic environment" and abandon the aggressive interventions of bloodletting and harsh chemicals aimed at changing the patient's symptoms so characteristic for antebellum practice (102).

"Blood of a Nation" is limited to a small piece of the medicalization of blood. Between 1848 and 1900, the social interaction between patient and practitioner becomes medical theory through and about blood and draws on a great deal of medical history. Charles E. Rosenberg's *The Cholera Years* (2007) and Todd S. Savitt's *Race and Medicine in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-century America* (2007) are recent examples of how much more complex the inquiry into the historical context of medical practice has become since the classic work of John S. Haller's *American Medicine in Transition, 1840-1910* (1981). The history of medicine and science has continued to elaborate the fraught and changing relations between physicians and their practice, and between practitioner and patient, especially against the backdrop of politics and with regard to class, race, and gender. Both confirm that we ought not read medicine in narratives of decline and resurgence, but as complex negotiation processes in which theory and praxis are mutually influential.

Both medical practice and theory are constructions of the knowable, attempts to expand the nation's epistemic frame. As Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison explain,

medical research was in part an effort at defining what medical research is.[19] Laboratories did not just produce data for a medical market but constructed a political narrative about national epistemology, about methodological, metaphysical, and moral objectivity by way of confirming structural expectations of what counted as objective. What blood meant to a physician depended on a specific definition of the term "meaning" that was relative to politics as well as to specific therapeutic technologies. For example, Ann Fabian Gould and Keith Wailoo explain, medical technologies themselves reflect hierarchical social values, which medical texts work hard to render invisible. I aim ot uncover this socio-political narrative by focusing on the social in the medical, the blood in practice and theory.

How medical practitioners and researchers contextualized blood, how they translated it from readings on a device and visual impressions on glass slides to their political reality influenced their understanding of blood. For example, as radical Jacksonian democrats attacked physicians during the 1820s and 30s in an effort to defeat elitism, physicians changed clinical practice by establishing empiricist therapy as the test for true medicine. I argue that practitioners focused on therapies involving blood was not only a response to theoretical imperatives, but also a reaction to socio-political pressures. In contrast to these egalitarian demands, laboratory research by 1900 relied on a frame of understanding that only made sense in the laboratory *of* 1900, a theoretical episteme that U.S. physicians came to accept only gradually during the last third of the nineteenth

19 I read Daston and Galison's *Objectivity* (2007) in reference to Daston's prior studies that specifically address nineteenth-century constructions of objectivity ("Objectivity").

century.[20]

Consequently, laboratories like those of Karl Landsteiner, the scientist I mentioned above, were anything but free from politics. Non-medical, social values and linear hierarchies became part of researchers' specific assumptions about what constituted health and disease, but also their decisions about how averages and norms were to be calculated, their rules about how the measurements were to be translated into theory, and most importantly their recommendations of how practitioners should eventually implement them in therapy. As historian of science Bruno Latour puts it, "those who speak in the name of blood groups, chromosomes, water vapor, tectonic plates, or fish can only be temporarily and locally distinguished from those who speak in the name of blood, the dead, flood, hell, and fish" (*Pasteurization* 199).

But during the second half of the nineteenth century, practitioners were not inclined to abandon their social focus on practice and instead derived medical theory from their clinical observations. I therefore stress the fraught nature of medical technology and research, with an eye toward practice. Texts about medicine describe a profoundly social interaction in which blood can mean race, gender, class, as well as a therapeutic preference that was in effect a political preference. Medical therapies thus implemented social and political theories.

Medical practice relies on blood to fuse social performance and social theory. Chapter four focuses on the role of blood in texts about therapeutic practice and theory before and after the Civil War. Blood as a semantically slippery concept is central to all

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20 Latour points out that especially the transformative steps in visual processes like microscopy are central to the construction of the object as well as to the translation of the observed phenomena into language (*Pandora's Hope* 79).

these medical practices and theories. But the bodily liquid itself also plays a critical role in medical therapy. Bloodletting or phlebotomy was one of the most divisive and most widely-used therapeutic practices of the nineteenth century. It becomes clear that a practitioner's defense or condemnation of phlebotomy is a matter of politics. Bloodletting, which often did bring about immediate and powerful changes in symptoms and thus counted as good therapy, declined as the medical theory created by practitioners itself laid the groundwork for later medical inflexions of blood with race in scientific racism.[21] The decline of bloodletting runs parallel to abolitionist efforts and extends beyond Emancipation into, as chapter five details, the rise of scientific racism.

This part of my argument also builds on a wealth of scholarship about the contributions of medicine to social identities. Scholars like Dana D. Nelson have explained that physicians were actively involved in the negotiation and construction of national identities concerning race, but also gender though medicine. Nelson's seminal *National Manhood* (1998) elaborates on the interactions between medicine, race, and nationalism through various shifting standpoints, identities, and practices of fraternization and management. In the nineteenth century, blood in medical theory and practice increasingly meant race and gender. Nelson correctly points out that imaginary constructs based on blood are most useful to scholars of society and culture if they are read diachronically as well as synchronically (269 n 29). Janice Delaney, Mary Jane Lupton, and Emily Toth remind us that menstruation has been at the core of medical constructions

21 The arguments over bloodletting were not limited to the U.S. Medical history offers a new lens through which to observe domestic problems in a transnational context as we see, for example, in John Harley Warner's discussion of Scottish physicians and their 1850s debate over phlebotomy. He explains that their status anxieties influenced their theories while new theories also influenced the practice ("Bloodletting Controversy").

of the world since Aristotle and thus also that we must take seriously the historical lineage of blood (Delaney, Luton, and Toth 45-8).[22] The findings of historian Piero Camporesi and anthropologist Melissa Meyer connect Nelson's argument—that men's anxieties about menstruation directly influenced the way white, male scientists imagined their fraternity and their role in the management of the nation at large—to ideologies of bloodletting and especially to phlebotomy as a social intervention (Nelson 72, Camporesi 106-21, Meyer 123-62).

Recently, Lennard Davis, Sarah E. Chinn, Laura L. Behling, and Ellen Samuels have further complicated the designation of medicine as a closed field and argued that medicine is deeply embedded in the formation of the nation state and nationalist ideology because it is an epistemological framework that produces social identities through both practice and theory. They stress the qualitative biases in medical research, therapy, and theory, and demonstrate that the political implementation of these forms of knowledge is directly responsible for the policing of bodies through measurements and medical technologies.

My reading of texts about medical practice as a genre and as a literary construction of identities also echoes a growing scholarly interest in the relation between medicine and literature. Chapter four in part argues that medical narratives about blood are not mere reports of research findings, but also constructions of universal social theories. As Cynthia J. Davis has demonstrated, biological definitions of the body

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22 As Regina Morantz-Sanchez reminds us, though, the historical situation of female patients and practitioners was far more complex than a simple patriarchal practitioner versus oppressed patient-dichotomy can express. Far from passive victims, Victorian women understood the implications of medicalized and essentialized identities enough to be able to at times manipulate them to their advantage and to form own networks of practitioners (297-303).

themselves arose from both medicine and literature in *Bodily and Narrative Forms* (2000). Questioning firm disciplinary boundaries between medicine and literature, recent studies like Michael Sappol's exploration of the nineteenth-century medical case narrative as a prose genre and Kelly Bezio's reading of travel literature texts as quarantine narratives also stress the literary quality of so-called medical texts. Their resistance to rigid the rigid academic compartmentalization according to disciplines makes them useful as well as challenging.

I read texts about medical theory and practice for the socio-political work they perform in disciplining of citizens through education in anatomy and hygiene. Of course, my approach echoes the broader development of what Michel Foucault calls the medical gaze, i.e. the clinical vision act which serves the "endless task of absorbing experience in its entirety, and of mastering it" (*Clinic* xiv). Especially in the encounter with blood, the clinical vocabulary of anatomical taxonomy offered a solution in this crisis of knowledge and understanding in the historical context of the nation state.

School education about medical subjects is particularly suited to illustrate how medical theories about blood gained wider acceptance by teaching students to look at the body in new ways, to speak about it in the language of clinical diagnosis, and to think about it as a matter of medicine, not politics in the sense of sovereign aristocracy. I here allude to earlier scholarship on school education in the sciences and especially instruction in hygiene and anatomy. [23]

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23 "Hygiene" is an elusive term, broad enough to warrant entire books. Suffice it to say that it is a social, political, medical, and cultural practice broad enough to encompass a range of specific local and historical implementations, from menstrual and oral hygiene to industrial, mental, verbal, colonial, and racial hygiene. For the purposes of this study, it is referred to in the sense of the United States Sanitary

Chapter two therefore explores the pedagogical and disciplining functions of medical language. Though Nina Baym's *American Women of Letters and the Nineteenth-Century Sciences* (2002) calls for more scholarship about the scientific education in secondary schools, her call has too often gone unheard regarding medical education in schools. I expand Baym's scholarship on school education to the sciences and especially in hygiene and anatomy to argue that the use of blood as an overtly medical metaphor roots in new school subjects, especially anatomy textbooks.

I argue that blood changed from an overtly political to an overtly medical metaphor by way of school curricula in anatomy. My findings illustrate that around the Civil War, Anatomical and hygienic taxonomy buttressed the nation state and supported the formation of a well-adjusted citizen by diffusing the epistemological challenge of blood in the War. Toward the end of the century, taxonomy even served revisionist efforts at rewriting the War as a closed chapter in the nation state's history. Though anatomy textbooks remain under-studied, we know that anatomy demonstrations were very political. As Michael Sappol's *A Traffic of Dead Bodies* (2002) explains, anatomical education and research was based on the dissections of the bodies of poor whites and African Americans. Medical education itself was in this way also part of exploitative racist institutions and incorporated structures of racist thought into its anatomy lessons

Blood in War and Race

Broadly speaking, changes in medical theory, practice, and their role in national

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Commission understood its mission, which far exceeded removal of waste and dirt, extending to therapeutic practice, medical supplies, the ordering of encampments, and regulation of personal behavior, which led to specific political positions and conflicts, creating a continuum from home to camp to hospital, as Margaret Humphreys details (103-30). As Michael Sappol explains, though, hygiene in the domestic educational context was at least initially negotiated via anatomy (*Traffic* 192-3).

imaginaries between 1848 and 1900 came by two inextricably entwined paths, war and race. Historian Drew Gilpin Faust famously explains in *This Republic of Suffering* that the nation at large reacted to the epistemological anxieties brought about by the Civil War with collective mourning. In her view, the Civil War shook the frame of sense-making, creating an epistemic crisis and a search for meaning. Ultimately, citizens found "a new sense of national destiny" and a "transcendent purpose" in the nation's power, wealth, extent, and influence (268). In search of this unity and purpose, most citizens turned from the battlefield to the graveyard. Their focus on mourning the dead, on questions of burial, and care for the graves gave rise to new, vast federal agencies and justified their expansion.

"Blood of a Nation" takes a step back to the moment before the grave, to the bleeding body and considers the possibilities of writing about the blood shed during the Civil War. The sheer quantity of the blood shed in the Civil War washed away established frames of intelligibility for warfare, and threw in questions all ways of knowing what blood meant. Blood was prominent in the horrors of war and challenged the conciliatory power of well-worn Romantic tropes, and some authors therefore had to find new modes of expression. Chapters two and three respond a related set of questions. Did authors respond to the blood? If so, how did they try to integrate it into their national imaginary?

For decades, the encounter with blood, its sight, smell, and texture as well as its affective dimension was a defining dimension of literature about U.S. the first mass war. That a growing mass of urban, industrialized consumers grew more distanced from even the blood of slaughtered animals formed the historical backdrop for a new urban mass

culture, including its hygiene lessons and industrial meat plants. The Civil War's red tide, the red, dripping blood was a threat to this new world.

"Blood of a Nation" focuses on the blood on the battlefield falls between the war and the grave, the wound and the bullet, an aspect of this process that literary scholarship frequently overlooks. Blood not only precedes the dead body, it also remains when the bodies are gone and haunts those who remember. This puzzling experience compounds the epistemic crisis Faust describes in that anatomic taxonomy offered the abstraction of blood through language to observers of battles as well as the middle class at the home front, enabling citizens to write about the semantically overdetermined body bodily fluid without having to work through its affective challenge. Taxonomy became a way to read bloodshed through a clinical, detached lens, a language supposedly void of affective content and clear definitions for complicated social relations between blood, race, and gender.

Beyond language, medicine also offered a practical way to cope with bloodshed. Franny Nudelman's *John Brown's Body* (2004) rightly stresses that scientific fraternities of white doctors offered anatomical knowledge and the power of clinical definitions to depoliticize all bodies (47-8). As chapter three demonstrates, medical practice echoed this way of mastering the affective disruption of Civil War blood. The professional lexicon and the medical gaze subsumed bloodshed into medicine and gave therapeutic solutions to epistemic problems.

This is especially clear in the new institution that bridged medical practice and theory: the Civil War hospital. Ira M. Rutkow's *Bleeding Blue and Grey* (2005), a standard reference for Civil War medical history, illustrates the medical-logistical

challenges for both Union and Confederacy. Neither had a coordinated health care system and both were equally challenged by the bloodshed that raised many questions. What was health care? What role could surgeons and nurses play in stopping the bleeding of bodies and, by extension, the body politic?

I argue that medical practice a matter of narrating, of texts about the examples of surgeons like Silas Weir Mitchell, nurses like Clara Barton and Dorothea Dix, and of the supposedly representative texts about them, written by authors like Louisa May Alcott and Walt Whitman. These texts wrestled with the national crisis through detailed rules of conduct and exemplary behavior—ways of acting in the face of blood. Documentation and scholarly material give us a far clearer picture in the case of the Union, where political institutions, offices, and civilian engagement in the United States Sanitary Commission created the first national, professional medical establishment.

U.S. medicine grew out of war, as historian Margaret Humphreys' study of the health care system during the Civil War, *Marrow of Tragedy* explains. The hard utilitarian reality of war ended a good deal of antebellum sectarian feuds and political rivalries, erecting functioning hospitals and establishing the nursing profession as a testament to the import of medicine. During the search for meaning, Civil War hospitals offered civilians an entirely new perspective on medical practice and the medical profession as part of the nation, a locus of narrating the national crisis through medicine and blood.

At the same time, however, medical theory shifted its emphasis from anatomy to physiology, and especially to the role of blood. Medicine continued to offer ways to reread the experience of blood from the citizen, but physiological theories of blood

introduced new and different questions, which increasingly involved questions about human races. As mentioned above, these medical constructions of race relied on the semantic slipperiness of blood. In texts, blood becomes increasintly occult. Once it was opaque, more texts anchored abstract social identities inside the bodies of living humans. These narratives arose from those earlier ones of medicalized blood, and from the Civil War.

Texts that find national significance in the hospital at the same time elide other kinds of therapy, particularly the sophisticated network of social practices to treat illness enslaved persons had long developed. Most obviously, race becomes a central dimension of what can count as medicine with regard to blood. As Sharla M. Fett and Herbert C. Covey have pointed out, African-American folk medicine was and is an important part of what white medicine refused in theory and practice. Chapter four examines medical therapy as a social performance that is flexible enough to encompass an altered minstrel performance in order to protect patient and practitioner from shedding blood as well as a therapy of unhealthy blood as embodied social identities.

The relation between blood, race, and medical practice was also an economic one. As historian Katherine Kemi Bankole explains in *Slavery and Medicine* (1998), medicine was central to institutionalized slavery not because of neglectful medical care for enslaved African Americans, but because white enslavers and practitioners insisted that enslaved persons needed special care and that so-called black blood was different (170-2). This belief gave rise to a host of specialized medical therapies that related to “black blood.” Especially my fifth chapter illustrates that medical research, experimentation, and the production of medical theory depended on slavery.

Based on social notions of essential otherness in non-white enslaved persons, the content of such therapies was often detrimental to individual welfare. For instance, even though Todd L. Savitt indicates that enslaved persons had a say in their medical treatment, he also points out that they were the group most frequently subjected to medical experiments ("Medical Experimentation" 335-48).[24] Practitioners who insisted on find essential, biological differences in the blood of whites and blacks often targeted enslaved persons as a source for measurements. As indicated above, and as chapter five elaborates, such measurements and the resulting theories frequently relied on the semantic slipperiness of "blood" to justify their circular arguments.

While "blood" is semantically slippery, "black blood" is outright opaque. As I pointed out above, Susan K Gillman most consistently addresses questions of blood. For my work her book *Blood Talk* is most important because it explores conflicts about race and interracial mixture developing around the melodrama and the occult roughly between the end of Reconstruction and the First World War. Gillman deploys the "occult" as a way to gather many strands that make up discussions of race, including psychology, and medicine, but also socio-political fraternities like the Ku Klux Klan. In "Blood of a Nation" I use the term in a more literal way, describing the opacity of this hypothesized black blood, the mystery at the heart of this blood, and the way its proponents have to rely on religious texts to warrant its existence. This idea of the so-called black blood then results in an ambivalence between bodily fluid and metaphor that pretends to explain

24 Recently, Petra Kuppers and Rachel Dudley have opened an encouraging new line of inquiry into what they call the "medical plantation," a concept that not only focuses on medical practice and experiments, but that follows a broader methodological inquiry into the relations of performance, medicine, enslavement, testimony, and the possibility of the archive.

social constructions of black and white.

This medical notion of so-called black blood was also a political narrative about blood-as-race. Both racist science and racist politics relied on this occult blood. Especially the violent racism of the Ku Klux Klan identified with the so-called black blood as a mystery, an opaque, indefinite, but eternal and even supernatural presence in African-American bodies. Edward H. Dixon's national imaginary I explore in chapter five is a clear case in which the medical construction of blood makes the fluid occult and revels in an orgiastic fantasy of "black blood." As chapter six illustrates, by the time the U.S. Supreme Court confirmed Jim Crow laws the nation state was buttressed by notions of so-called black blood and its authors drew on a wealth of associations of blood, from Enlightenment husbandry to social Darwinism. Though racist violence at that point was physically exerted by groups like the Ku Klux Klan, these political applications of blood quantum laws were also part of the nation state's regime of racist violence as well as of authors' national imaginaries.

National Imaginaries

The term "national imaginary" deserves some explanation. "Blood of a Nation" is no study of cultural anthropology like Uli Linke's *Blood and Nation* (1999), which examines the role of blood metaphors in political ideologies. Rather, I read texts about the metaphor "blood" as well as those about the bodily fluid perform to trace the ideological work blood does in constructions of national imaginaries.

The term "national imaginary" is for one an overt reference to Lauren Berlant's *The Anatomy of National Fantasy* (1991). Berlant uses the term "National Symbolic" to describe the regulation of desire and the "harnessing affect to political life through the

production of 'national fantasy'" (5). This all refers to the terminology of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. In his terms, the Symbolic realm would pose a plane of intervention, i.e. of therapeutic negotiation of pre-genital desire and experienced reality. However, blood, as I explain below by way of Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection, precedes ego-formation. It stands at the boundary of the self that *can* desire in the first place. Also as a metaphor, blood only bespeaks the real, while its reality resists the limits of signification, as I explain in chapter two.

More obviously, I cannot simply adopt Berlant's term to focus on blood because her interest in Nathaniel Hawthorne's utopian political desires and intentionally leaves in place the complicated mutual influences of, as she explains, the National Symbolic, i.e. the overlap of political space and its juridical, linguistic, territorial, and genetic aspects, the sum of which she calls a "tangled cluster" (5). The goal of "Blood of a Nation" is in part to extricate blood from that "cluster." Since blood is different it is less useful to treat it as yet another symbol. Instead I turn the project around and examine the process of how authors make sense of blood.

To that end, I adopt the term "national imaginary," which has currency in Canadian and Australian scholarship on nationalisms and national identities, but is under-used in the U.S.[25] In using this term, "Blood of a Nation" thus also aims to facilitate comparative conversations about blood beyond the U.S. because the comparative mode is

25 My conclusion references Homi Bhabha's use of the term (12). For a history of the term and an attempt to integrate it with a narratological approach, see Ross Chambers. The term has also become popular in work on iconology, as seen in the edited volume by Larry J. Reynolds and Gordon Hutner.

central to the study of blood.[26] The national imaginary describes the cultural artifacts produced by writing publics in support of the nation without assuming that this national imaginary is in alignment with the existing nation state. For example, in her discussion of nationalism in Margaret Atwood's novels, Kiley Kapuscinski sees it as a "socially constructed metanarrative that organizes and enables national identity through exclusive ideological, political, and socio-historical frameworks," but that also disavows its status as a fiction and that depends on constant reinvention by the reading and writing public (96 n 2).[27] This, in turn means that each author can devise independent national imaginaries in a developing negotiation of what the nation is and whether the status quo fulfills the conditions of this national imaginary.

A national imaginary may well be a counter-narrative or an expression of resistance and disruption and a utopian projection of political desire. To translate this once more into Lacanian terms, blood stands between the real and the imaginary, but also between the imaginary and the symbolic. While the bodily fluid touches a primal, preconscious and inexpressible part of the subject, the metaphor negotiates anxieties and control. As part of the symbolic plane, the blood metaphor is useful for authors who attempt to address the primal that precedes and lurks underneath the laws and contracts of

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26 This is most obvious in Alexandra M. Stern's discussion of medicalized notions of blood along the U.S.-Mexico border in the early twentieth century, who uses the concept as a comparative base between the notion of blood in the U..S. and Mexico instead of universalizing the political use of "blood" (79-80). For other examples of the concept in scholarship, see Marko Živkovic's description of the Serbian national imaginary that deployed history, geography, and culture in the construction of Serbian identities that focuses on redundancy and recursivity to detect patterns and gradients in a political geography (4). In a similar vein, Margot Francis uses the concept to examine what she calls Canadians' "parasitic relationship to Indigenous peoples" by finding a "flight from history" in narratives that simultaneously offer the nostalgia of returning to a thus de-historicized imaginary (127).

27 Annette Hamilton defines it as "the means by which contemporary social orders are able to produce not merely images of themselves but images of themselves against others. An image of the self implies at once an image of another, against which it can be distinguished" (16).

the nation. If the nation as a Romantic whole and organic unity of polity, politics, and policy is a misrecognition, a fantasy, then the nation state is the acknowledgment of the community as controlled by the Name-of-the-Father.

To understand how texts circulate in the formation of the national imaginary, "Blood of a Nation" also draws on another form of imagination, namely Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983). While much of my argument aligns with Anderson's, I disagree with his insistence that the nation was originally "conceived in language, not in blood" (149). The nation state is part of the symbolic, but the imagined nation is not synonymous with its legal construction. As a result of his prioritizing of language, Anderson sees that class precedes race. I instead agree with Michel Foucault that class structures emulated eighteenth-century ideas of race and that the two entwined, as I explain below.

Of course that is not to say that that all is only blood. But blood is always with us. To divide the nation in language and blood and to dismiss the latter as Anderson does, however, sidesteps atavistic moments, overlaps, archaisms, lingering haunts, and specters. His focus on language obscures interrelations between the language of literature, medicine, laws, and politics as sites of negotiation of that fantasy image that is the nation. Betsy Erkkilä rightly points out that the early republic displays a constant struggle with the "historical and psychological drama and trauma of blood and boundaries" (*Mixed Bloods* ix). Blood helps me to engage the development of the nation as the messy affair that it is by undermining clear definitions.

Abjecting Blood from the Nation

Behind "Blood of a Nation" stands a much broader historical change that is

visible in how texts relate blood and the nation's legal form between 1848 and 1900, namely the shift from aristocratic sovereignty to the nation state. This assertion roots in the work of French historian Michel Foucault who describes sovereignty and the nation state not just as political systems but as *epistemes*—the totality of ideas in a given period that form what can be understood as knowledge in a specific time and place.

Foucault does not pretend that there is a break or discontinuity between the two political systems of aristocratic sovereignty, the nation state, and their social institutions. The shift between epistemes is not sudden or total, because they are neither static nor discrete. As Collette Guillaumin points out, while the French Revolution may have literally killed the sovereign, it metaphorically replaced the blood of a royal family with the blood of a people, creating a continuity between aristocracy and race (41-5).

An often-neglected aspect of the episteme is that it does not end abruptly. Foucault stresses that he "*wouldn't say exactly* that sovereignty's old right—to take life or let live—was *replaced*, but it came to be *complemented* by" what we understand as biopower (*Society* 241, my emphasis). Ann Laura Stoler has likewise pointed out that Foucault emphasizes the continuity between aristocratic race and bourgeois sexuality, not a break or difference (38-40). In "Blood of a Nation," this continuity appears in the deployment of blood metaphors against anxieties, in the authors' incessant reinterpretation of what blood is and how it relates to the political order. The decline of aristocratic sovereignty and the rise of the nation state is always a question of what role blood plays.

I want to offer a broad spatial metaphor to illustrate the overall arc of the narrative this study tells. I maintain that blood underwent a process of distancing and abstraction

during the nineteenth century, in which process authors refer to it to align national imaginaries with the nation state, in effect expelling blood as antithetical to of U.S. domestic nationalism. Through the process Julia Kristeva calls "abjection," blood becomes both the core of liberal-national imaginaries and its greatest taboo, always visible but never welcome, always theorized about but never fully recognized. I return to the idea of abjection in more detail below. Blood becomes the dialectical contradiction of the domestic nation state.

The expulsion of blood only inverts it, however, which is why blood is never divorced from the nation state. Even after the end of sovereign aristocracy, the executive prerogative of the state claims this sovereign power. Externally, this power increasingly appears as part of imperial colonialism. Aristocratic social structures as well as patriarchy and elitism underlie the nation state's inherited structure. The banishment of blood from the domestic order of Victorian societies thus reflects and amplifies a shift in economic, social, and political structures, but not the end of sovereign aristocracy or absence of blood. Blood never vanishes materially nor does it leave its central place at heart of the nation's political, social, and cultural realms. It never becomes a mere bodily fluid, free of its political history and cultural weight. Instead, it paradoxically becomes more important the less it is part of daily life.

My overall argument develops the metaphor of expulsion and distancing basically as an extension and combination of several scholars' points about blood, especially, as I already mentioned, by Foucault and Kristeva, but also Norbert Elias. They provide a crucial focus on the intersection of the nation state and the individual because their theories balance the human psyche with the history of social institutions and cultural

products—psycho-genesis and socio-genesis, to put it in Elias' terms.[28] Unlike historians of the nation like Uli Linke who focus only on metaphors or scholars in phenomenology or psychoanalysis who focus primarily on the individual, they explain that blood is important and effective in national imaginaries because it addresses human affect as well as metaphors of belonging and community.

We can sum up the model that arises from reading their theories with regard to blood on a pre-conscious, individual level: humans react to blood with a visceral, affective sense of threat and danger. They have to neutralize this threat by way of abjection to function coherently. Individuals often negotiate group belonging through metaphorical and literal blood, entwining blood with desires for social-economic and cultural capital, prestige, and status. Finally, to individuals, making sense of blood gives them a way to relate to the nation state and the nation state to interpellate individuals to create a citizenry.

So it is important to recognize that the affective dimension of blood, which I will frequently stress, goes deeper than compassion for a hurt human. In *Powers of Horror* (1982), psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva expands on the formation of the individual human psyche as described by Sigmund Freud. Kristeva points out that Freud's model of the three basic parts *Ich*, *Es*, and *Über-Ich* already presupposes the possibility of the *Ich*, the self, to be conscious. To achieve self-awareness, though, Kristeva argues, a process has to take place first in which the self draws its boundaries and separates itself from all that is not self. This is a primal, pre-conscious process and it touches not just on our sense of

28 Fore more details on these terms, see Alan Sica's elaboration, who rightly critiques Elias' reliance on metaphors like the overcome phylogeny-repeats-ontogeny model (62).

self, but on the very moment of the self's coming into being.

This moment of drawing of boundaries to structure the entire the individual psyche Kristeva calls "abjection," the expelling of all that is not self from within the self, beyond a boundary. The structure of an individual's psyche also obviously structures what the individual can know and rationally comprehend. The violent affect that occurs when this person approaches the boundaries is a feeling of threat and dissolution. Individuals encounter this boundary in moments of disgust and horror, especially in the contact with the corpse, the encounter that shows us that which we must "permanently thrust aside to live" (3). The sight and odor of blood, pus, sweat, or decay are not representations of death, not signifiers, but the defiling essence of "what life withstands" (3). The self is precarious and blood is its menetekel.

Individual encounters with blood and the texts about them thus do not just address politics or politesse, but psychic terror, an existential threat to the individual that encounters the border of the "condition as a living being," from which the body itself recoils (3). As Kristeva points out: "Such wastes drop so that I might live, until, from loss to loss, nothing remains in me and my entire body falls beyond the limit—*cadere*, cadaver" (3). Blood signals not just injury or danger, but the danger of nothingness, of the erasure of the self, a psychological threat of negation that goes far beyond the threat of physical harm.

We should not regard abjection as private or only internalized, because it sets off social dynamics. Anne McClintock has recently pointed out that we should see abjection as a dynamic term that implies distinct but interdependent objects, states, zones, agents of abjection, abjected groups, and political processes *of* abjection (*Leather* 71-4). It is

important to realize that abjection does not exist independently from material reality and that material reality arises in part from the psychic dynamics of individuals or social group dynamics. Abjection describes the individual in relation to society, and socio-economic relations amplify the abjection of material blood. Blood is in this material and social dimension a central marker for prestige and social power.

This social and psychological function of blood brings me to historical sociologist Norbert Elias' theory of historical development, which remains under-studied by literary scholars, despite his importance in history and sociology.[29] Elias' 1939 *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation* examines the rise of behavioral and structural etiquette at European courts and explains how individuals internalize the characteristics of material conditions in a social process. Specifically, the development of the centralized courts forced a great number of individuals to cooperate and coexist with the same goal of attaining prosperity. Since individual prosperity depended on the benevolence of a superior, individuals refined their behavior in order to please them and to avoid displeasing them in advance. Warrior knights became courtiers to please the rich and powerful.

Elias' model explains why individual acts of bloodshed and inter-personal violence fall out of favor and why citizens increasingly identify with more abstract confrontations between nations. In Elias' model, such changes in the behavior of individuals in turn restructure the material aspects of everyday life. As he points out,

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29 Denise Gigante's recent work on taste remains one of the few exceptions (99). If we concede that habituation influences food consumption and relations between humans and animals, then it should be clear that our reactions to human blood are regimented as strictly, if not more so. This is not a substitute for phenomenological approaches, which, however, end in a certain speechless loquacity when it comes to blood, much in the same way we see in Walt Whitman's struggle with the unspeakability of blood in chapter three. For an example of a phenomenological attempt to address blood, see Drew Lederer.

citizens in the nation state later identified such processes as the advancement of so-called civilization, as hierarchical, linear progress. Jonathan Fletcher points out that what counts as civilized conduct in the West is the social display of increasing affect control and habituation (47-8). Unpleasant actions, manners, but also odors and especially bodily fluids fell under a regime of constraint and self-censoring in the name of civilization. This self-censoring took the form of self-conditioning of the individual psyche, or affect control. Annette Treibel points out that "civilization" also becomes a key word in the history of imperial expansion and colonization (50).

"Blood of a Nation" explains how blood becomes more than a marker of uncivilized behavior. In the shift from court to the drawing room and from etiquette to hygiene, blood moves to the socio-cultural center of the nation state. So when I focus on blood, I therefore focus on its presence in conspicuous absences, in all the ways national imaginaries expel it from the civilized, domestic core of the nation. In a way, I follow Toni Morrison's emphasis on "significant and underscored omissions" and silences that structure the core of an entire literary culture (*Playing* 6). As I stress in the last chapter, U.S. racism itself depends on the erasure of some blood as unspeakable and impossible in the nation state. A study of the relation between blood and the nation thus also examines the liberal-progressive imperative of civilized spaces as spaces free from bloodshed and the constant presence of blood expressed in fictional and non-fictional texts, poetry, and scientific texts.

Kristeva explains our affective response to blood and Elias shows how this reaction relates to broader socio-economical changes between the 1400s and 1750s. Foucault finally adds the specific political background against which I read U.S. authors.

As we mentioned above, his *History of Sexuality* describes the long supplementation of eighteenth-century European sovereign monarchy with the nineteenth-century bourgeois sexology.

To clarify the contrast, Foucault focuses on the material and metaphoric importance of blood to sovereign power. Through blood, aristocracy asserted its power "in the form of blood, that is, in the form of the antiquity of its ancestry and of the value of its alliances" (*Society* 240). Blood in the nineteenth century must be read in both contrast to and in continuation of this legacy. To the sovereign, blood was the most important element in the material, manifest "mechanisms of power," especially in rituals (*History* 147). Blood was central, even fundamental in a society based on alliance systems, "the political form of the sovereign," orders, castes, and lines of descent (147). But blood also was central because the daily life under much of sovereignty, just about up to the period we consider, was one of imminent death from starvation, epidemics, and violence (147).

Until the rise of the nation state, blood was valuable for three reasons. First, blood was "instrumental" to the sovereign who could shed blood and who depended on the act of shedding blood as a symbolic and ritualistic source of authority (147). Second, blood "functioned in the order of signs," and thus allowed for what I mention as semantic slipperiness, the address of both psyche and affect by way of signification processes, "to have a certain blood, to be of the same blood, to be prepared to risk one's blood" (147). Third, blood is precarious, threatened, and thus a motor of dynamic social processes. Because blood is "easily spilled, subject to drying up, too readily mixed, capable of being quickly corrupted," it is a target for enemies and a rallying point for allies (147).

Foucault concludes his elaboration with a *tableaux* of blood: "A society of blood—I was tempted to say, of "sanguinity"—where power spoke through blood: the honor of war, the fear of famine, the triumph of death, the sovereign with his sword, executioners, and tortures; blood was a reality with a symbolic function" (*History* 147). In sovereignty, blood was real *and* symbolic, infusing the lives of citizens *and* rulers. In the nineteenth-century U.S. we see the legacy this socio-political past present under the guise of the nation state. In other words, independence from Great Britain did not suddenly end the legacy of blood with which the U.S. was connected. As Reginald Horsman points out: "in the nineteenth century the Americans were to share in the discovery that the secret of Saxon success lay not in the institutions but in the blood" (24). I explain in chapter six that blood must stay central to a nation rooted in racist slavery.

Together, Foucault, Elias, and Kristeva explain that blood was central to socio-political formations prior to the nineteenth century and why it became so important to both the nation state and the middle class.[30] In self-discipline and habituation did members of the nineteenth-century middle-class distance themselves from the "society of blood." Individuals internalized and advanced rules of behavior through the discipline of bodies, both on the level of imposed rules of hygiene and on the level of affect, the horror

30 "Blood of a Nation" is not history, but it takes into account the conflict between Foucauldian psychohistory, *Alltagsgeschichte* (microhistory), and the broader histories of discipline (macrohistory) in the wake of Norbert Elias and Gerhard Oestreich in historical scholarship between the 1980s and the 1990s. Without taking a specific side, this theoretical section indicates that in order to study blood, it is necessary to examine the individual psyche in conjunction with the material reality and socio-cultural processes around that individual. But this study does not apply the hypotheses of Kristeva, Foucault, or Elias so much as use them to illustrate the many different facets of texts about blood and how they fit into a larger context, the development of the nation state. For more on these conflicts between micro- and macrohistory, see Heinz Schilling.

or jolt at seeing blood. Individual confrontations with blood resulted in projections of anxieties about the threatening atavism of sovereign power onto moments of political violence. A national crisis like the Civil War from this vantage can become the arrest of the progress of civilization or even a return to a less civilized, supposedly more savage society. The psychological crisis in the threat of the self, the political crisis in the collapse of the nation state and the nullification of the national imaginary overlap in blood.

Summaries

Each chapter of this study focuses on a specific dimension of what blood means in connection to the nation, from aristocratic sovereignty and colonial history to taxonomy and the blood shed during the Civil War, blood in medical praxis and theory, scientific racism, and the legacy of slavery under Jim Crow by the end of the century. Each chapter also illustrates what I see as most characteristic for the on-going change of how authors wrote about blood in this context.

The first chapter juxtaposes two novels and the role blood plays in them with regard to history, territory, and slavery. I begin with Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1851 *The House of the Seven Gables*. This canonical text provides a central example for a liberal-progressive national imaginary that is largely in alignment with the nation state. Hawthorne's novel best illustrates the struggle to extricate the nation state from its bloody history, to expel the blood, and through this process of abjection create a new, civilized, and hygienic domestic order. I examine the Romance genre as a means for Hawthorne to control blood in a masterfully-structured novel. The romance itself allows him to construct a coherent, symmetrical image of the nation as a well-built house.

Although the novel seems concerned with unearthing the nation state's sins of the

past, I argue that this is a selective admission. Hawthorne chooses one historical moment and place to render invisible even more troubling moments of bloodshed related to the nation state. Instead of acknowledging all histories of sovereign violence, he disavows existing imperial history and continuing bloodshed within the nation. In other writings, he relegates the nation's bloody violence to marginal spaces like the frontier and the border with Mexico. The U.S. republic presented a formidable challenge to aristocratic sovereignty. The young republic also raised the question of whose blood would count in the new nation, if not the aristocracy's. Hawthorne answers this question in part so as to disappear continuing Native American genocide and the murder of enslaved persons.

To achieve his coherent image of the house, Hawthorne uses the liberties of the Romance genre to prioritize his national imaginary over existing history, the Romance over the fact. He justifies his liberty by way of national art. As Thomas W. Herbert has demonstrated, *House* attempts to legitimate the nation state as the natural order of middle-class dominance that triumphs over aristocratic ideals derived from European sovereignty (33-5). To Hawthorne, associations between blood and European sovereignty remained important for U.S. national imaginaries well past political declaration of independence from the British sovereign.[31] Yet blood in this sense represents the political legacy of both European sovereignty and the U.S. in bad faith because it muddles the legacy of the nation as *both* colony *and* colonizer, as the victim of violence and the violator.

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31 Well-known are the medieval conflations of secular and Christian mythical lineages which Marie Tanner explores, which bestowed divine qualities on the human sovereign (80-1). Eric Griffin points out that the Spanish blood obsession haunts texts from Jamestown that themselves reflect a British obsession with pure blood and therefore advance versions of *la legenda negra* against their Spanish rivals (116-21). This idea of a royal blood is the source and adversarial abject in liberal-progressive national imaginaries.

Hawthorne defines the U.S. against sovereign aristocracy by way of what I take Jean Fagan Yellin's famous allusion refers to, namely his "strategy of avoidance and denial" ("National Sin" 97). Even though the novel covers historical periods of massive bloodshed, it never mentions the genocidal campaigns against Native American or chattel slavery. What little blood appears in the novel disappears entirely by its end. Hawthorne leaves the reader with a blood-free, hygienic order, a domestic nation based on heterosexual reproduction. Hawthorne both denies historical blood and renders physical blood invisible by abstracting it.

His national imaginary avoids and denies blood as a central part of the nation's history and present by piling layers of representations on blood. I observe three layers in which the novel removes and abstracts blood. *House* first projects the blood of sovereign violence into a factually incorrect history. Hawthorne erases other historical acts of violence, especially King Philip's War, by laying bloodshed at the feet of the aristocratic sovereign's representatives. This history then becomes a map and a deed hidden behind a portrait. The very spaces where bloodshed occurred become obscured. Finally, the last stubborn stain of blood of the sovereign's last representative, Judge Pyncheon, disappears into a daguerreotype of his death.

Paul Gilmore stresses that especially Hawthorne's use of daguerreotypy helps him find the technological means to "establish a new, bourgeois Edenic family," which leads the nation to progress (*Genuine* 139). In the final picture of death, Hawthorne manages to reintroduce a signifier into the novel's central confrontation with blood, i.e. the moment when only a daguerreotype remains of Judge Pyncheon's corpse, the last embodiment of sovereign power, which the last descendant of the Pyncheons never sees.

The Pyncheon family lives on only through a distant maternal cousin and her husband, a vindicated enemy of the clan. Shawn Michelle Smith adds that this new Edenic family is a decidedly white family, written against the backdrop of the increasingly heated political debates over slavery in the 1850s. This is true, but I argue that if we regard Hawthorne's ideas about blood, we cannot find a connection between his views on familial character and eugenic ideas about blood (Smith *Archives* 41-3). *House* does progress, from bloody history to bloodless present. It inscribes liberal domesticity with progress and civilization. It also does stress that the most important role of blood is horizontal-biological reproduction of middle-class citizens with possessions, as opposed to the vertical-legal bloodlines of aristocrats whose noble descent can only lay claim to ownership. Blood is thus the nation's invisible driving force. Yet Hawthorne ultimately insists that individuals and their family traits can change. This puts him well outside both the scientific racism we see in chapter five and later eugenic theories.

To illustrate the extent of Hawthorne's glossed history of the nation, I pair it with the raw, disorderly reality of Ludwig von Reizenstein's 1850 *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans* (*The Mysteries of New Orleans*). Reizenstein left his native Bavaria because of the 1848 uprisings and made his way across much of Louisiana and Missouri as a surveyor and journalist. Instead of Hawthorne's New England, this son of petty aristocracy focuses on the Gulf of Mexico, St. Louis, and Texas as settings for his sensational serial novel. Recently, especially Kirsten Silva-Gruesz and Patricia Herminghouse have stressed that Reizenstein's sprawling novel opens our reading of the antebellum moment by introducing international relations especially in the Gulf of Mexico, the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) calling us to reconsider stereotypical

histories of antebellum German immigrant communities. I add that it should also help us question Hawthorne's nationalization of New England as the nation's birth place that Shelley Streeby points out ("Houses").

I argue that Reizenstein demonstrates that the history of sovereign bloodshed and the timeline of the nation state do not coincide. Material and metaphorical blood points to blind spots and telling silences in glossed narratives of the nation state's history and push back against ideas of U.S. history as a linear ascend. Reizenstein emphasizes that the U.S. and its authors, like Hawthorne, fail to acknowledge and work through the nation state's history of violence. He advocates working through painful complexities and anxiety-inducing uncertainties about the nation's origins.

Reizenstein insists that by making the blood that drips from the pages of history disappear, the nation becomes a spectral, gothic space bound to sovereignty, incapable of fulfilling its democratic promise of freedom. Unlike Hawthorne, he stresses the affective dimension of blood, its ephemerality, precariousness, and its changing role in the many different communities within the nation state. In a democratic negotiation of values he presents the U.S. as a panorama of many origins and as always plagued by slavery.

Translating Reizenstein's German, I trace the ways in which he offers a national imaginary. To him, blood seeps from a porous, grotesque nation because the ghosts of the past must remain present as long as the nation state's history censors its past. The *Geheimnis* (secret) of bloodshed past and present gives rise to a nation of secret societies, haunted urban spaces, and prophetic visions of doom. Instead of hoping that biological reproduction and possession will resolve the nation's internal tensions, Reizenstein sees the perpetual reproduction of violence in a society based on slavery where queer non-

biological inheritance is more coherent than the precarious blood ties of families.

Reizenstein insists on telling the *Geheimnis,* i.e. on witnessing and narrating the nation's bloody history to to liberate the nation from its curse. In the wake of the 1848 revolutions, he also rejects simplified notions of transplanted democratic revolutions. Of course, his sensational writings about the nation's bloody history, murders, and secrets addressed a New Orleans readership largely composed of German, radical national sympathizers. He stresses that the citizens in the uncanny nation state must find a new way to resolve the tension between the liberty of the national imaginary and the bloody reality of the nation state.

As Hawthorne and Reizenstein were engaging in these fictional struggles with blood, other prestigious genres also accumulated and disseminated new lessons in what blood can mean. Chapter two sketches out the failure of Romantic blood metaphors in poetic descriptions of blood during the Civil War, the rise of medical language as a means to diffuse the epistemic problem of blood through school textbooks, and the use of this language in nationalist rhetoric after the Civil War. Emily Dickinson's 1862 Civil War poem manuscript of "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'" directly addresses the blood on the battlefield as both real and as incompatible with Romantic national imaginaries that praise the War effort. Dickinson's critical focus on blood alone makes it stand out among her poems, but I also stress that its source and final posthumous publication show how later editions of a text about blood and the nation can integrate even Dickinson's critique by realigning the poem with nationalist revisionary history.

I begin with a close reading of the poem and explore its critique of both, contemporary Romantic tropes that aim to reconcile the Civil War blood with nature, as

well as the taxonomic vocabulary of hygiene textbooks that offer to resolve the epistemic crisis by way of renaming and regulating. Chapter two closes with a look at the poems' posthumous publication history that silences Dickinson's critique through visual framing and content manipulation.

As Tyler Hoffman, Ben Friedlander, and Faith Barrett have pointed out, "Autumn" powerfully evokes the dripping blood on the battlefields. Yet it also ponders the very possibility of representing the Civil War in writing. Dickinson engages other Romantic war poems that seek refuge from the blood in metaphors of red fall foliage and rejects their strategy by insisting on the jarring, unspeakable affective force of liquid, dripping blood. Dickinson shows that most Civil War poems stopped short of writing about red, wet blood and fell into clichés. I maintain that her critique also responds to the epistemic crisis connected to the one Drew Gilpin Faust observes, as outline above. How to find the words to write about what must not be? Dickinson's response indicates that this troubling dimension of the War escapes all efforts at consolation and integration into redemptive tropes.

Expanding my view to include a source for the poem, I see "Autumn" as not only rejecting Romanticist clichés, but also the taxonomic vocabulary it draws from Calvin Cutter's *Treatise on Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene* (1858), Dickinsons' anatomy textbook. I expand my emphasis on attempts to regulate affect and to signify real blood with reference to Nina Baym's and David Cody's findings about Dickinson's science education at Mt. Holyoke Academy, a still under-studied influence on her work. Dickinson graduated from middle class at Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary in 1848, where she passed exams on a wide range of textbooks, the new staple of progressive school

pedagogy. Dickinson's poem critiques efforts to side-step the epistemological challenge of blood by way of medicalizing it in taxonomical vocabulary that focuses on its quality. She illustrates that the nineteenth-century obsession with anatomical and hygienic taxonomy offered a new way to keep at bay blood by seeing the blood while avoiding its affective force, a way that fails just like Romanticist nature imagery.

I also focus on blood taxonomy as a mobile vocabulary; this way of describing blood seems independent of genres and translates its conception of blood from one kind of text to another. Taxonomy makes it possible to write about blood without addressing its cultural, political, or affective dimensions. Rooted in medical handbooks and textbooks for anatomy and physiology, blood taxonomy does not explain its view of blood but merely implies a political position on blood, which emerges more clearly in later efforts to rewrite the history of the Civil War in the national imaginary.

Finally, I examine the publication history of "Autumn" from its first, posthumous publication in *The Youth's Companion* in 1892. Even though the editors saw it fit as a poem for a politically-charged issue, they presented it as a nature poem, and framed it with rote questions asking for exactly the taxonomical, quantitative knowledge Dickinson rejects. "Autumn" becomes part of the issue's celebration of Columbus Day that turns the Civil War into a national myth. The revisionist national imaginary strove to paste over the dividing legacy of the Civil War. The parallel with Hawthorne's "avoidance and denial" is striking. The *Youth's Companion* reframes blood to replace its confusing, threatening incoherence and disjunction with glossy memorialization and an emphasis on rote-learned quantification of the nation's blood.

During the Civil War, authors became interested not only in new medical

vocabulary, but also in changes in medical practice. Chapter three illustrates that this medicalization of blood in Civil War writings by Walt Whitman, especially in his 1865 *Drum-Taps*. The chapter begins by placing his work in the context of the Civil War bloodshed and handbooks for medical practice regulating the Union Civil War hospitals he saw. I then illustrate that liquid, dripping blood destabilizes the national imaginary Whitman had begun to explore in his 1855 *Leaves of Grass*. Looking closely at poems from *Drum-Taps* and at other Civil War writings by Whitman, I explain how he drew on and manipulated hospital practice to modify and rescue his national imaginary. In effect, he turned from an exhaustive poetic catalog of the nation to an absorptive national poem about the nation.

Medicine offered a way to solve the epistemological crisis through newly-emerged practices of clinical medicine and medical hygiene that promised to absorb both the literal and metaphorical blood. Whitman won his struggle to make sense of the Civil War bloodshed by embracing the powers of medicine. Scholars like Joann P. Krieg , Philip W. Leon, and Robert Leigh Davis have taken up the important inquiry into Walt Whitman's relation to medicine and his priority to the nurse over the surgeon. His specific relation to Civil War medicine remains under-studied despite the enduring popularity of his poem "The Wound-Dresser" from the "Drum-Taps" sequence of *Leaves of Grass*. This chapter focuses on Whitman's 1865 first edition of the poem collection *Drum-Taps* as a moment of crisis. Whitman wrestled with the limits of language and the expressible inherent in the affective force of the blood he witnessed.

Whitman's poems present blood as a crisis and come to the same conclusion as Dickinson. Existing discourses of blood in Romanticism, religion, or political rhetoric

could not express the red, trickle of blood. During his stay in Civil War hospitals, Whitman found his solution in the ways nurses and surgeons stopped the bleeding. Read in conjunction with Civil War medical manuals, I explain that Whitman's images of Civil War surgery are not as realistic as some may assume. Instead of aiming at realism, Whitman consciously distorted and highlighted certain facts and medical procedures in hospital medicine, especially methods of absorbing blood.

He also struggled with the implications of the blood for his national imaginary. By focusing on absorption, he found a way to write about the nation's shed blood and thus to rescue his national imaginary into subsequent editions of *Leaves of Grass*. In what I see as a root of his later reliance on Hegelian dialectical progress, his naturalized medical lens simultaneously absorbs blood and makes it legible, removes it without abjecting it, and thus allows the nation to overcome the challenge. Despite this personal and aesthetic success, he later decried the nation state's political failure to absorb the blood. He stressed that the bloodless history of the renegotiated Civil War history created an uncanny, spectral doubling—the same kind, I claim, that Reizenstein foresaw.

Chapter four turns from students and observers of medicine to medical practitioners. I juxtapose texts by two writing practitioners, William Wells Brown and Edward H. Dixon and the ways their writing about blood and medical practice influences their thoughts on race and gender. Brown was born a slave and despite learning to read and write only after his escape in 1834, became a popular lecturer and abolitionist speaker and author. Above, we already read from Brown's collection *The Anti-Slavery Harp*. Most of this chapter focuses on a range of writings, especially a semi-factual anecdote that prefaces his 1873 *The Rising Son* and parts of his 1853 novel *Clotel*. Most

literary scholars focus on the latter novel, which builds on the same Jefferson-Hemings rumors and follows the fates of Jefferson's imagined daughter's and her children in the antebellum nation. Brown was a masterful observer of social dynamics, and in *Clotel* presents a complicated antebellum critique of identities under slavery, as Paul Gilmore explains, as well as the minstrel critique of racism that itself replicates racist stereotypes (*Genuine* 65-7).

Recently, literary critics have paid increasing attention to Brown. Ann DuCille, and Ivy Wilson have further developed theories of Brown's complex plays with characters and his dazzling wealth of allusions. Robert S. Levine recently read Brown's activism in the temperance movement as a means of simultaneous individual and social reform for all victims of white supremacy, expressing a far-reaching social ideal of moderation ("Temperance and Race" 107-8). Beyond editing *Clotel and Other Writings*, Ezra Greenspan just published a new biography, which explores many areas of Brown's life that biographers have thus far left unexplored, even correcting Brown's actual place of birth (*Life* 26-7).

Yet with all this current attention, *The Rising Son* has escaped any serious attention save Carole Lynn Stewart's contribution. Echoing Levine, she reads Brown's life-long advocacy for temperance as structuring *The Rising Son.* Stewart argues that if we read Brown's counter-history of African civilization as a narrative of the civilizing process, then the convalescence-through-habitus of psyche, body, and society propagated by temperance societies gives his work a far sharper critical edge than if we dismiss his engagement as mere opposition to alcohol (5).

Drawing on this recent surge in scholarship, "Blood of a Nation" argues that

Brown always considers practice and theory in conjunction, and especially so in medicine. Greenspan mentions what many Brown scholars disregard and what I emphasize: Brown received medical training and assisted in medical practice while still enslaved and was a practicing physician from his return from 1860 until his death (*Life* 34, 51).

Brown's many careers make him more qualified than any of his contemporaries to help us understand the cultural, social, and political dimensions of medical practice. I argue that he sees medical practice not as an a-political, so-called objective act, but a social transaction, a performance of class and race. Typical for his love for multiple editions, *Clotel* and his last finished text, *My Southern Home* (1880) echo the same scene in which an enslaved black doctor's apprentice treats other slaves with the painful so-called heroic therapies of orthodox medicine. Through the minstrel performance of this scene, Brown distorts the social role of the black enslaved practitioner and criticizes the shedding of blood during phlebotomy as racist violence. Materials on his practice indicates that Brown's own therapeutics were in contrast rather bloodless; relying on the latest eclectic medical technology, he especially spared his patients phlebotomy. Brown's earlier writings show that the in medical practice blood was never free of racial connotations.

Beyond that, in the 1873 anecdote he writes about avoiding bloodshed in an escape from the Ku Klux Klan by hiding a medical intervention behind a minstrel performance of conjuring. In a multi-layered play with social dynamics and identities, Brown the practitioner dissembles medical expertise to be able to alleviate pain and save his own life. He complicates the notion that I stressed above. Avoiding blood in the

nation is not just a question of "avoidance and denial." By pointing out that shedding blood, even in medical practice, may be racist violence, William Wells Brown places heroic medicine and racist violence close to sovereign violence. I claim that his post-bellum interest in new, progressive medical therapeutic technologies echoes his antebellum minstrel critique of bloodletting while his post-bellum semi-factual encounter with the Ku Klux Klan shows the logic of minstrelsy still at play, now helping him dissemble his bloodless therapy.

Brown's circumspection regarding blood was not typical for medical practitioners. Chapter four therefore pairs Brown's texts with writings about medical practice, medical theory, and a novella written by Edward H. Dixon. This New York orthodox physician is far more representative of what we might call established medicine of the mid-nineteenth century. Dixon was known as an editor, publisher, reformer of medical education, and anti-masturbation crusader. He also stands out, however, because his only non-medical text is a gory sensational novella about the KKK, the 1872 *The Terrible Mysteries of the Ku-Klux Klan*. In this largely unstudied text Dixon dissolves individuality, language, and reality into an occult blood. To achieve this, Dixon's sensational novella first silences the practitioner's narrative authority. Beyond reason and critical distance, Dixon ultimately offers a swirling cauldron of human blood in which his Klansmen dissolve icons of the nation state before drinking this mysterious, unknowable and unspeakable essence of race. Occult blood lies beyond reason, language, and cultural associations, offering a new, race-based ideology of occult "black blood."

Among writing practitioners Dixon stands out for the plethora of medical writings he left behind. The narrative's excessive violence might lead us to divorce Dixon's

creative texts from his medical ones, though. I demonstrate the opposite, that Dixon's earlier medical narratives in his periodical *The Scalpel* focus on blood not out of medical necessity, but as the bridge between body and soul. Drawing on Michael Sappol's argument that medical case narratives can be understood as a prose genre, I read these publications as prose narratives ("Knowlton" 468-71). Nineteenth-century medical practitioners communicated through prose narratives, and my reading of blood between the case narrative and the novella demonstrates the importance of the genre.

I find that Dixon's medical narratives almost compulsively return to blood. In his medical narratives, he negotiates social identities by way of both medical practice and medical theory. The case narratives begin with observed symptoms, including observations about physical blood. On one level, his medical narratives simply communicate such observations and findings about blood to Dixon's fraternity of practitioners. Beyond that, though, they construct a universal medical theory that divorces blood from its context. Blood becomes abstract, thereby providing a lens through which Dixon can then read another patient's symptoms in a circular confirmation of his social-bias-turned-medicine. This process of negotiating blood in the case narrative relies on the semantic slipperiness of blood to bridge descriptive observations of materiality and speculations of social prescription disguised as therapy. Blood is *both* material and metaphor and Dixon's texts oscillate between these two senses of "blood."

The discontinuities and paradoxes between medical practice and theory visible in Dixon's texts help us analyze the relation between blood, race, and medicine in the national frame. Recalling Foucault and Elias, the emergence of blood represents a threat to a national imaginary of hygienic heteropatriarchy, a threatening return of the

sovereign. Medical narratives therefore superimpose the moment of diagnosis onto this blood. Blood does not signal a crisis, but merely the occasion for a case to be narrated and a puzzle that the physician solves. Akin to criminal forensics, this medical puzzle of blood ultimately turns out to be a justification for social interventions by way of physiological theory and laws. The national fraternity of practitioners thus creates a narrative frame for understanding blood not as a threat to the national imaginary. Rather, blood underlies the nation state's health. White, male, middle-class practitioners regulate this notion of blood.

To broaden this discussion of race, medical practice, and occult blood, chapter five considers the role of blood in the rise of antebellum scientific racism and Reconstruction rejoinders. Around the same time of Dixon's theories, blood also becomes important to theories of polygenism. This loosely associated group of theories insists on the existence of distinct, immutably different human races, originating in separate acts of divine creation.[32] I read Brown's *The Rising Son* in this context and argue that it is more than an African-American historical encyclopedia. Brown directly attacks scientific racism when he argues that humans share one blood created by god and that geography and personal agency cause the differences in skin color. He directly responds to polygenist theorists like Samuel Adolphus Cartwright with the theory that adaptation to climate alone causes of changes in humans.

Cartwright's central text is his 1849 "Report on the Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race," written as in response to an inquiry of the Medical

32 Michael Banton's *Racial Theories* (1987) still stands as one of the most elegant, concise, and detailed overview of racist theories across Europe and the U.S.

Association of Louisiana (MAL). The MAL had ordered a commission inquiry into the physical differences and diseases of enslaved African Americans in 1846 and appointed the well-known Louisiana practitioner and medical Cartwright to publish its findings, which he did in the *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal*. This apology for human enslavement combines observations about enslaved African Americans with speculative arguments from natural history based on the Hebrew Bible and establishes the link between observation and argument through blood.

Cartwright's medical theory draws on occult ideas of "black blood" as well as on theology to justify why this blood is inferior, immutable, eternal, and universal. Brown's *The Rising Son* attacks this theory of so-called black blood in all its dimensions. The crucial difference between black and white blood in the nineteenth century turns out to be between stasis and change. Brown insists on the Christian doctrine of "one blood," which restores unity, agency, and the prospect of liberation and progress to African Americans. His commentary on biblical history and the curse of Ham answers Cartwright's polygenist theory, of "black blood" as divinely created. Brown's historiography simultaneously inscribes black history into the nation state.

In discussing these texts, I also want to draw attention to a lack of scholarship. To fully grasp the complexity of "black blood," we need to advance the discussions begun by scholars like Jordan D. Winthrop, but we must address medicine, legal, and theological sources as well as history. Texts that defended or attacked the concept of so-called black blood drew on a wide range of sources including natural history, national histories, and the Hebrew and Christian bibles. Many of these today fall outside disciplinary canons and boundaries. To fully appreciate the responses by anti-racists as

not disordered or haphazard, literary scholars must examine all original sources.

"Blood of a Nation" focuses on the temporal structure implied in scientific racism. In this framework, the blood of the individual is an immutable matrix for collective racial qualities stemming from the first days of mankind. The simultaneous justification and naturalization of the enslavement of black bodies rests on the intersection of two axes in blood. The synchronic axis reports clinical observations about and measurements of blood. The diachronic axis asserts occult notions of eternal qualities drawn from selective interpretations of the Hebrew bible as natural history. Medical narratives of racist theorists have to draw on scripture to argue that one act of creation led to one human blood with mutable qualities or whether several acts of creation led to different, immutable kinds of blood. Recourse to the bible gave scientific racists a way to introduce chronological seriality into medical theories about blood.

The scientific method molds with religion, resulting in the narrative of so-called black blood. Cartwright developed an entire physiological-anthropological theory around what he argues is black blood: the essence of human race. The immutable blood created at the dawn of time dooms black individuals to eternal physiological and intellectual inferiority. He thereby quantified and specified the vague notions of contemporaries like Dixon about how blood and race are linked. He also made the metaphor of blood-as-race compatible with white supremacists beyond a medical audience. For instance, white supremacist, physician, and ethnologist John H. Van Evrie published Cartwright's "Report" with the 1856 Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court.

Despite the resistance to the equation of blood and race by Brown and many other authors, this equation became the central fact of the U.S. nation state. Jim Crow laws

codified the occult "black blood" and made it part of the nation state's legal order that chapter seven turns to. Chapter seven looks both back to Thomas Jefferson and the rise of statistical calculations of blood quantum in the legal order of chattel slavery, and forward, to new conceptions of community. The chapter focuses on the legacy of slavery and its legal, social, political, and cultural post-Emancipation reiterations with reference to Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1894) and Elizabeth Pauline Hopkins' *Of One Blood* (1903). While Twain is pessimistic that the national imaginary can overcome the enslaver's laws, Hopkins sees how hope in alternate social configurations of the family exist beyond blood. They imagine the possible subversion of the nation state's racist blood laws through a maternal narrative and the reconstitution of the black family.

In three sections, I move from the legal calculation of racial blood quantum in the nation state to the gothic haunts that alone allow for the negotiation of alternative truths and end on the specific counter-narrative of the maternal history that functions outside the father-enslaver's blood to restore the family. This chapter draws on scholarship about the two novels and about constructions of so-called black blood admixture at the end of the century, especially by Susan K. Gillman, Barry Wood, Ellen Samuels, Holly Jackson, Claudia Tate, and Homi K. Bhabha. However, the chapter overall follows Hortense J. Spillers' questions about the possibility of recovering a black maternal narrative and black fatherhood under the legacy of chattel slavery and the Jim Crow legal order of so-called black blood admixture.

Beginning with descriptions of regulations of blood quantum under chattel slavery, I first detail Thomas Jefferson's 1815 elaboration on blood fractioning. Based on a largely unexamined letter, I illustrate that the totalitarian nature of his system roots in

his knowledge of animal husbandry, but gives way to U.S. legal narratives about race as a state of perpetual enslavement, especially in the inheritance through the mother or *partus sequitur ventrem*. Jefferson's blood math structures society around an abject "black blood," which racist science overcomes only to bring about even more pain and suffering for individuals. Twain plays this out in the confrontation between the customs of Virginian gentry and the laws of racist science. Rejecting the racist discourses of both law and science, Hopkins imagines a vicious cycle of possession and property, in which the past possesses the present generation after generation, and in which the children reenact the father's sins.

Twain and Hopkins both stress that the enslaver-fathers are obsessed with tables, ledgers, and blood fractions. In both novels, mothers and children can only know and speak the messy truth of blood outside this national imaginary, in a gothic specter, especially in haunted houses. Twain's anteblleum nostalgia of the South describes a national imaginary similar to the spectral nation of Reizenstein's *Geheimnisse* that I described in chapter one, a spectral nation. However, there is no alternative to the nation state's racist order by 1900. Hopkins therefore makes it clear that any conflict between maternal narrative against blood math remains confined to the haunted house. Even though this struggle can end in a triumph of the maternal narrative over the father's laws, this stoic knowledge of blood is no longer legally applicable, politically speakable, or rationally comprehensible. The complete history of blood is an epistemic impossibility outside the house and remains invisible in the father's ledgers.

I argue that by the end of the century, blood becomes impossible to speak outside the medicalized fiction of race. At this point, fiction and history merge. Knowledge of a

real blood history itself now counts as occult, while white theories of "black blood" count as an objective, legal fact. While the father's simultaneous mathematical and legal abstraction of blood justifies the enslaver-father's nation state, witnessing the historical messiness of blood and speaking to its semantic slipperiness disables this calculation. In this way, the narratives of blood told in the haunted houses open a path to new conceptions of community for individuals beyond the haunt, as persons in a nation state. Twain ends on a pessimistic note, but Hopkins indicates that by conceiving of new national imaginaries, the blood of the nation may come to mean something more than just the blood of Thomas Jefferson—even, perhaps, the blood of Jefferson's daughter.

Chapter One — Whose Blood? National Imaginaries, Invisible History, and Revolution in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* and Ludwig von Reizenstein's *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans*

> "putting aside his steel-hilted broadsword to take up a gold-headed cane, the Colonel Pyncheon of two centuries ago steps forward as the Judge of the passing moment" – Nathaniel Hawthorne.
>
> "Wail Fool, scream city! All of Philistine land is craven! The waters of Dimon are full of Blood – at night comes destruction over Ar in Moab, she is done for!" – Ludwig von Reizenstein.
>
> "the crimes of this guilty, land: will never be purged away; but with Blood." – John Brown.

When we begin to think about how authors consider blood it helps to ask first, whose blood they write about. Which author regards the blood of which character coming from which social group as relevant in the literary construction of a national imaginary and why? In this chapter I focus on the political metaphor of blood in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) and Ludwig von Reizenstein's *Die Geheimnisse von New Orleans* (1855). Despite their differences, both texts rely on blood as the central element in the history of U.S. nationalism.

This chapter develop around three clusters: history, territory, and slavery. Of course these categories are anything but distinct: Hawthorne disavows and Reizenstein highlights the nation state's colonial history. The question of colonialism is always a question over territory. Likewise, the antebellum crisis over slavery came to a head after the incorporation of more and more territory by the U.S. At the same time, colonial bloodshed by way of the sovereign's sword was different from national expansion that abjects blood and removes it to the nation's frontier, or so Hawthorne would have us

believe.

Also, the vertical descent and hierarchical order of inheritance lie at the heart of Hawthorne's discussion of what constitutes the nation state. In his novel, the nation rests on the democratic, egalitarian distribution of land in the owner's possession, not abstract claims of property inherited through ancient, aristocratic bloodlines. We will see that Reizenstein rejects this entire discussion as a sham in a nation state that bases its wealth on the bloodshed of slavery in the first place.

So the central tensions revolve around who causes blood to flow in the history of the nation state. Is there continuity between the blood of the colonial period and the present nation state? What role can inheritance through blood play? In one sense the central question is thus one of laws of inheritance: should *ius saniguinis*, the inheritance according to blood line, or *ius soli*, the inheritance according to place of birth determine the nation state?

In response, Hawthorne structures *The House of the Seven Gables* entirely around one small, iconic stain of blood. The spectral image of blood on the corpses of the Pyncheon patriarchs limits the violence inherent in the fought-over land and ultimately disappears by the end of the novel. Reizenstein, however, paints a bloody panorama of the nation told in a sprawling prophecy with many characters and locations which all emphasize that violence in the here and now is the result of a disavowal of the nation state's historical legacy of sovereign violence continued in the present disavowal of slavery.

As I will repeatedly stress in this chapter, these different ways of narrating blood in the authors' national imaginaries also help us understand their choice of genre,

Hawthorne's Romance and Reizenstein's sensational novel. While the Romance relies on *poiesis* and the reevaluation of the real through the lens of the fictional in a harmonious, symmetrical text, the sensational novel can present collections and impressions in moments of *mimesis*, in jarring juxtaposition and disorienting discontinuity more than the creation of a harmonic, symmetrical. The author's choice of form is itself a political choice insofar as their explorations of the nation stress either the whole or the part, the abstract or the particular, the lesson or the problem, the disappearance of blood or the blood.

Hawthorne turns the central distinction between sovereignty and the nation state into the question of whether blood should be part of present and current history, in a sense an affirmation of the nation state's indebtedness to its sovereign legacy, or whether blood should remain relegated to a distant, Romanticized past. Early on in *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne's narrator leaves us guessing whether the death of Jaffrey Pyncheon, Sr. was murder or a case of the family illness, a spontaneous, fatal hemorrhaging. The Pyncheon clan seems to carry this hereditary bleeding disease, "apoplexy," which seems to cause a sudden death accompanied by bleeding from the mouth (14).

The narrator stresses that although Jaffrey lives too much in the past to let an ancestral injustice stand, he still let his son inherit the Pyncheon property, land won through that same injustice. In the muddled reality, his offspring benefits from a political structure that overrules laws with family ties: "in view of death, the strong prejudice of propinquity revives, and impels the testator to send down his estate in the line marked out by custom, so immemorial, that it looks like nature" (*The House of the Seven Gables* 19).

Jaffrey's sense of proximity to a social dimension more meaningful than himself marks out a "line" that "looks like nature," a mark of "propinquity," meaning "nearness in blood" (OED). Family is, however, part of the sovereign legacy. The familial blood line becomes the specific measure of proximity. From the start, blood stands in a historical conjunction with inheritance and violence, two axes that map out sovereign power in the nation state.

There is, in short, no biological necessity to the idea of patrilineage and aristocracy. The novel seems to target blood as the biggest threat to the republican order, in an initial critique of the mysterious mechanism of transmission that "looks like nature" but is not. As we will see in the course of this study, this initial insight into blood as socially constructed erodes during the nineteenth century by way of medical theory and the equation of blood and race in chattel slavery—the telling silence in the background of Hawthorne's national imaginary to which I return later in the chapter.

Before I move to discuss the relation between slavery and blood, however, I first want to explore the themes most obviously at the heart of the novel: history and territory. As I pointed out above, sovereign power of kings and emperors is not replaced, but complemented by the nation state. In the novel, colonial history carries this legacy across the ocean. Let us take a moment and examine this haunt of the nation state. In the house itself, by the time of the narration, the painting of Colonel Pyncheon still covers the land deed and its original owners' "hieroglyphics." The picture depicts the "progenitor of the whole race of New England Pyncheons" (86). We remember that to Foucault, sovereignty hinges on blood shed by the sovereign: "Sovereign power's effect on life is exercised only when the sovereign can kill. The very essence of the right of life and death is

actually the right to kill: it is at the moment when the sovereign can kill that he exercises his right over life. It is essentially the right of the sword" (*Society* 240). Bloodshed is a political act most characteristic for sovereign rule, and if another political system is to distance itself from sovereignty, then it cannot uphold the sovereign focus on blood.

In *House*, Colonel Pyncheon is the ancestor whose bloodline inherits the curse of sovereign violence. The executive power of the sword that sheds blood and that stands for the right to shed blood, is the emblem of sovereign executive power, of the literal right over life and death. Colonel Pyncheon unites in his body—and passes on in his bloodline—a fundamentally undemocratic quality: the unity of executive, religious, and legislative authority, the unity of "Puritan soldier and magistrate" (8). His defining emblem, though, is "his steel-hilted sword" (*House* 197). By the force of his blade, Pyncheon violently claims territory and executes the old wizard, Matthew Maule. The injustice of executions underlines the presence of aristocratic bloodlines of "Clergymen, judges, statesmen,—the wisest, calmest, holiest persons of their day," as the corrupt rule of those who "stood in the inner circle round about the gallows, loudest to applaud the work of blood, latest to confess themselves miserably deceived" (7).

The embodiment and concentration of sovereign power in the figure of the Pyncheon patriarch is central to the national imaginary Hawthorne's Romance attempts to establish, the vision of a young nation able to break with the sovereign legacy and shake of its past. As Laura Korobkin explains, Hawthorne intentionally changed the historical record of colonial law, stressing the sovereign aspect of the Magistrate, to create this anti-President sovereign figure. Real magistrates were in no way the sole wielders of sovereign executive power, but the sword turns the imperial officer into the

embodiment of sovereignty (193-8). Hawthorne's national imaginary rests on the presence or absence of sovereignty. The Colonel's deceased descendant is a Judge, a man of the law, but their resemblance suggests to the narrator that, "putting aside his steel-hilted broadsword to take up a gold-headed cane, the Colonel Pyncheon of two centuries ago steps forward as the Judge of the passing moment" (*House* 87).The sword disappears, and Hawthorne acknowledges this, but its corrupt spirit lingers and continues to threaten the nation state.

History is the crux of the text. The aristocratic political order does not just vanish with the U.S. Constitution. Instead, sovereign bloodshed lingers as the republican nation state stands erected on top of Foucault's "society of blood" (*History* 147). As we will see at the end of this study, the complications of Hawthorne's attempt to resolve this tension is symptomatic of the bargain that the colony makes to rid itself of sovereign blood at the price of the blood of enslaved persons.

The novel filters history through the imaginary ideal. Because he insists on the happy ending, sovereign violence must disappear. However, because Hawthorne was a student of history, he did not silence the historical record, but moved its focus to the confrontation between imperial magistrate and citizen settler. The confrontation between Pyncheon and Maule displaces wide-spread violence against colonized and enslaved individuals. Sovereign bloodshed and white-on-white violence form the true threat to the nation state. Hawthorne structures history around Maule's execution as a fall from grace and thus gives coherence and structure to the national imaginary. Sarah Purcell reminds us that when we read texts about wars and revolutions, we read discursive nation-making: "Public memories of violent conflict … were designed to downplay the bloodshed and

division of war in order to bring disparate Americans together around images of shared sacrifice" (1). That is why Colonel Pyncheon's shedding of Maule's blood forms the core, the original sin in the novel, not the Native American blood that white people shed or the blood of enslaved persons. The image of the sword-wielding warrior and his land is simply incompatible with Hawthorne's nation.

Colonel and Judge Pyncheon are avatars of the sovereign inside the nation state's territory, and I want to take a moment to discuss the relation between the land and blood. The internal conflict in *House* is not personal as much as it is national. It develops over territory, the political problem at the center of U.S. politics since the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. Territorial expansion of the nation state enters the plot in two displaced pieces of land of Native inhabitants and the aristocratic colonialists in place displaced by settlers. Sovereign bloodshed wins land, which Hawthorne abstracts twice, into a deed and a portrait.

Hawthorne does not turn his critique into an indictment of aristocratic powers active in the nation state. The nation state as such is saturated with blood, but it, just like the social institutions and historical instances of bloodshed, remains invisible because the novel ultimately evades and redirects its critique in favor of an uneasy and uncanny present. Hawthorne suggests that the existing class tension in the nation state eventually discharges over Maule's land. Yet this "ill-gotten spoil—with the black stain of blood sunken deep into it, and still to be scented by conscientious nostrils" (18)—note the rhyme of "spoil" with soil is not the final claim to the Pyncheon title. Indeed, the last chapter depicts the departure of the characters from the house with seven gables, rendering the build-up of the conflict between Maules and Pyncheons essentially

pointless. Hawthorne creates a selective history that emphasizes chapters of this history that end, while the legacies of on-going disenfranchisement, theft, and bloodshed disappear.

The patriarch's aristocratic blood lineage only lies in a contract written in words, hidden in plain sight—the "wealth to the Pyncheon blood" (*House* 15). The historical structure of sovereign political order relates blood to space. The sovereign was the ruler, embodiment, and protector of land, of a sovereign *territory* bounded by the identification of a people. Aristocratic blood does thus not only define a person but also a space in which the sovereign claims legitimacy. This space in turn distinguishes bloodlines. Hawthorne attempts to disappear this history by constructing virtual, non-republican, non-Anglo, non-capitalist spaces like the Pyncheon's tract of land. This tract included "the greater part of what is now known as Waldo County, in the State of Maine, [which was] more extensive than many a dukedom, or even a reigning prince's territory, on European soil" (*House* 15).

Writing the nation state by way of blood means having to define whose blood counts. As Michel de Certeau puts it, "writing that conquers, . . . will use the New World as if it were a blank, 'savage' page on which Western desire will be written" (xxv). In Hawthorne's writing, Pyncheon patriarchs claim land in the name of the sovereign, land that has no status as legal property according to European laws. In the land, Hawthorne introduces two notions. First, he condenses an association of European aristocracy and territory; then he stresses the primary of land-grabs. Both ideas erase the presence of any original inhabitants. He imagines definitions of the land and so creates a series of fictions inside the house, a narrative chain that denies and erases the land's actual inhabitants

outside the house through the contrast of possession and ownership. With legal claims on the land, patriarchs pass on this narrative and its image is in their blood line. They create a separate imagined community within the Body Politick.[33]

The territory for which the deed stands doubles a visual claim that floats the spectral property, a form of imagined space projected onto existing spaces, to create an imagined legal claim, and, by extension, an imagined national territory. He makes territory into a matter of blood in an abstracted claim to land, layering representations between the sovereign bloodshed and the national state. In the story he tells Phoebe, Holgrave imagines the fantasy of Pyncheon wealth as represented by "a large map, or surveyor's plan, of a tract of land, which looked as if it had been drawn a good many years ago, and was now dingy with smoke, and soiled, here and there, with the touch of fingers" (*House* 138).

Through the map and the portrait, Hawthorne makes the land part of the Pyncheon patriarchs' blood, a quality that they pass on to the next generations even without any actual land. The "fingers" must be those of ancestors who sought, traced out, who stressed by touch and gesture the claim that the law will not recognize for want of fit documentation. The haptic expression of embodied desire of the "fingers" remains unfulfilled because both map and deed become invisible in the diegesis, just like other claims on the land by original inhabitants.[34]

History in the end lies covered by the portrait of Colonel Pyncheon, which invests

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33 I here refer to the eighteenth-century term that, as Drew Lopenzina reminds us, was used in founding documents like the Mayflower Compact and the plan for Samson Occom's Brotherton.

34 Walter Benn Michaels discusses Hepzibah's map and the novel's reaction to the 1852 Homestead Act ("Real Estate"). While I arrive at similar conclusions regarding Hawthorne's Lockean impulse, I am more interested in how he disembodies the bloody history of property to legitimate its present.

blood with connotations of identity, inheritance, and heterosexual reproductive family. These qualities in turn become the legal and political order as inheritable estates, as property.[35] The map itself is already a signifier for property, a metaphoric and political appropriation of one land mass with the goal to split it up, assign it to individuals—and their heirs.

In *House,* the national imaginary based on possession resolves the contradiction in the existing nation state between the claims of aristocratic bloodlines, linked to sovereignty and settlers in possession of the land. The land itself to Hawthorne is the nation state's basis, raising questions of the legitimate ownership of those who possess the land:

> Efforts, it is true, were made by the Pyncheons, not only then, but at various periods for nearly a hundred years afterwards, to obtain what they stubbornly persisted in deeming their right. But, in course of time, the territory was partly regranted to more favored individuals, and partly cleared and occupied by actual settlers. These last, if they ever heard of the Pyncheon title, would have laughed at the idea of any man's asserting a right—on the strength of mouldy parchments, signed with the faded autographs of governors and legislators long dead and forgotten—to the lands which they or their fathers had wrested from the wild hand of nature by their own sturdy toil. (15)

The narrative voice pits frontier settlers and farmers on the land against aristocratic owners of the land.[36] Holgrave's victory shows that "mouldy parchments" do not count; their deteriorated state stands in for the decadent, degenerate blood-line that claims them and that is displaced by existing facts. The "actual settlers" seem "more favored" in the

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35 A good share of recent work on Hawthorne has established the connection between law and property. See Walter Benn Michaels ("Real Estate"), Gillian Brown (*Individualism* 63-95, "Women's Property"), and Milette Shamir.

36 The vampiric sub-text of Hepzibah may also flow from this association of land-owner and aristocrat that is based on the analogy of capital and blood. Mortgage melodramas were closely linked to the vampire figure in this period. See Nicholas Daly for more on the landowner vampire.

sense of fortune, but also in the sense of a greater social fitness, of health, of a rugged frontiersman myth that equates nation, state, and land. While avoiding any legal opinion, Hawthorne signals the final victory of possession over ownership— *uti possidetis, ita possideatis*.

Personal property is, of course, the bedrock of libertarian political theories, and Hawthorne assents to this principle to ward off sovereign power. The sweat, blood, and tears of land owners cleanse the nation state from the sovereign blood of history. Overcome political structures fade with their living embodiments who are "dead and forgotten" (15). As we saw above, this is central to *House*: the history that Hawthorne recovers is not history, but a projection of present political arguments onto the past to justify present politics. The murky facts of history mustn't disrupt the existing order. As we will see below, this is the opposite claim of Reizenstein, to whom history lives on, personally and metaphorically, in the present, where it cannot be reconciled with the nation state.

So the second act of narrative occupation by settlers who disown the colonists occurs because Hawthorne has to populate the land with imaginary, "favored" members of the nation. He makes it clear that there is no hope of recovering the eastern lands and of thus claiming the spectral legacy to end the congenital haunt. In *House*, the "deed," which documents the postulated purchase of Native American land by a Pyncheon patriarch, lies invisible and hidden until the end of the novel hidden behind the Colonel's portrait at the architectural, metaphorical, and structural heart of the novel (14). Finally revealing the secret compartment behind the portrait of Colonel Pyncheon, Holgrave pulls out "an ancient deed, signed with the hieroglyphics of several Indian sagamores,

and conveying to Colonel Pyncheon and his heirs, forever, a vast extent of territory at the Eastward" (*House* 223).

Blood disappears into the deed Holgrave movers. The land ownership changes through a contract, a purchase agreement that entered the land into the sovereign legal order and at the same time thus called this order into being.[37] In the "deed" lies the displacement of Native Americans and of two generations of U.S. Americans whose violence forms the foundation for the liberal nation *House* imagines as we see below. The term "Indian sagamores" is more than a hint at the chiefs of the Panawahpskek (Penobscot) people, an Abenaki tribe of the Wabanaki Confederacy, the Native inhabitants of the Maine coastal area.[38]

By way of the deed, Hawthorne covers up an entire history of imperial bloodshed that the novel ignores to make blood a political metaphor, not a historical fact. The Panawahpskek sided with France during the Seven Years' War and were decimated by English fighters for scalp bounties, as John Grenier reminds us (65). The bloodshed between the British and the Panawahpskek people took place in the eighteenth century, the exact time on which Hawthorne's list of historic allusions remains silent. Hawthorne writes a history from the legacy of medieval witchcraft of the fifteenth century to the Puritan witch trials of the 1690s, the U.S. War of Independence of 1775-83, and to the novel's diegesis around the 1840s. He consciously skips roughly 1700-1775, that begins with the rise of for-profit slave trade in the colonies, covers King George's War, the

37 The same logic applies to the *Requerimiento* of 1513 during the "conquest" of the Americas.
38 James Fenimore Cooper also applies the term to Uncas, the Mohian chief, which would extend the tribal lands to the Hudson River valley (*Mohicans* 33).

French and Indian War, the Great Expulsion, and the expansion of the triangle trade.[39] These two generations saw an increasing expansion of white settlements onto Native land and a repeated violation of treatises between magistrates and Natives. Remembering Purcell's insight into the downplaying of "the bloodshed and division of war," we see how Hawthorne's nation state depends on the erasure of sovereign bloodshed in the taking of land (1).

The Romance changes history by bridging the Puritan era to the Revolution and the antebellum period. Below, we will see that Reizenstein proposes an alternate way of writing the nation state's blood of history. Hawthorne links the 1440s to the 1640s and the 1840s, suspending history's political meaning in the creation of an imagined neutral land, disconnected from genocide and bloody Revolution—a bloodless national imaginary. The "strangeness and remoteness" that create Hawthorne's "neutral territory" of the Romance in his "Preface" is exactly the construction of the civilized nationalism by means of abjecting the Other—the backdrop against which the house stands (*House* 29). Hawthorne chooses "territory" here and, just like he plays with historical source and archive, the time before and after a revolution, he plays with the "tract" de-coupled from its original inhabitants (24).

The bloodless history we saw above makes ghosts of historical people and liars of those who testify for them while giving land to s supposedly new nation state. White settlers occupy the land and argue that occupation justifies their property as possession.

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39 As Christine DeLucia has recently explained, King Philip's War was a central point of space-making in the Northeast to explain how "individuals and communities reckon with a past of almost unspeakable cruelties and dispossessions, the effects of which have persisted through centuries of racialized thinking and policy making" (976).On the legacy of this war as a justification for Indian Removal and racial boundaries specifically against the backdrop of the horrible violence, see Jill Lepore.

This is not because they conquered it with the sword or made it theirs with a deed, but because of their Lockean removal of it from "the wild hand of nature" (15). Yet this is no argument regarding Native American owners who are, to stick with the Lockean model, savages, and their land management is as incomprehensible to the whites as are their "hieroglyphics."[40] Their inability or unwillingness to enter into European modes of written legal interaction gives whites the right to expropriation.

Hawthorne's "Preface" stresses this expansionist gesture as the founding assumption in the text. The author "trusts not to be considered as unpardonably offending by laying out a street that infringes upon nobody's private rights, and appropriating a lot of land which had no visible owner, and building a house of materials long in use for constructing castles in the air" (*House* 4). Of course there is no way to shed the blood of an owner who is invisible. Original inhabitants have no "private rights" and thus there is "no visible owner" of the land. The 1831 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that declared Native American sovereign nations "domestic dependent nations" sealed the legal claim to autonomy and legally enforceable ownership (the Panawahpskek were only compensated in the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Agreement of 1980).

In other words, Hawthorne's national imaginary defines the success of the political experiment that is the U.S. by way of absence of blood shed at the hands of a sovereign in acts of imperial expansion. To render this blood invisible, the novel evades the historical bloodshed, abstracts land with a deed and a map, and then displaces both land and the bloody victor with hard-working farmers. The history of bloodshed and

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40 For John Locke's concept of the savage, see his *Second Treatise of Government* (18-30).

violent expansion becomes invisible in the novel. The peaceful and legal transfer of title echoes the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, which certain readings of American exceptionalism see as evidence that the U.S. is no empire, but a democratic republic that solely expanded its territory through peaceful means.[41] To Hawthorne the nation state's territory must not have been gained through bloodshed lest the nation state collapse back into mere land and its sovereign ruler, betraying the construction of the liberal-progressive nation as the advancement beyond its European history.

The process of abjection of blood from the nation state also provides a way to draw a semi-permeable boundary around the nation state, on the other side of which reside racially and politically othered persons. Blood is only relevant in the presumably white narrator's tale of white suffering and redemption. The bloodshed acknowledged is not that of Native Americans or the socially dead enslaved persons, who live beyond the bloody boundary of the white domestic order which structures the social and political economy of the nation state. Beyond the blood lies what is not part of the self because it must not be part of the self.

The ending of *House of the Seven Gables* in the marriage between Phoebe as the last of the non-patriarchal Pyncheons and Holgrave as the last descendant of Maule is still widely debated, read alternatively as an intended reconciliation or of warring clans forced happy ending of radicalism and liberalism.[42] Whether satisfactory or not, the novel's

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41 Obviously the term "containment" as a political concept originates with Stalin, but its history connects to Frederick Jackson Turner's 1893 Frontier Thesis, which I read as a later the social-scientific formulation of the process described here. See also: Pease ("Exceptionalism").

42 Critics frequently discuss Hawthorne's ending, so a summary is necessary. Since Hawthorne's own comment on his wife's preference for the ending of *House* over that of *The Scarlet Letter,* strong positions have been provided by F.O. Matthiessen (*Renaissance* 331-7), Nina Baym ("Artist-Hero" 598), Michael T.

ending does aim at a resolution to the tension by, to put it in a Hegelian terminology, developing a synthesis that progresses beyond thesis and antithesis. Specifically, Holgrave's previous socialism implies sympathies with or even advocacy of feminism, while his entering into this marriage creates a political, social, and cultural compact that props up the domestic ideals Hawthorne advocated. Crucially, Holgrave's insistence on democratic equality frees his offspring from the aristocratic pretensions of their maternal grandfathers.

Because domesticity lies at the core of Hawthorne's political imaginary, he can resolve what Agnieszka Soltysik Monnet has called the "historical incompleteness" that troubles the nation (62).[43] My reading of Hawthorne aligns with a specific scholarly lineage that deemphasizes *The House of the Seven Gables* as a masterful text radically disconnected from politics, a so-called classic work written by an author withdrawn from public life and politics—even though this notion still reverberates in current

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Gilmore (96-107), Walter Benn Michaels ("Real Estate" 156), and more recently Robert Milder ("New England" 486-9). Respectively, they argue that the ending is beyond Hawthorne's realm of experience that leaves a gap between foreground and background, that it is a conservative narrative voice aborting the Romantic heroism, an attempt to reconcile artistic integrity with market demands, or an intellectual exorcism to overcome the author's disgust with Salem. Teresa Goddu plausibly reads the ending as a gradualist, providential reconciliation of capital and gendered consumption with the plight of the proletariat ("Circulation"). Stressing the characters' visual removal into the country estate, Alan Trachtenberg points out that the impossibility of restoring a "moral" Jacksonian republic in the new market society is what gives the romance its power, a quasi-redemptive ideal of the past, impossibly restored ("Seeing" 478). I cannot divorce the imperial expansionist policies of Jackson from the ideal aspired to and thus see Trachtenberg's reading as exactly correct in that it follows Hawthorne's intention, but as silent on the political implications of that vision. Christopher Castiglia reads the conclusion as the birth of a legitimate law propped up by the mutual confirmation of the interior legitimacy both families claim (*Interior States* 264). While I agree with Castiglia on the birth of the legitimate law, I read Hawthorne's ending as the confirmation of the individual through the matrix provided by the history of sovereignty.

43 Agnieszka S. Monnet, speaking of *The Marble Faun*, rightly warns us not to dismiss Hawthorne as complacent conservative. Her observation about the aesthetic anesthesia in the novel is actually the observation of the very political purpose that I read his novel as pursuing. Instead of writing an apolitical novel confirms the sentimental and the psychological disturbance of the gothic, I see this diffusion of the radical potential in both as the exact goal in *House* (63-4).

scholarship.[44] Sacvan Bercovitch and Thomas W. Herbert among others intervened to show that Hawthorne's supposedly a-political reticence is itself political and that his perfected image of nineteenth-century domestic idyll was an expression of sexual politics. In the wake of work in the New American Studies, scholars like Shelley Streeby and Walter Benn Michaels placed Hawthorne's liberalism in hemispheric and political contexts of imperialism and imagined communities.[45] They highlight the text's political dimensions as related to Hawthorne's personal and professional investment in the political project of fashioning the antebellum U.S. and his active participation in nation-making.

Reizenstein's text insists on recalling and remembering the shed blood, on memories of the Spanish and French history in New Orleans, the legacy of imperial colonialism in the now, the past and present of slavery, and the United States' aggressive spatial expansion. His figures bridge gaps between Spanish imperial rule and the contemporary U.S. His history spans from the knightly orders of the *reconquista*, the conquest of the Americas, and the Spanish Inquisition, including its implementation of some early conceptions of blood-as-race in the *limpieza de sangre* to racialized slavery in the nineteenth-century U.S—a topic we will revisit in the fifth chapter. As María

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44 Although with far more substance than merely myth-making, the concept of the withdrawn, reticent bookworm still shines through in Clark Davis' recent contribution. Davis counters critics of Hawthorne by providing the image of Hawthorne's "publicly private" life, which he places in a post-Romantic, skeptic philosophy that focuses on the moment of moral choice, not on grand ideas or ideologies (4). I agree that the binary public/private is in many cases misstated, nowhere more so than in Emily Dickinson's case. However, Davis' idea of Hawthorne as "wary" of ideas and as primarily "local" gives us no access to his grand imagination of the new nation, of America as a nation between the old world of corruption and the future (43). In the end, Davis again reads Hawthorne as politically reticent and as primarily arguing from within his fictional frame, which I argue side-steps the political engagement and active pursuit of decidedly political offices itself (103).

45 See: Streeby ("Haunted") and Walter Benn Michaels (*Gold Standard* 87–112).

DeGuzmán and Jesse Alemán, point out, the Black Legend proved quite useful to those trying to justify U.S. expansion, as it provided a morally superior position to the U.S. while simultaneously casting the older sovereign power as the uncivilized cause for the anticipated, regrettable decline of Native populations whose archeological remnants gave an air of ancientness to the young nation (*Shadow* 3-7, "Other Country" 78).

The Other realm, an imagined space of non-civilization stands in opposition to a civilized, normalized point of view, purged of the traces of aristocratic blood, of the sovereign's presence and the history of sovereignty. This space appears once in *House* in the silent abjection of the passed Pyncheon patriarch, but becomes more pronounced when we read the novel in the context of Hawthorne's choice of imagery in describing the sudden and imperial expansion of the nation state in the U.S.-Mexican War.

The cadaver that famously sits in the office displaces the last bodily remnant of the sovereign executioner with a corpse. The cadaver-Other creates the new order of the nation. The last Pyncheon dies and disappears with his bloody stain, without any bloodshed. Settler violence is an individual transgression uncoupled from the political order, not the continuation of sovereign bloodshed. Ironically, the loss of the abstract land, the "wealth of the Pyncheon blood" is necessary for the nation state to prosper and expand (15).

The "tract" of the house, then, *must* remain un-claimed by the Pyncheon family, for were it recovered, it would create a physical connection between the new middle-class and the violent bloodshed of its ancestors. As it is, though, Phoebe and Holgrave's family may find its place in history as having acquired status and power without retaining the contact with blood, without even the telling stain left to tie them to the uncivilized Other,

now that the Judge disappeared.

No funeral or memorialization acknowledges the Pyncheon founders in the novel. It is worth noting here that Hawthorne's insistent narrative framing of the cadaver and the overt control Holgrave exercises over the body blocks the experience of a differential time of mourning. As Dana Luciano has elaborated, however, this "sacred time" carries with it a political potential that might endanger the status quo, the questioning or denial of progress and the nation state's narrative in favor of death in another *chronotrope* (*Grief* 169-214). Indeed, the absence of mourning as well as the absence of the more inglorious fate of cadavers, say dissection, constitutes the blank into which the Judge's cadaver fades.

As Shawn Michelle Smith and Alan Trachtenberg have noted, Hawthorne leans heavily on technology to achieve this effect. Technology made the fantasy of the civilized space a reality by providing means to cover up the undesirable blood. The Judge is accordingly photographed *after* his death, which stabilizes the status quo as free from the abject, the blood and the corpse, the nineteenth-century eugenic discourse of stabilized whiteness.[46] The daguerreotype frames the blood-stained cadaver within the new order. Holgrave creates this order and takes a picture *of* death which he can then to bring to Phoebe. He hinders her from opening the doors in a traditional sign of communitarian mourning and thus un-couples death from material reality by *signifying* death and framing it, instead of allowing for the troubling material presence of the pollutant.

Only after the death of the Judge and the disappearance of his cadaver is the

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46 The classic article on Holgrave's daguerreotypes is Alan Trachtenberg's ("Daguerreotype"), which strongly resonates with Shawn Michelle Smith's connection of the socio-cultural trajectory of image-taking technology ("Eugenics").

nation free, liberated—in the libertarian sense—from the lingering presence of the aristocratic bloodline and its aristocratic principle of sovereign rule. We might also stress, following Lauren Berlant, that the liberal-progressive nation to Hawthorne is superior because it successfully makes of the guillotine a metaphor without a material referent (*Anatomy* 1-2). As the last aristocratic body disappears and becomes "invisible," the aristocratic threat and its sovereign violence disappear as a threat to the nation state—even though I want to stress that "invisible" does not mean absent (*House* 212). To all appearances, however, the order of the ancient ancestor ends; the "custom" begins that we saw at the chapter's beginning, which is "so immemorial, that it looks like nature," just like the daguerreotype (19).

So much for Hawthorne's work to establish the Other in *House*. Where do we see a confirmation of my reading outside the novel, though? Is there another example of Hawthorne's national imaginary as one that abjects blood so as to render the national state blood-free and non-imperalist? To affirm the democratic promise of his national imaginary, Hawthorne underlines the idea of a non-conquering political order, in his narrative reworking of the U.S.-Mexican War. His campaign biography for Franklin Pierce describes not realistic detail of battle scenes, but soldiers as knights (*Pierce* 105).[47]

Stepping across the nation state's boundary and engaging in imperial bloodshed, U.S. soldiers effectively invaded and violently submitted another sovereign state. As history contradicts the national imaginary, Hawthorne's text transforms into knights with chivalric conduct. While it is not unusual to choose chivalry as a metaphor for military

47 Shirley Samuels remarks on the "truism" that the military march into Mexico would bestow manhood on middle-class civilians in this hagiographic account (*Facing* 38). Shedding blood has gendered and racial as well as political implications.

engagement, Hawthorne's knights in Mexico enlighten his construction of sovereign violence in *House*. Neither soldiers nor bloodshed are realistically drawn because Hawthorne chooses to echo James Fenimore Cooper's and, by extension, Sir Walter Scott's Romanticized image of a courtly knight. Significantly, the knights are not the violent warrior caste of privileged prowess that scholars like Richard W. Kaeuper describe, but chivalrous embodiments of national manhood (143-9).

Historical details are irrelevant to Hawthorne, or rather, must remain invisible in his narration. He needs to suppress them to reconcile bloodshed and liberal nationalism and therefore displaces historic facts of nineteenth-century warfare and politics by projecting them onto a sanitized imaginary of medieval chivalry. A *real* knight stands much too close to the historical warrior. Bloody swords would remind of a factual past and its bloodshed. In Hawthorne's national imaginary such real war is an untenable connection to questions about moral justifications for bloodshed in the 1850s. By using knights, Hawthorne appears to equate military aggression between and violent conquest of nation-states with clashes of sovereign rulers and local warlords. However, as in his relation of colonial violence as an inferior step of political evolution toward "settled" national territories, the text displaces and ignores concrete violence and places the burden of tying together sovereign violence, aristocracy, and the historical origins of nations on the figure of knightly soldiers.

This displacement in *House* is not limited to the past, but most clearly extends to arguments regarding slavery. As Lauren Berlant points out *The Anatomy of National Fantasy* (1991), the novel in advance forgives the betrayal of political faith by political practice in the public sphere (217). She indicates the political imaginary as always

engaged in the act of conscious forgetting or, as I would say, abjection as a means to define the self. Hawthorne's liberal nationalism expresses an optimistic vision of the nation's ability to resolve the conflict between libertarian and aristocratic forces and the struggle to overcome the violence of the old order.

Perhaps on no other subject is Hawthorne's novel more deafeningly silent than on on slavery. The ending is remarkably peaceful, while the year of its publication was a turbulent year for the nation. Especially remarkable is Hawthorne's effort to keep at bay regarding a conflict over liberty and enslavement with the text's concern over inheritance of Puritan sin. The text's synthesis not only reconciles class tensions, but tries provides for a subtle merge without a bloody overthrow of slavery.

Hawthorne never openly addresses the question of race as the basis for enslavement. Though he enlists the aid of heredity through blood as the central mechanism of transmission, he never openly acknowledges the implicit racial hierarchy he builds. Especially Shawn Michelle Smith elaborates that Hawthorne's construction of a white, middle-class idyll anticipates roughly contemporary and even later discussions around eugenics, especially the theories of Francis Galton. To Smith, Holgrave's daguerreotypes transform surfaces into significant representations of depth, which in turns allow for the conflation of social, moral, and biological dimensions by way of one image (*Archives* 29-31).

However, we must remember that slavery is an ever-changing set of practices and institutions and that its association with race changed over time. In this way, the connection to 1890s Galtonian eugenics is less useful than it might appear. Even though the basic conception of the white family photograph and wide-spread anxieties

concerning a belief in authenticity and visibility of race are obviously present by the 1850s, Smith's Galton reference muddles the time-line of blood. In chapter five we will encounter a racist theory of so-called black blood that is contemporary to Hawthorne. In it, blood is indeed an occult substance and a sign of distinct human races. These medical theories were, however, deeply imbedded in chattel slavery and the specific medical and theological arguments of enslavers. They did not spring from the social science but influenced them. While Hawthorne is troubled by race, we cannot lay the next generation's sins at his feet. Galton's theories are far more akin to the blood quantum laws we see in chapter six by the end of the century than his confused Lamarckism.

House seems either unaware of or uninterested in the conflict that lay right at Hawthorne's doorstep. In Hawthorne's undeniably white, domestic idyll lies not only the answer to moral problems, but more importantly the answer to the nation's duality—all the while staying mute on slavery and violent territorial expansion. In 1851, Hawthorne wrote to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow that the "Fugitive Slave Law is the only thing that could have blown me into any respectable degree of warmth on this great subject of the day — if it really be the great subject — a point which another age can determine better than ours" (*Letters, 1843-1853* 431).[48] The few non-white characters in Hawthorne's text are Jaffrey Pyncheon's servant Scipio, Matthew Maule's son, and the Jim Crow figure, embedded into Hepzibah and Phoebe's little shop in the form of a gingerbread man. The racist subtext is social rather than scientific, and its notion of

48 As Gary L. Collison reminds us, the 1850-1 fight over the rescue or return of the Virginian runaway enslaved person Frederick "Shadrach" Minkins drew many of the most prominent names in Hawthorne's imagined community—obviously Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison, but also Thoreau and Emerson—into an increasingly graphic debate over the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act.

inheritance, as discussed above, beholden to the Enlightenment as much as the 1850s, abounding in elusive hints in a strategy of diversion, silence, and sublimation.[49] Recently, Larry J. Reynolds delineated Hawthorne's position on slavery as skeptical of institutional or political intervention and profoundly racist (Reynolds, "Ajar" 40, 50). Hawthorne's faith in a gradual, divinely-ordained, miraculous end to slavery did not differ from many of his contemporaries.

Even though she leaves her terms frustratingly underdeveloped, I believe that Jean Fagan Yellin's views of Hawthorne as deliberately side-stepping the centrality of human enslavement in his texts, which she calls a "strategy of avoidance and denial," indicates something along the lines of what I argue Hawthorne does in *House* ("National Sin" 97). By stressing the "custom, so immemorial, that it looks like nature," Hawthorne develops a Romance of national history that avoids, side-steps, and even denies the bloodshed for which the nation state is accountable.

So as not to endlessly repeat the ingenious arguments about Hawthorne and slavery made by Berlant and others, I focus on the question of how the novel negotiates territory as the site of inheritable memory, especially the genetic memory of sovereign bloodshed as part of the nation state. One might see Hawthorne's focus on generational sin as a critique of slavery. After all, a critique of aristocratic oppression of labor might well decry slavery as its most extreme form, as Walter Benn Michaels explains about *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) ("Real Estate" 172). However, although ancestry may imply sin, Hawthorne does not attack the inheritance of slavery. Discussing *The Adventures of*

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49 A similar point is raised by Robert S. Levine, but to a slightly more conciliatory ending, in which he finds disorder in the imagined nation that I see rigidly ordered (*Dislocating* 133-47).

Huckleberry Finn (1884), Toni Morrison's explains that "freedom has no meaning … to the text without the specter of enslavement, the anodyne of individualism; the yardstick of absolute power over the life of another; the signed, marked, informing, and mutating presence of a black slave" (*Playing* 56). This, of course, only in part applies to Hawthorne. As we will see in the last chapter absolute power takes on a very different form when we consider blood and race in the post-Emancipation legacy of chattel slavery.

As Morrison pointoued out above, Hawthorne's liberal national imaginary depends on the dialectical "specter of enslavement." Because Hawthorne never addresses the violent reality of slavery, but writes about the nation state erected on the basis thereof, class struggles become a conflict between white citizens, artists, and laborers. The continued presence of the violence inherent in enslavement is actually vital to the formation of Hawthorne's liberalism. Only the enslavement of humans provides the simultaneous Other and the absolute, sovereign power over the life of that Other becomes possible by merging the "old Pyncheon blood" with the bloodline of Maule's descendant.

After containing the bloodshed at the hands of the state, he must therefore resolve the internal tension between aristocracy and republicanism by way of a marriage between the shop-keeping Phoebe and the Fourierist-turned-conservative Holgrave. Instead of addressing enslavement, Hawthorne moves as of inheritance and property to the center and responds with political metaphors blood. In short, aristocracy tempered by capitalism and reformerism enter into a liberalist balancing act that projects national union through the promise of biological offspring free of either extreme. In the children's blood lies the solution to the nation's crisis. Sin is a matter of blood, but of blood inheritance, not of

bloodshed. Violence is no question of present bloodshed under slavery, but of an aristocratic inheritance, a blood curse.

Hawthorne demystifies blood by stressing a neutral process of biological inheritance in which parents' virtues can overcome ancestral vice and pass their talents on through blood. Phoebe's success at market transactions only makes sense to Hephzibah in this frame of reference: "these things must have come to you with your mother's blood" (*House* 57). Economic success depends on so-called talents or gifts, i.e. personal qualities that pre-determine social roles and thus limit mobility and change. Hawthorne's view is typical for nineteenth-century failures to distinguish phenotype and genotype: apparently following a vague notion of what Ernst Mayr termed "soft inheritance," Hawthorne sees genetic material transmitted to successive generations through biological reproduction as malleable due to use or disuse and environmental influence (5).

Characters inherit traits and taints as congenital flaws through what Hawthorne sees as a blood line, which is only possible after the previous mode of inheritance—blood-as-aristocratic lineage. Soft inheritance is central to Hawthorne's conception of a truly liberal nation, s.i. upholds the idea of biologically superior individuals and privileges age and possession over inheritance and ownership. Finally, beyond race and class, Hawthorne's emphasis on invisible blood in his national imaginary also bespeaks his heteronormative patrician. Bourgeois sexuality and a focus on reproductive health are the nation state's future, as is clear in the image of blooming, blood-red flowers, Alice's posies, which overtly reference sexually engorged bodies (*House* 217). The mix of maternal and paternal blood in their offspring also continues an earlier medical trope,

Aristotelian theory in which the male's blood is refined semen, the form-giving principle that gives significance to the substance-giving matter of the mother, unrefined blood.[50] By emphasizing the blood of swollen reproductive organs, Hawthorne naturalizes a wide-spread, horizontal reproduction of wealth in the nation and delegitimizes vertically inherited claims to aristocracy. The nation's health and prosperity thus depend on the quality of blood in biological parents—a bell curve that precedes the heteronormative and eugenic politics we will see chapters four and five with regard to medical theory and scientific racism.

House stands at the moment when the equation of blood and race generated a crucial shift in the national imaginary, but Hawthorne does not attempt to clearly address this question. Rather, he again stresses the problems of inherited sin to displace the bloodshed of slavery. The integral part of the U.S. Hawthorne's "reactionary romance," as Eric Cheyfitz calls it, rests in this lack of engagement with slavery as a pressing, present problem, which becomes all the more obvious below in contrast to Reizenstein's abolitionism to which I turn now (557).

Instead, blood serves as an abject in the construction of the national imaginary and has only a minor influence on some generations within that nation before it submerges again into the mass. The Pyncheon blood must submerge back into the great blood of humanity, as Holgrave demands: "The truth is, that, once in every half-century, at longest, a family should be merged into the great, obscure mass of humanity, and forget all about its ancestors. Human blood, in order to keep its freshness, should run in

50 See Charlotte Witt for details on Aristotelian theories of human reproduction.

hidden streams, as the water of an aqueduct is conveyed in subterranean pipes" (*House* 132). A family of renown may fall, but it must not have existed without a foundation, without an anchoring in property, its "written record of hidden opulence" (*House* 222). In the liberal-progressive imaginary of the nation that Hawthorne narrates, blood must possess, have property, because the nation's history is one of nostalgic ownership. A lineage must once have owned to be of interest in Hawthorne's stories of the nation, but the bloodlines must also lose their political role of sovereign blood to maintain legally exclusive power in the future. Hawthorne's constructions of a mass, of possession as blood quality, and of blood as a temporary influence rely heavily on a social equality according to the imagined liberal nation, which, in turn relies on its invisible Other, on the invisible blood of non-whites.

Instead of displacing the real horrors of warfare that granted ownership over this soil by pointing to an idealized version of its ancestry, Reizenstein's *Geheimnisse* insists on the present nation as the culmination of a history of violence. The bloody history of Ludwig von Reizenstein's *Geheimnisse von New Orleans* is manifest, concrete, and provides an impulse to action, as opposed to Hawthorne's evasion, displacement, and removal of embodied history. Like his selective history of the colonies, Reizenstein's preface, called "Memoranda for the Inclined Reader" recalls a governorship. But Reizenstein eschews Plymouth Rock for the Gulf of Mexico and recalls Baron de Carondelet, who governed the provinces of El Salvador, Louisiana, West Florida, and Ecuador in the 1790s. Reizenstein relies no less on history than does Hawthorne, but instead of stressing a "truth" in the heart of a character, he insists on the transformative power of events.

More than that, Reizenstein writes about the nation state's imperial legacy in German. Throughout this study, we will see the ways in which language becomes the tool to reevaluate blood. While Hawthorne did all he could to please his English-speaking, middle-class audience with a Romance about the vanishing of aristocracy and the rise of U.S. liberal nationalism, Ludwig von Reizenstein wrote in German for emigrants sympathetic to a liberal revolutionary cause. Unlike *House*, his *Geheimnisse von New Orleans* insistently recalls acts of sovereign violence and violent transgression in the present. The blood shed in violence is not a sign of individual transgression, however, but the climactic result of a history of imperial violence.

Reizenstein himself lived the contradictory and problematic politics of an aristocrat, flamboyant intellectual, and torch-bearer for the German revolutionaries of 1848. An immigrant to New Orleans, he was also a journalistic jack-of-all-trades whose first novel explicitly re-works both the European urban mysteries of Eugène Sue and their Transatlantic offspring written by Ned Buntline. Reizenstein's *Geheimnisse* is coquettishly topical, controversial, political, and partisan. I argue that it is also a sensational text that reacts to the Romance's holistic aesthetic and therefore bring its insistent echoes of imperial history, slavery, and violence to bear on Hawthorne's willful exercise in political blood discourses in *House*.

Published as a serial novel in the German-language *Louisiana Staats-Zeitung* between early 1854 and 1855, *Geheimnisse* develops in panoramic mode and clusters around the fates of two emigrant couples and their friends and families. Despite its convoluted and confusing plot, I will attempt a summary of this rarely-read novel. All characters are pawns in the greatest triumph of Uriah Hiram the Freemason, a two

hundred year-old Spanish knight who unleahses the yellow fever on New Orleans as a punishment for slavery and the violation of Romantic beauty, thus preparing the coming of a mixed-race Messiah born to a German immigrant named Emil and a mulatto woman named Lucy Wilson. Their son will continue the work of his namesake Toussain L'Ouverture in the U.S. Reizenstein highlights violence and chaos, all of which he links to slavery. Hiram buys the freedom of enslaved families, who have to re-pay this favor by helping him whenever he calls.

In the second of many subplots, Reizenstein creates the evil counter-point to Hiram's scheming in the criminal exploits of a secret society that resides in the bar Hamburger Mühle and that includes the murder-rapist and Hungarian cavalry officer Earl Lajos Est**, the sadistic and pedophile murder-rapist and Jesuit priest Dominique Dubreuil, and other seedy characters. At the same time, the fate of an extended immigrant family is told. The family of Count Ernst von R**, his wife Melanie, and their five children and Melanie's older step-sister, Cölestine von Nesebeck, leave Germany in search for Emil, their missing son.Emil had emigrated with his wife Jenny, her sister Frida, who is married to Lajos. A number of immigrants, residing German-American creoles, and friends appear in side stories, including the lesbian couple Orleanna and Claudine de Leisure, who is married to Albert, who in turn loves Frida. In what appears to be the first lesbian love story, Reizenstein sets up an unusual cast of characters and their passions.

Hiram spins these relations into a web of mutual attractions to bring together Emil and Lucy and follows Lajos' bloody trials and tribulations. The novel's many time lapses and doublings defy neat summation. For example, Hiram is already dead in the

"Prologue," though we only learn of his burial in a free Haitian empire ruled by Faustinus I. at the end of the text (*Geheimnisse von New Orleans* 22, 677). Hiram also enters New Orleans with a little child who then disappears from the text. Prinz Paul von Württemberg appears as a *deus ex machina* and moral beacon to provide the starving family von R** with a farm—the only happy moment in the entire text seems to be this admittedly grueling pastoral. The plot seems to be set, but part of the secrets or mysteries in the text is the disappointment of readerly expectations—as I argue below, a political statement on Reizenstein's part. They abandon the farm to search for Emil, only to die of yellow fever, which Hiram has released on New Orleans.

As I explained above, evading and rendering invisible slavery and imperialism means abjecting sovereign bloodshed. In *Geheimnisse*, Hiram forces this bloody violence from the shadows of the urban underground in hopes of accelerating a revealing revolution, the confrontation that will end slavery. The boundary between the liberal-progressive nation state and the "society of blood" becomes permeable (Foucault, *History* 147). As Uriah Hiram attacks the criminal representatives of the nation, characters fail to recognize each other and the hypocrisy of the domestic ideal. To them, the blood stands only for inter-personal violence, but Reizenstein makes it clear that Hiram's struggle is about the systemic violence, far exceeding its moment with its focus on the historical struggle of which they all are a part. Hiram is an ancient knight and Reizenstein's quasi-magical *éminence grise*. His role fluctuates between that of a Wandering Jew who flees from the Inquisition to the Spanish colony in the late 1700s, that of John the Baptist who baptizes the parents of the golden child he claims will end U.S. slavery, and that of an evil genius whose intimate knowledge of fauna and flora of the U.S. gives him the power

to unleash the yellow fever Reizenstein.[51] Hiram's intrigue of human desire culminates in the 1853 outbreak of the yellow fever in New Orleans in which he sheds the blood of citizens to redeem the collective sin of the national body.

Here we see the parallel to Hawthorne's novelistic evasion: as the Romance displaces Native American blood shed by Anglo and Spanish colonists, and their sovereign prerogative, it is indispensable to the sensational novel. Hiram also aims to end slavery in uncompromising, militant calls to discipline and his invocation of a possible bloody end to slavery are reminiscent of absolutist rhetoric, especially as I argue below, of John Brown's words. No less radical than Brown, Hiram the blood of the quick and the dead in an attack that not only decries present ends, but their roots in the past (*Geheimnisse* 399). Hawthorne simply ends the United States' history of violence by transposing its imminence and material continuity onto a Romanticized realm of chivalry. Reizenstein's sense of history as a continuation of the past in the present gives rise to cyclical remembering, testimonies, and accusations of the then in the now. *Geheimnisse* is no reconciliation of history with the present by synthesis of a bloodline. Rather, it erases bloodlines as punishment for history. Hiram's weapon of choice, the yellow fever, kills indiscriminately and leaves behind a torrent of blood.

His impatient violence echoes the increasingly militant confrontations over slavery in the 1850s. Four years after *Geheimnisse*, John Brown expressed the same sense of militant abolitionism in a note he handed to a prison guard: "I John Brown am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land: will never be purged away; but with

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51 Reizenstein also alludes to Goethe's *Faust II* (1832). A letter from a fictional history of New Orleans, reports one of the many rumors about Hiram, according to which he created his helper Diana Roberts as a kind of homunculus (*Geheimnisse* 688 n. 48).

Blood. I had as I now think: vainly flattered myself that without verry [sic] much bloodshed; it might be done" (Ruchames 167). To both Hiram and Brown, blood is a sacrifice in the sense of the *Tanakh*, a painful and precious gift to a higher cause. In its material and physical literality, blood is both gift and purifying agent. The sacrifice comes at the cost of life, which Brown and Hiram's conspirators lament, but which both see as an essential part in the overcoming of slavery and moral renewal of the nation state.

The effusion of the bodily fluid cleanses the land from its moral transgression through the value of human life. In an equation of blood and life, bloodshed can cancel out bloodshed. This is not a simple exchange transaction, but a simultaneous sacrifice and baptismal rite that also cleanses the repentant sinner. Abolitionitionist emphasis on the blood and its transformative powers seems the exact opposite to Hawthorne's disappearance of blood. Land and the nation state are identical and share the same bloody history. To Brown and Hiram, black and white blood are the same, and so the effusion of blood in the U.S. has always betrayed the hypocrisy of the supposed civilized domestic sphere. Paradoxically, the contaminant is a purifying sacrificial blood.

Reizenstein's disorienting cast of characters and plot twists remains anchored in its rejection of the return of past, chivalric violence in the present through Hiram. In *Geheimnisse*, a mass of contemporary citizen subjects stands opposed to one sovereign non-citizen. This mysterious figure appears unexpectedly to call on characters' fortitude, rally them on, and decry their infidelities, accuse, and announce their punishments. Hiram is a real knight and an animate *memento mori* that constantly reminds citizens of impending death and thus of a higher and more terrible obligation, i.e. their moral duty to

fight slavery. He haunts in the nation state as an uncanny presence reminiscent of the bloodshed going back all the way to Spanish imperialism on which the U.S. is built. The embodied abject insists that the nation state has by no means overcome sovereign blood, but only traded it for slavery.

The blood in these texts is also relative to their respective genres, and so the difference between the gothic Romance and the sensational serial novel is more than an aesthetic or formal difference. Blood indicates the relation of textual form, of genre, and political content. Despite its popularity and cultural attention, the sensational novel is still under-studied and deserves closer consideration, as scholars like Shelley Streeby and David M. Stewart insist.[52] The sensational form tells not in unified, long-form prose like the Romance, and its political force results not from a unified effect—I use Poe's concept loosely here. Its affective force lies in sensational specificity, in sudden, disruptive juxtapositions of images and the successive interruption of order instead of its construction. Its focus on specific, affective embodiment—the source of the sensation—made for both, the popularity of texts with sensational characteristics, and the dismissal of that form itself. In sensational literature, blood does not have to carry a symbolic meaning across chapters. It may appear unexpectedly, in brief, vivid explosions of violence across the page that convey sensations, but remain unintegrated into a broader theme. Sovereignty is characterized by unevenness, a temporal development along moments when bloodshed punctuates domesticity.

Blood, with its long aesthetic provenance and affective force, will not usually

52 For more detail, see Streeby (*Sensations* 27-37) and Stewart ("Sensationalism").

appear suddenly and without further relation to themes or content. The one stain of Pyncheon blood is quite different. Hawthorne writes a Romance in part because it allows him to limit whose blood counts. His choice and development of the genre are parts of the text's political concerns. In contrast, the Romance form allows for the projection, planning, and implementation of coherent political goals. Like the text, the socio-political, national order is coherent and even.

The sensational text functions through the succession that questions, undermines, tests, and reconsiders particular spaces and their pasts, whereas *House* allows for strong political readings *because* it claims a narrative authority that proposes a coherent argument about what the national imaginary is, about the so-called self or authentic core of the U.S.-American national identity. Considering the socio-psychology of *House*, we see the expulsion of blood from the domesticated order as a way for ego-formation to take place, as described in Julia Kristeva.

In the Romance the creation of the self is predicated on the creation of a coherent order with a boundary that is not-self, the expulsion of an abject. Unlike Hawthorne's process of generational acts of settlement and forgetting, *Geheimnisse* proposes a working-through, an awareness of the past as the formative precondition of the present. We all have different blood, but our blood is an embodied bridge across time—a concept with problematic conclusions I discuss in chapter five.

This is a rather abstract discussion, so I want to offer a visual analogy borrowed from psychoanalysis. As I pointed out, Reizenstein does not abject blood, but calls for a working-through of the nation state's history to uncover this hidden sovereign legacy. In the introduction I argued that, broadly speaking, Hawthorne's method of selective

recognition of bloodshed and its subsequent abjection is a useful model to imagine how power in the nation state came to supplant the legacy of sovereignty. Reizenstein presents a utopian counter-method. His text cedes that blood is abject, but in complicated formal and structural maneuvers undoes chronological seriality. Instead of offering present distortions of the past as a cover for real history, Reizenstein lets the past bleed into the present, literally and metaphorically.

Instead of Kristeva's model, we can thus relate the sensational text to Sigmund Freud's illustration of the difference between material present and the psyche (*Unbehagen*). Considering the historical stages in Rome's urban development, Freud points out that the earliest stages are often gone, invisible, or only present in fragments, ruins, and small blocks of the once masterful architectural order (13-4). The buildings of today's Rome occupy the same space as past Rome, but are not all of Rome exactly because only one building at a time occupies this space. Freud argues that the human psyche is different in that it loses nothing. He therefore imagines a Rome in which the same space is occupied by all previously existing structures, which could be perceived simultaneously, only needing, perhaps, "a change in the direction of the gaze or the beholder's standpoint to conjure up the one or the other view" (15, my translation).[53]

The sensational panorama prioritizes the equal observer in an admission of incoherence. The domestic-eugenic order that genetically arises in *House* depends on a physical separation from its ancestral violence and therefore sends the Colonel's portrait crashing to the floor (*House* 222). The self-conception, one is even tempted to say self-

53 "eine Änderung der Blickrichtung oder des Standpunktes von Seiten des Beobachters, um den einen oder den anderen Anblick hervorzurufen."

inception, of the liberal U.S. defines the nation as the bloodless order of blood, of blood-as-race, and of blood-as-gender, of blood-as-Other. Its domestic order is at once domestic politics and domestic hygiene, all of which banish blood from its realm. Reizenstein's novel dialectically depends on this order. After all, its affective force only functions by way of discrepancy, contrast, and disappointed expectations. By betraying the insinuated direction of plot and structure, *Geheimnisse* creates uncertainty, instability, all of which contribute to the air of ephemerally, mortality, and which resist holistic constructions of liberalist nationalism that is Hawthorne's imagined national order.

This order, however, extends far beyond the borders of Salem and New Orleans. Blood is bigger than any novel and it exceeds the local domestic in an international dimension. Whereas Hawthorne insists on the nation as a real alternative to empire while Reizenstein decries its inextricability from imperialism. Both novels see blood as racial, but while *House* anticipates for later discussions of heredity and eugenics, *Geheimnisse* remains optimistic that a combination of inter-racial procreation and a violent revolution can take blood out of the equation.

Reizenstein's sensational text achieves a similar psychological effect in its change of direction and point of view, which is incompatible with the Romance. Blood seeps through the cracks of the nation state's glossed version of history, especially in the violent, excessive shedding of blood so characteristic of the sensational mode. Reizenstein's characters do not align with the nation state; they do not shed blood in the defense of enslaved persons or in noble deeds. Reality is blood-soaked, and race and violence often merge in blood imagery, which makes Hawthorne's fictional Salem even more willfully bloodless in contrast.

Sulla, a free Quebecois black man, is the greedy traitor to Hiram's cause, and helper to Merlina Dufresne, the head of the most dangerous criminal secret society in New Orleans (*Geheimnisse* 104-10). Reizenstein insists, however, on deepending the character when he gives Sulla a complicated and tragic back story. Sulla's mother Victoria has her son with a young mulatto lover, kills her husband, and flees to the United States, only to be tortured and lynched. Racism, death, and hatred rule the passions in the U.S. and Canada. During the botched hanging, a famous Louisiana planter's son rages with animalistic violence and breaks Victoria's neck with his bare hands before the mob can rescue the pregnant woman. She gives birth to Sulla at the moment of her death. All horrors converge in the bloodshed that Sulla witnesses and later contributes to himself. This family history is almost the opposite of the Pyncheons'. Sulla betrays friends and nation, but nevertheless has a complicated personal history that anchors lived reality in the body through affect. Reizenstein's visceral depictions of blood tie his readers' senses to a history of violence, while Hawthorne evades blood to build his cerebral middle-class domesticity.

Beyond mere graphic detail, though, the blood in *Geheimnisse* serves to portray complexities, break continuities, and uncover complicity. Sulla's history is not gratuitous, despite its vivid details, the sex, desire, conspiracy, and raw violence because the quantity of blood in his personal history reflects its quality. Sulla is conceived and born in blood, and his parents' bloody crimes mirror their own murderers' racist violence. In a nation state ruled by racism, the lives ordinary citizens are drenched in blood. Through blood, Reizenstein's novel confronts readers with this reality not in a gratuitous spectacle, but to discuss representational politics.

In writing blood, we can see that the initial question of whose blood warrants telling needs to be amended into how the texts depict blood. The formal difference between Hawthorne's and Reizenstein's use of blood is that between *mimesis* and *poiesis*, following Erich Auerbach: the sensational novel draws on reality while the Romance constructs a text to influence reality. The texts thus form two sides of a Romantic impulse—domestic and revolutionary.

In blood, these texts develop a formal and substantial argument, essentially negotiating the two sides of Aristotelian and Platonic positions. Reizenstein depicts the nation state mimetically as a contingent, tentative, provisional truth caught in all the many, divergent, and incompletely represented internal tensions of life in 1853 New Orleans. This renders the changing history of land as the primary focus of a volatile nation. In contrast to this disorienting place, Hawthorne's ideal nation is anything but unstable. It is overtly composed, written as *poiesis*, a self-conscious artifice and purposeful reflection on the nation state in light of higher truths that exist beyond the petty gruesomeness of material bloodshed and to which the nation state should aspire. During Hawthorne's lifetime, the Romance form stands out in its sophistication of narration. His narrative voice in *House* condenses all blood into a symbolic container for sin, guilt, and aristocratic inheritance.

I therefore read the Sensation as partially derivative of the Romance, and Reizenstein's bloodshed as a reaction to and clarification of the subdued nation-making efforts of national publishing elites, which were especially present in the New England area. Building on Sacvan Bercovitch, Shelley Streeby explains that the Sensational author best known to scholars, George Lippard, "attributed the antebellum nostalgia for Puritan

origins to a pernicious project devised by New England historians and Boston critics to suppress counter-histories and to definitively link the 'national character' to New England Puritanism" ("Houses" 447). I see a similar conflict between Hawthorne's poietic Romance and Reizenstein's mimetic sensationalism. Blood as an abject boundary makes a "nation" only in the sense that Hawthorne's metaphor of the haunted house draws on sovereignty's previous coherence and glosses history. This history is what the aesthetic and political goals of the sensational novel recall.

Society is more complex in Reizenstein's panoramic narration than Hawthorne's central perspective allows for. These market positions of a literary quasi-aristocracy that decried immigrant literature and sensational texts themselves relate to the novel's concern with property and blood. In a way, the difference between *House* and *Geheimnisse* boils down to *ius saniguinis*, the inheritance according to blood line, and *ius soli*, the inheritance according to place of birth. Hawthorne structures *The House of the Seven Gables* entirely around one small, iconic image of blood, one spectral stain of blood on the corpses of the Pyncheon patriarchs. Yet this stain is not the blood that matters in the novel, even though Hawthorne's masterful narrative would have us believe so.

As I explain above, Hawthorne's gothic Romance is an effort at U.S. nation-making. He foregrounds one blood—that of the Pyncheon patriarchs—to bracket the history of blood that his conception of middle-class liberalist nationalism depends most on: blood as aristocratic inheritance, as shed by sovereign violence, and blood as the biological anchor of gendered and racialized identities. *House* evades the blood of Native Americans, enslaved persons, and disenfranchised social groups like immigrants because

it wants to find out whose blood counts in the future. *Whose* blood counts is precisely its point.

I will suspend the connection between property and race until the final chapters, when I turn to the conception of blood-as-race. Suffice it to say here that Hawthorne's logic of inheritance does not function according to the same logic as the eternal, immutable racialized blood.

To recall, Hawthorne's novel displaces original inhabitants as unfit in a superficially bloodless, Lockean gesture, and therefore must stay silent on two generations of sovereign violence against Native Americans. Ultimately, Hawthorne rids the national imaginary of this sovereign bloodshed by first rendering the deed to the land invisible behind the portrait of the original patriarch who shed that blood and secondly disappearing the last living descendant of this bloody, patriarchal aristocracy into a domestic daguerreotype. The displacement projects sovereign history of blood onto an otherworldly realm, strategy I contrast to Reizenstein's insistence on the present of this history in the here and now. Hawthorne's national imaginary bases the nation's *tēlos* on the absence of blood shed by the blade of a sovereign even as it silently agrees to these same acts of imperial expansion. Hawthorne's Romance exemplifies a national imaginary about the domestic, liberal-progressive ideal form of the nation state in its territorial and legal form, through the lens of glossed history.

Reizenstein's sensational critique, in contrast, is public, revolutionary, and trans-national provides a lens through which to Hawthorne's work for its silences, its quiet construction of a community. *Geheimnisse* poses questions that throw the very mastery of Hawthorne's masterful tale into relief, that reveal its sleights-of-hand, the political ends

of its poetic creations. It doubts the completeness, the complete overcoming and absence of the *ius sanguinis*. Read through Reizenstein, Hawthorne's national community is in no way representative of the United States, but emerges rather as a survey of Hawthorne's political ideals with its mileposts written in blood.

History and religion ask similar questions, but proceed on radically different teleological assumptions. We will see in the last two chapters that it is important to identify just what theological roots blood has because the reference to especially the Hebrew and Christian bible allows authors to develop a short-hand in constructing what blood can mean. As both novels make ample use of Christian literature to develop what "blood" means in theology in relation to the nation. I therefore want to make a brief excursion to offer a religious analogy to the way historiography and history relate in each text by considering them as eschatological and prophetic texts.

Though both authors develop the significance of blood through its historical echoes, Reizenstein finds historical patterns in the present as prophecy, not eschatology. The disjointed, episodic, and bombastic elements in *Geheimnisse* together with its rejection of a central, coherent, and consolidating narrative perspective leads to a style I would call prophetic, which is most clearly visible in contrast to Hawthorne's abjection of blood.[54] In Reizenstein, Hiram's vengeance of slavery smacks of the god of the Hebrew Bible. The echoes of biblical violence are part of a narrative that consciously taps the episodic, disjointed *mimesis* of the *Tanakh*.

A biblical prophet like Isaiah or Jeremiah often tells of a ruined society

54 David S. Reynolds points out that Hawthorne's intensive preoccupation with and later detraction from John Neal may well have influenced this turn form prophetic exuberance to Romantic subtlety (*Beneath* 258).

abandoned by purpose and direction. The prophetic perspective allows for the simultaneous discussion of observed problems, though this results in a panoramic, disorienting style. Lacking the clear structural center and central perspective of *House*, *Geheimnisse* also unfolds horizontally, as a panorama, through tableaux.[55] The tableau lays bare the same sleight-of-hand that Hawthorne uses in *House* to shift from Colonel Pyncheon as imperial colonizer to evil, demonic ghost. This disembodiment, as I explain below, is crucial to Hawthorne's strategic displacements, which shifts from embodiment to an otherworldly, abstract realm.

One of these tableaux provides the most telling insight into the overall narrative strategy of Reizenstein's text and the meaning of blood: a group of two men and one woman lounging in a lavishly-decorated room, a secret salon behind fake walls in a brothel camouflaged as a saloon. A third man enters and is greeted with a set of exchanged phrases from the biblical book of Isaiah. This text tells of the destruction of enemies to the Kingdom of Judah and gains a new significance in the context of Reizenstein's sweeping novel:

> "Death or Merlina," answered the entering party and added still: "The Mill wakes when New Orleans sleeps—club members of 99 and 100 bring death and perdition!"
> Dubreuil, the club member of 99 answered: "From midnight comes smoke and no lonely one is in his tents."
> "Wail Fool, scream city! All of Philistine land is craven! The waters of Dimon are full of Blood – at night comes destruction over Ar in Moab, she is done for!" said Lajos, the club member of 100. (331, my translation)[56]

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55 For more on the panorama, see Angela Miller and Marie-Louise von Plessen.

56 "Tod oder Merlina," antwortete der Eintretende und fügte noch bei: "Wenn New-Orleans schläft, wacht die Mühle—die Clubbisten von 99 und 100 bringen Tod und Verderben!"Dubreil, der Clubbist von 99 antwortete: "Von Mitternacht kommt ein Rauch und ist kein Einsamer in seinen Gezelten.""Heule Thor, schreie Stadt! Ganz Philisterland is feige! Die Wasser von Dimon sind voll Blut – des Nachts kommt Verstörung über Ar in Moab, sie ist dahin!" sagte Lajos, der Clubbist von 100. (331)

The melodramatic, verbose exchange pits the secret society against all of New Orleans and narratively transforms vile criminals into demonic powers and gives ordinary acts of bloodshed a cosmic significance (as we will see in chapter five, this temporal distortion by way of biblical reference is also central to scientific racism).[57] The prophetic text connects Christianity to the workings of secret societies, mocking both and poking fun at credulous readers through a prophecy of bloodshed in an uncovering and undoing of narrative and political power structures.

The choice of whose blood a text narrates directly correlates to the form and rhetorical nature of that narration; in this case this choice results in the difference between Hawthorne's apocalyptic and Reizenstein's prophetic narration. Reizenstein's reference to Dimon citates Isaiah 15-16, prophecies with specific historical reference that can be read as what Joseph Blenkinsopp describes as an "ironic lament" and a "masterpiece of *Schadenfreude*" regarding Moab, the enemy nation of Judah (7).

Isaiah responds to a history of extermination, expulsion, and tribal violence before and after the rise of the mighty Davidic kingdom, a history the prophet stresses against the sovereign's interest (Kaiser 57-74). Reizenstein's use of prophetic scripture reveals corrupt religious authority, the future decline in the present. In *Geheimnisse*, that present is the culmination of a history of violence, it accesses the prophetic mode of narrating to open the prospect of doom and defeat of the U.S. at the hands of other nations, an end to the increasing power of the U.S. In the choice to explore and detail blood, Reizenstein

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57 The self-aggrandizing performance here alludes to contemporary secret societies such as the Free Masons, George Lippard's Brotherhood of the Union, the Ouvrier Circle, or other such groups, and in mocking posh rituals connects the self-important conspirators to violence and ruin. I return to this point below, regarding the Ku Klux Klan. For more on secret societies, especially regarding Lippard and the Civil War, see Mark A. Lause.

relates the present as a visible continuation of the past, where ins of the present are inextricably linked to the past through blood.

Hawthorne's brilliant use of Romance conventions allows him to evade blood through formal means. His gothic Romance can justify supernatural elements that introduce an air of implausibility to the text. For example, Matthew Maule's curse on the Pyncheon patriarchs lasts over two hundred years and seems to allude to witchcraft and blood magic. The phrase is clear enough in its accusation of the ministers of church and state, in its condemnation of the innocent blood they spilt. Indeed, Hawthorne's source appears to have been Sarah Good's curse of her accusers during the Salem witchcraft crisis of 1692.[58]

House demands the suspension of disbelief as it insists on an autonomous aesthetic realm ever so slightly but significantly removed from the real. The Salem text limits visible blood to a small stain like a period behind an especially cogent paragraph. The phrase of giving them blood to drink, however, is no magic curse, but stems from Revelations 16:6: "because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve" (NRSV).[59] Revelations is entirely different from the prophetic source we see Reizenstein draw on.

Hawthorne's apocalyptic mode of narration is eschatologically bent. Christianity necessitates a revolutionary event, an end-time, and the return of the Davidic Messiah. This return, however, differs greatly between Jewish and Christian eschatology. Whereas the Christian apocalypse produces an otherworldly focus on the hereafter and a divine

58 The earliest scholarly source for this observation seems to be Arthur Hobson Quinn.
59 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy" (KJV).

struggle on a cosmic scale, the Jewish idea of the descendant of David is decidedly political and this-worldly, with an impetus of imperial subjugation and conquest.

I therefore distinguish between the prophetic and the apocalyptic because of their respective political implications. Hawthorne's well-wrought narrative explains the present in light of the past to displace bloodshed from material reality onto an otherworldly realm. His Romance clearly finds a reflection of the past in the present nation state, but it narrates history throws a purposeful structure, to achieve not openness and indeterminacy, but closure. Blood is an anarchic fluid, though, which undercuts attempts at control—physically in emissions and ruptures, metaphorically in a constant overlaying of history with narrative overlay. The Romance is blood stains on the clothes of Colonel and Judge Pyncheon reduces histories of bloodshed to a white male injury. In order to use this single, small stain effectively, greater bloodshed must remain invisible. In this world, no more blood appears as Hawthorne removes it to an otherworldly representation.

To simultaneously use blood and not make it the focus of his revolutionary ideals, Reizenstein employs Friedrich Schiller's political aesthetics. According to Schiller, beauty liberates the present from the past through its timelessness, liberating the world from its enslavement to the past ("Letters" 21, 27). Biological reproduction reproduces revolutionary potential through aesthetic improvement of an individual instead of absorbing radical reform into a liberal-progressive compromise of the nation state. This is no contradiction to the presence of history in the world, but its qualitative frame of reference. An action is good or bad only when read against this backdrop of beauty, setting an external moral and ethical frame for individuals, no matter what race they are.

Blood is thus not only a biological component, but the substrate for beauty, the necessary material for any political progress.

The prophecy is intra-diegetic and a structuring element of Reizenstein's novel, which stresses the rise and fall of imperial powers through the emphasis on violence, embodiment, and somatic reality. In blood can we see the difference between the novels, between the theological dimension of between apocalypse and prophecy and between closure and agency, which influences the way Hawthorne and Reizenstein see the role of blood in history. What is more, Hawthorne's focus on progress and the beginning of an otherworldly history necessitates his wrestling with blood as lineage and blood as inheritance. As we saw, Hawthorne stresses biological reproduction as a mode of horizontal demarcation and inheritance, abandoning the biblical model of patriarchy in favor of the nation state's biopolitics, *ius solis* for *ius sanguinem*. In Holgrave's past as a Fourierist, he seems to hint at French socialist Charles Fourier, only to assign this influence to the past, not the liberal progressive future (*House* 126). Reizenstein's focus on the present and its debt to the past leads him to see blood as an eternal reoccurrence independent of individuals and nations.

Let us return to my initial question: whose blood counts? In *Geheimnisse,* the present as the culmination of a history of violence is openly visible in the streets of New Orleans. Reizenstein's Hiram consequently insists that only a child conceived in the spirit of beauty can be the savior who destroys the chains of the "Helotes" (*Geheimnisse* 96, 112). Hiram tries to collapse all social distinctions of blood into themselves, rejecting social constructions of race and class by masking them.

At the center of both novels lies the invisible tension of blood, between

aristocratic degeneration and democratic vigor, the old and the new, the rule by might and liberty, and the question of whether *ius sanguinis* or *ius solis* determines the further course of the nation. That is why Reizenstein's novel echoes arguments important to the European revolutions of 1848. While we saw that *House* is defined by a hetero-biological logic of reproductive domesticity and inheritance, Reizenstein's New Orleans even contains non-biological, queer reproductions and lines of inheritance. A society of "lesbian women" form yet another secret society inside and beneath the visible social order—the surface Hawthorne focuses on—and illustrate that invisibility is the necessary outcome of an uncanny nation state that erases its own bloody history (391-2). Reizenstein's novel denies the equation of the nation's biological reproduction-through-blood with survival as well as biological determination itself.

Biological reproduction and the creation of bloodlines offers no solution for the nation state's true problem. As though to mock the hopes for a democracy that will organically evolve from aristocracy, Reizenstein presents the family of Count G*, whose nine members all perish. They die not because they are socially unfit or decadent aristocrats, though one of the few glimpses of happiness in the novel is of their ascetic subsistence life on an outlying island farm right before they all die of the yellow fever (*Geheimnisse* 638). Despite changing and adapting to democracy and capitalist wage labor, but Hiram's mass-destruction kills them along with everyone else. Biological reproduction is in itself meaningless and in this case less successful than queer reproduction of a secret society able to protect its members over generations.

Blood in *Geheimnisse* therefore also openly reproduces and transcends race; in Reizenstein's view, blood-as-inheritance is therefore not the engine that drives the future,

but only a means to an end, though he vaguely cedes human races as having to do with blood; Hiram's main concern is to manipulate race through reproduction. Reizenstein alludes to common eighteenth-century arguments for the superiority of Creole offspring, fore-runners of later ideas like Charles Waddell Chesnutt's Future American. The old knight Hiram not only sheds blood, but manipulates blood-as-life. He brings together the queer couple of Emil G* and Lucy Wilson to conceive and bear a son, whom Hiram names Toussaint L'Ouverture (*Geheimnisse* 639). The infant proves that social change exists only within the body.

Blood as the vehicle for biological reproduction is thus not yet another reworking of race as a reflection of social inequality, but the possibility of transcendence created through a merge of all bloodlines. Beyond alluding to contemporary discussions of blood and race in the abstract, Hiram's savior-child plot line brings blood and race into direct contact with the legacy of the Haitian Revolution, about which Emil's German wife, Jenny dreams early in the novel (*Geheimnisse* 133). Reizenstein again evokes histories of violence in the bloody war for independence, while relating the U.S. to its legacy of imperialism and slavery.

The central motif, however, lies in the continuation of L'Ouverture's revolutionary struggle on U.S. soil. Reizenstein substitutes the messianic child of beauty as the dead Haitian hero's own children. This substitution posits an alternative to Hawthorne's inheritance via bloodline and again emphasizes the this-sided nature of Reizenstein's political prophecy. Instead of investing the material body fluid with social and legal property by abjecting it, Reizenstein develops the bloodline as an approximation, a non-linear sharing of identity, legacy, and race in reality.

Even with his clear abolitionist stance, Reizenstein complicates of the very project of revolution. By introducing an alternate political order in Haiti and by providing a *deus ex machina* resolution—the only surviving characters depart to a post-Revolutionary isle of the blessed—the novel's ending even seems to collapse into a paradox that would betray its democratic fervor. Indeed, would the mere construction of Hiram's plan not point to an implied messianism and the coming of an apocalyptic war?

Also, the sudden appearance of a brig sent by the emperor of Haiti, Faustinus I, seems to clash with Hiram's insistence on violent change. Only Emil, Lucy, Prince Paul, and Kaspar Hahn (a comical relief character) survive the yellow fever and leave New Orleans without bringing about a golden age. We could even blame Reizenstein for introducing an external agent to remove the internal tension of the U.S. by providing an unspecified safety-valve, possibly even repeating what Yonatan Eyal describes as the 1845 free-soil loco-foco argument for the annexation of Texas as a safety-valve for the internal tensions over slavery (30).

Reizenstein does not prophesy the outcome of the struggle over slavery. Hiram claims that a revolution will occur on the young Toussaint L'Ouverture's eighteenth birthday, in 1871 (*Geheimnisse* 677). It is tempting to read a scene toward the end of the novel as a prediction of the Civil War. In the scene, black clouds battle against white clouds, but this phenomenon occurs between 1847 and 1853 and ends in the defeat of the black by the white clouds (665-6). This meteorological metaphor prophesies a series of events more probably predicts continuing social unrest across the U.S. like John Brown's guerilla war and large slave uprisings like the 1811 Deslondes revolt in Louisiana. Reizenstein employs black and white contrasts to confuse the question of revolution, not

to offer simple explanations.

I argue that the everyday We must read the unexpected appearance of a Haitian emperor who carries out Hiram's testament in the context of Reizenstein's audience. His novel appears in installments in the German-language, radical newspaper *Louisiana Staats-Zeitung*. New Orleans was exploding in size and significance to the circum-Atlantic trade including the triangular slave trade, to the exchange of information, to the mobility of cosmopolitan, aristocratic elites, and to masses of immigrants.[60]

German immigrants were among the largest groups, but appeared in public in especially marked groups like the Turners and the proto-anarchists. Reizenstein's paper catered to the more radical advocates of political revolutionary activity, many of whom were political refugees of the failed democratic revolutions of 1818 and 1848. As James M. Bergquist explains, German expatriate readers would have understood Reizenstein's reference to the 1848 revolutions around the world (14).[61] The intervention of an empire, even an abolitionist, progressive one, could thus appear as a stridently conservative gesture.

Reizenstein points to the stalemate of antebellum domestic politics and, as we will see by my last chapter, also to the dialectic between empire and enslavement as the nation state's crux. He points out that the victory of reactionary aristocracy in Europe brings both sides of the Atlantic together in a larger question posed to revolutionaries. He

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60 For more on the cirum-Atlantic network of political and cultural exchanges, see Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker's *Many-Headed Hydra* (2000) and Joseph Roach's *Cities of the Dead* (1996). For more on German immigrants, see Ellen C. Merrill's *Germans of Louisiana* (2005).

61 A particularly interesting source is J. Hanno Deiler's 1901, self-published *Geschichte der New Orleanser Deutschen Presse. Nebst Anderen Denkwürdigkeiten der New Orleanser Deutschen*, which intended to relate all German newspapers in their historical context, with a never published second volume solely on the history of the *New Orleanser Deutschen Zeitung*.

critiques vulgar revolutionaries because, as Colin Dayan reminds us, at this moment legal and national orders based on sovereign power and its focus on the individual are transitioning to a progressive national identity, citizenship, and social death, to which we will return in the last chapter (41-5).

His critique roots in discussions of a heterosexual reproduction-as-inheritance at the heart of this order, i.e. the discussion of the role of kinship by blood that replaced kingship by blood, of inherited blood lineages and the distinction between *ius sanguinis* and *ius soli*. To demonstrate revolutionaries cannot transplant democratic upheavals but must organically develop from within existing tensions, born from beauty as it were, *Geheimnisse* refers back to empire. Instead of endorsing Hiram's schemes, it ends on a note of sustained, intellectual engagement with injustice and violence and of the conscious acceptance of bloodshed as a part of the new existing social relations. The young, increasingly urban, and uncanny U.S. produces violence. To grapple with its secrets means learning to live in the new material relations from within its reality—as opposed to imposing an imagined order on reality. In a way, Reizenstein argues that it is better to live in full knowledge of the sovereign's sword than to bow to republican lies and the abjection of blood. He stresses that bloodshed can only end if its structural causes are abolished.

Blood should not be a gothic haunt, but a fact to be avoided by revolutionary democrats. If unavoidable, revolutionaries need to accept bloodshed and thereby demystify it. Accepting blood in all its meanings robs the novel of the Romance's masterful unity, but offers a meaningful grappling with the nation's lived reality and history. Only stoic honesty regarding material reality provides any source of happiness

amid the disorder and tragedy of democracy, transient though it may be. As the novel's concluding quote from Horace stresses: "*Impavidum ferient Ruinae*"—"The ruin will strike him unafraid" (678).[62] Living within this chaos forces us to create a new culture based not on the façade of middle-class inheritance Hawthorne constructs, but on relational ethics that assume transience, ephemerality, and constant disruption of order. Blood as an acknowledged part of reality is the starting point for domestic intimacy, an authenticity entirely opposite to Hawthorne's liberal domesticity.

The novel's title and its concept of the secret helps me clarify how the gothic Romance and the sensational mystery novel differ politically, which also resturns us to the larger contrast in this chapter, between abjection of and working-through of blood. Here I must remark that the title's "mysteries" would usually be translated as "secrets." However, both English terms run the risk of eluding the root the German title emphasizes. "Mysteries" translates of Sué's term "mystères" and in this way sticks to the original title. But *mystikos* (*μυστικός*) would indicate secrecy in the sense of a divine will, whereas *Geheimnis* is a secret in the sense of human creation. *Geheimnisse* is derived from *heim-*, which has a different and important semantic function: *Heim* (*domus*) occurs both in *geheim* and *heimlich* (*vernaculus*, *occultus*). As a quasi-equivalent I would suggest "home-d" and "home-ly," connoting "being native" or "vernacular, domesticated," and thus a semantic connection to the domestic order.

The adjective *geheim*, however, also functions in the sense of "trusted, intimate," and, drawing on the *Grimm* dictionary, we see the connection to Freud's *unheimlich*—

62 The stoic sense of determination, however, is ambivalent, as survival itself is turned into a moral right—a rather meager lowest common denominator and perhaps a hint at proto-Naturalist thought.

uncanny: "[3.]b) heimlich ist auch der von gespensterhaftem freie ort: es ist im hause heimlich, *domus a spectris non infestatur*." The canny *Geheimnis* is *not* a supernatural space, but that place which is free of the ghostly—including a ghostly narrator, dead Colonels and Judges. *Heim* also connotes land property, rest, placed-ness, but it also echoes "placement, institutionalization," with *heimsuchen* as its violation in the sense of an invasion of the place, a haunting, or in the sense of God's appearance.

Reizenstein's plot line around the Count's family and their lack of a *Heim*, their status as *heimatlos* (*sine patria*), Reizenstein's *Geheimnisse* points out the instability and lack of subjective psychological domestic coherence that Hawthorne identifies with the nation. The home is the *core* of the secret, not in the sense of a structure that Hawthorne emphasizes, but in the creation of a space *free* from the haunts of the past. The blood is known to lie beneath, not abjected into invisibility. The home is a psychological space of working-through, fitted with Freud's image of Rome's historical architecture we discussed at the beginning. The tragedy, then, seems to be that this is impossible to achieve in the U.S., especially as long as slavery continues to exist, which makes the creation of a domestic authenticity impossible because it remains predicated on the disavowal of the blood at its core.

Although Reizenstein's novel certainly expresses a purposeful, explicitly political stance, it disappoints readerly desires for a coherent, unified metaphor or aesthetically flawless form like Hawthorne's gothic Romance, for a final speech to make sense of the sprawling plot. Reizenstein rejects this stability and insists that aristocratic inheritance is as empty as the promise of a democracy given by a slave state or liberty in a social order based on bloodshed—all is the stability of empire and conquest. The constant issuing

forth of blood in acts of violence and Hiram's nagging reminders of imperial history as the basis of national space leads Hawthorne's careful layering to an absurd end point.

Liberal nationalism in *House* functions through abjection and barriers, the very layers that Reizenstein's psychological model insists we must unearth and perceive as simultaneously existing. To project its imagined community, the Pyncheon line of inheritance in *House* covers up the aboriginal blood through a transposition of land to blood to race. Hawthorne's novel displaces the history of conquest and imperial expansion by first appropriating the land through a map, building a house on the ill-gotten soil and around the map, then displaying a portrait that confirms white, patriarchal, aristocratic rule by force and force-as-rule, and finally disappearing the last male heir into a non-linguistic representation of his own death. This layering of spatial, temporal, and racial displacement makes possible the investment of blood with political power, which in turn props up middle-class hegemony.

The *Geheimnis* and its affect are not unique to the city, but the spectacle of the yellow fever, the proximity of brothel and church, the horror of fires, and the constant flux of the city itself may amplify impressions on the senses. New Orleans is not a memorial to a version of its history, but it is built on the corpses of the people it destroyed. Characters and the narrator compulsively recall, narrate, and testify to violent deaths, bloodshed, and the imperial past. Blood is part of reality. The victims of the yellow fever are buried in mass graves, with no lasting legacy or legal "settlement." Their death is part of a legal order they have no access to. Even the yellow fever is only another excuse for bloodshed, with the majority of victims murdered under the cover of the epidemic (*Geheimnisse* 669). More importantly, Reizenstein's re-occurring locations do

not displace original land, but instead testify to the entropy and decay of middle-class institutions in the city. The abandoned Atchafalaya Bank building is Hiram's secret hide-out in New Orleans, the once-powerful bank is already purposeless, empty in the novel and not even standing anymore in the narrator's time (*Geheimnisse* 90).

As capitalism progresses only through its own constant destruction and reinvention, the present in *Geheimnisse* is an indicator of past atrocity and future demise, a marker of transitory lives ending in bloodshed, disease, and destruction. New Orleans is therefore a spectral city in which the present is always on the brink of becoming the past. Buildings stand not as structural centers of the nation or ancestral houses and do not function as covers for imperialism. They are the precarious veneer under which blood flows, a cover for sexual violence against minors, murder, torture, slavery, and Hiram's plans, *meant* to burn down, decay, and vanish to reflect reality, not order. No portrait provides an anchor for meaning—the central portrait in the novel vanishes in a fire (645). No secret compartments explain the political order of past, present, and future.

To return to the beginning, Reizenstein's spectral city is uncanny, but not supernatural in the Gothic sense, and its imagined community is not created through the expulsion of blood as abject as in *House*, but through the awareness of the past as the formative precondition of the present, the awareness of the presence of blood that has been spilt. If we thus read Hawthorne's novel as a formative process in the sense of Kristeva's model and Reizenstein's text as a depiction of the nation as a psycho-social formation like the human psychic apparatus. We see Reizenstein's relation of psychological and spatial perspective expressed through the form of the sensational narrative, shifts and juxtapositions that unearth existing fragments of the unconscious

history of New Orleans. Its bloodshed compulsively reenacts the horror of the past. Finally, its prophecies reflect the circulatory, psychological nature of history, its repetitions and its continuity, rejecting the notion of overcoming the past in favor of a working-through.

In light of Hawthorne's and Reizenstein's narratives about blood, we can now sketch out an answer to the initial question of whose blood can be represented. Even though there is no inherent reason why literary tests should select some blood as privileged and either relegate other blood to the margins or disappear it entirely, the political, historical, and material context of literature leads to an imaginary in which blood at once stands for itself and much more.

Blood is important to the colonial history of the U.S. and its situation as one of few democratic republics of the mid-nineteenth. Because blood is essential to sovereignty, the break with this order opens the question of how a liberal democracy can progress without it. In Hawthorne's texts—though we might also refer to earlier national imaginaries as those of Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) or John Quincy Adams (1825-1848)—we saw that the answer lay in a process of expulsion of blood from the domestic polity. Abjecting blood amplifies the association between the civilized bloodless nation and the uncivilized margins of the frontier.

Both Hawthorne and Reizenstein wrote in the antebellum moment, between the fading memories of 1812 and the national imaginary surrounding the 1849 defeat of Mexico, a war that remained largely disconnected from the domestic nation of east-coast and even southern elites. At that moment, the abjection from the domestic nation resonated with the nation state's official history and the legal order that disavowed

enslavement. The Civil War, however, troubled the narrative of a liberal-progressive republic freed from the bloodshed of tyrannical sovereign power, free from the sword that killed among the population, inside the domestic space.

Especially after the annexation of former Mexican territories, the struggle with the nation's sovereign legacy of blood materializes in questions regarding expansion, occupation, and invasion as a return of the abject sovereign. Critic Jesse Aléman points out that even the indebtedness of U.S. histories to Mexican histories lead to an uncanny doubling in which alimentary narratives overlap: "the inter-American gothic emerges when the hemispheric horrors of the Spanish conquest of Mexico return in narratives … that sense how the US stands to inherit the monstrous race war hidden beneath the romantic veneer of Mexico's history" ("Gothic" 416). By 1848 the U.S. national imaginary made of Mexico an eternal margin, but some U.S. authors like Reizenstein disagreed that an invisible empire is an absent empire. In this prophetic view of blood as a sign of cyclical return, those whose blood is written out of the center exist and walk among the nation's urban centers.

Reizenstein does not see bloodshed in the U.S. as an aberration from or violation of order, but as central to the national imaginary. To Reizenstein as to John Brown, the end of sovereign blood culture created an order steeped in blood, which they seek to liberate through literalization. To Reizenstein, "whose blood?" is not a question of choice, but an imperative, a demand for full accountability and a complete and bloody history and the social panorama instead of bloodless historiography. We will see again in chapter three that Whitman agrees with Reizenstein, though his medical solution differs from Reizenstein's.

My study considers the literary construction of blood in nineteenth-century U.S. texts and the ways authors deploy it as a rhetorical tool to make social and political arguments. In writing about blood, authors express the theoretical reasoning, social justification, and material realization of political structures. Blood reflects the struggle over which forms of collective human association ought to prevail and which institutional forms best reflect these forms. Blood is unique in its radical indeterminacy and semantic fluidity, but also because it relates the inside of every individual human body to its social surroundings through discourse.

The next chapter turns to the question of how the bloodshed that shook the institutions during the Civil War could be represented and how citizens should react to it. When Jefferson Davis claimed in 1863 that the South was "forced to take up arms to vindicate the political rights, the freedom, equality, and state sovereignty which were the heritage purchased by the blood of our revolutionary sires," he expressed that a sovereign power explicitly linked with sovereignty and courting the remaining empires of Europe projected itself on the same space as the Union (qtd. in McPherson vii). The Confederate State's secession challenged the nation state as self-identical with its territory. To the Confederates land and its residents were owned and inherited in blood, not possessed and remade without it—as we will see in the last chapter, this conflict of what constitutes the nation hinges exactly on the relation between enslavement and sovereignty.

However, the Civil War was no return of imperial violence enacted on the U.S.—even though the question of the French and British empires' involvement long created uncertainty during the War. Rather, two imagined communities claimed legitimate representation of the true nation in one space and their simultaneous claim transformed

that space. Considering the difference observed above between Hawthorne's abject blood and Reizenstein's working-through, the Civil War presents a crisis of the national imaginary. With the explosion of wide-spread violence in the middle of the nation, including battles, summary and public executions, civilian deaths, and riots, liberal domesticity was to all appearances drowning in the blood of the nation's youth. Blood was certainly no longer abject, but flooded the domestic space, the farms, mansions, and churches that Hawthorne's national imaginary declared free of the bloody sword.

Blood in both novels is the stuff of politics and thus at the same time the literal and metaphorical life-blood of citizens and nations. Blood is lineage, and bloodshed, a container for what the unspoilt or whole and simultaneously a threatening sign of precariousness. These qualities of blood linger in an *Aufhebung*, which Reizenstein decries and Hawthorne buries deep in the national unconscious. Blood in both novels negotiates prestige and politics and maps the political economy of the 1850s U.S. The quality of the nation is equal to the sum of the qualities of blood. Despite their differences, both texts use blood as the central image of the body fluid through which they advance their accommodationist and revolutionary political positions, respectively. While Hawthorne's imagined community leads to a process of Othering of blood, to the expulsion of blood from the domestic order, blood is the disruption of order and the rupture of the border between the domestic private and the public in Reizenstein.

The precariousness of blood stands metonymically for threats to bodies, lineages, and identities, even whole societies. Blood is thus never one single, stable signifier, but the intersection of many social and political relations inside one body. The body fluid is concrete when it issues forth as a liquid tissue, but every specific rupture resonates with

different social relations, with discursive structures beyond the individual that frame blood and thus give it meaning. The Pyncheon blood in Hawthorne's novel appears in the blood stain, limited in quality and quantity. Although the text tries to define this blood in a clear way, blood always implies family heraldry, race and class distinction, and the political threat they pose to Hawthorne's national imaginary beyond the author's control. *Geheimnisse* repeatedly explores scenes of shed blood, covering characters in blood and leading to the text's central image, a prophetic vision of a river of blood in which blood flows as a mark of individual acts of violence, but more importantly as a punishment for the nation's sin that is slavery, and the echo of past imperial violence.

Insofar as it is materially present, blood is part of the narrative construction, a purposeful image in relation to the texts' political positions: in *House*, blood is only visible in minute quantities *because* the domestic space, the political institution, and the public space are overtly bloodless. The home of middle-class domesticity—the model for the nation at large—is free from blood. The constant violence and prophetic visions of river of blood in *Geheimnisse* reveal this as artifice and aesthetic choice, as Reizenstein decries the home, politics, and the nation itself as bloody and violent. In both texts, blood functions through its affective force, but through suppression in Hawthorne and compulsive working-through in Reizenstein. When blood issues forth in Hawthorne's national imaginary, it is a contaminant, a disruptive, uncontrolled threat to the political order defined by the absence of blood. While I read this affective force of blood as social and political, we can illustrate the social economy of blood through models from psychoanalysis, specifically we can read the appearance of blood in Hawthorne through Julia Kristeva's constitution of order through abjection.

Blood is the constituent principle of the nation's psycho-sexual order. It sets off and bars the not-I from the I, the abject from the self. The expulsion of blood *from* the I gives coherence *to* the I. The appearance of blood therefore threatens the coherence of the I. In this chapter, blood marks the boundary of the national imaginary to the individual as well as to the society. Blood is the limn between the inside of self and that which must not be apart of the national community and its institutions.

Chapter Two — Defiant Blood: The Civil War, the Textbook, and Emily Dickinson's "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'"

> "All vessels that carry blood to the heart, are called veins. All vessels that carry blood from the heart are called arteries."
> – Calvin Cutter.
>
> "The hue – of it – is Blood –" – Emily Dickinson.
>
> "Of what use is your blood? About how much blood is there in a man's body?" – T*he Youth's Companion*, September 8, 1892.

Chapter one explained that political blood metaphors help Nathaniel Hawthorne separate the U.S. from the sovereign "society of blood," disavow the bloodshed inherent in the nation state's history and territorial expansion, and avoid slavery as a topic (Foucault, *History* 147). It also detailed the way in which Ludwig von Reizenstein emphasizes blood as both invisible and present, the political haunt of U.S. nationalism and the uncanny nation state. However, if the goal of domestic, liberal-progressive narratives of the nation state was to expel blood and hide it from sight, then which genres and what kind of language could simultaneously address blood and silence it? How were such notions disseminated and find cultural resonance?

This chapter advances chronologically, to the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865), the nation's great blood-letting. I focus on one specific attempt to define what blood is and put it into context with Emily Dickinson's reaction to medical definitions of blood before and during the Civil War. In her 1862 Civil War poem "The name – of it – is 'Autumn,'" Dickinson considers the blood of the War with more intent and lingers on its complexity with deeper thought than most contemporaries. I argue that Dickinson insists on the affective disruption that blood brings with it and thereby offers a radical critique of the

taxonomical as well as the Romanticizing blood narrative. Also, I argue that the rise of medical taxonomy as a new way to express blood toward the end of the century silences her argument. Overall, Dickinson sees blood as unruly, as a liquid that exceed attempts at disciplining and that undermines established as well as new vocabulary about blood with radical uncertainty. While the next chapter we will look at the other notable exception to the rule of writing about the Civil War, Walt Whitman, Dickinson's poem is far more complex in its response to the bloodshed during the Civil War. In one brief poem, Dickinson responds to the bloodshed on the battlefields, contemporary Romantic reactions that offer consoling nature imagery, and the use of taxonomic vocabulary aimed at rendering blood politically neutral as part of a hygienic education.

This highly-condensed response demands several steps of inquiry. First, I will work through the poem in a slow close reading to explore its formal dimensions and argument. Next, I will explore its response to contemporary Romantic tropes of nature poetry that Dickinson references. By referencing William Cullen Bryant's 1864 "My Autumn Walk," I briefly illustrate what Dickinson's allusions target and how Bryant's use of blood as a metaphor differs. Next, to explore the poem's allusion to and rejection of hygienic education and its use of anatomic vocabulary, I examine closely Dickinson's school textbook at Mt. Holyoke Academy, Calvin Cutter's 1858 *Treatise on Anatomy, Physiolog, and Hygiene: Designer [sic] for Colleges, Academies, and Families*.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the general avoidance of the topic of blood in Civil War literature and the fact that Dickinson never published her poem, her critique of both Romanticist conciliatory nature imagery and new taxonomic vocabulary remained unheard. To demonstrate just how effective the rise of medical vocabulary in the

description of blood was, the final part of this chapter will then turn to the posthumous 1892 publication of "Autumn" in *The Youth's Companion*, one of the longest-running and most widely-circulated periodicals—in the same issue that the "Pledge of Allegiance" was first printed (Laura Apol 61). The nationalist-revisionist magazine published an edited version of the poem which was also framed by rote questions that draw attention to taxonomy and anatomy, away from the poem's critical gist. Read superficially, "Autumn" becomes a nature poem that uses blood as a metaphor, not the much deeper cultural critique that I argue it is.

Let us begin by turning to the crisis of the Civil War, the Romantic response, and Dickinson's "Autumn." My connection between Dickinson and the Civil War should not come as a surprise. While Dickinson is still occasionally read in isolation from the violence that erupted around her, scholars since Thomas W. Ford's "Emily Dickinson and the Civil War" (1965) have pursued this line of inquiry.[63] Recently, a number of Dickinson experts have expanded upon previous scholarship, confirming that the context of the Civil War gives us new access to both, Dickinson's work and to the War. Martha Nell Smith points out that the long-held critical consensus that Dickinson was not involved in socio-political history at least in part resulted from competing claims and resulting lack of accessibility to the archive of Dickinson's work ("Public, Private" 67-8). Most recent scholarship addresses the relation of textual genres, conventions, and representations of the Civil War. Eliza Richards points out that the "co-incidence of the rise of mass media and total war" generated a new closeness and an exchange between

63 For a more complete genealogy of scholarship on Dickinson and the Civil War, see Christanne Miller's 2012 *Reading in Time* (147-50).

poet and battlefield in which poems express a condensed figuration of war reporting ("Correspondent" 164). Faith Barrett argues that Dickinson refused sentimental models of identification with soldiers and that she addressed the nation from a skeptical perspective ("Addresses" 67, 89). Renée Bergland stresses a similar point when she argues that Dickinson's Civil War poems play with perspective, moving between abstraction and participant observation, drawing on balloon photography in order to critique both nation state and church ("Eye" 151-3). Benjamin Friedlander, finally, stresses the internal contradiction and constant change in Dickinson's positions regarding the War. He traces her private references but also Dickinson's careful calibration of indeterminate references in order to involve a greater number of public discourses ("Ball's Bluff" 1584). Friedlander indicates that the deaths in her environment seem to have influenced Dickinson's decision to abandon her preparations for more public publications and to consider her private publications as a methodical response to the War (1596).

My chapter follows their lead, with an emphasis on one central point: if we read certain poems as Civil War poems, we need to take into account all changes of the period and not over-simplify the Civil War experience itself. Dickinson thought about the blood shed, which means she was not only fully informed about the Civil War, but also grasped its essential difference from previous wars with much greater clarity than perhaps any of her contemporaries.

My focus on blood especially agrees with Tyler B. Hoffman, who points out that Dickinson "does not allow us to see past the horror of war, which bleeds onto the landscape, permitting us no refuge" ("Limits" 7). This horror was unprecedented. The

real Civil War in fact is not far removed from the rivers of blood we saw Ludwig von Reizenstein prophecy in the last chapter. Literary obsession with spilled blood during the War indicates its affective force, the shock, the horror, and fascination with the sudden flood of blood. This was especially true in 1862, when Shiloh's 3,472 dead alone exceeded the dead of the Revolutionary and the U.S.-Mexican War combined.

Blood is everywhere in Civil War narratives, and much of it is historically accurate; but visions of dripping blood also gave rise mythological stories, like the legend of "Bloody Pond" at Shiloh, where wounded men supposedly collapsed drinking from a pond near the Peach Orchard. Though unsubstantiated, this story remains a stubborn staple of Civil War lore, while the name draws on a battle of the U.S. Revolutionary War and actually comes from James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (Morris Patterson Ferris 8, Cooper 135). In this image, fluids mix, water and blood merge in a variation of Christian iconography we will encounter again in the next chapter. The image of the dying drinking the blood of the dead here is not, however a complicated concept of absorption as we will see in Whitman, but serves to render the bloodshed more grisly.

The Civil War was a massive eruption of blood into the domestic spaces of the nation, and I argue, a radical challenge to the nation. We need to bear in mind that, as historian Drew Gilpin Faust explains, representations of warfare simultaneously serve as propaganda and also negotiations of social and political changes. Faust's seminal study *This Republic of Suffering* describes changes large and small, all of which change the nation state. Together with Dana Luciano's *Arranging Grief* that illustrates how modes of suspended grief time disappeared during the nineteenth century, Faust shows me an

explanation for Dickinson's surprisingly visceral poem that contrast to her contemporaries. Dickinson's critique arrests the reader's attention and involves us in a meditation on blood. This suspension follows the ethos of what Luciano calls "sacred time," fortifying its reflection with blood. I also argue that the focus on national forms of mourning as a political engagement that Faust details depends at least in part on abstraction and euphemisms to redirect affective energy into positive associations with the nation state. A citizenry busy contemplating the implications of blood and spellbound by its affective dimension would most certainly impede the war efforts, even, I venture to say, threaten the political system as such.

This chapter is a backwards glance at a time of retrospection, the renegotiation of the meaning of the Civil War in poetry as expressed through blood. The Civil War is an epistemic crisis as much as a political and moral one. If the nation was not Foucault's sovereign "society of blood," and if it was not unified through the exercise of sovereign violence over one geographical space, then whence the pools of blood standing in orchards and barns (*History* 147)? Whence dripping piles of amputated limbs on the porches of mansions-turned-hospitals? The War was a civil war—Hobbesian horror and kin to wars of inheritance in the decidedly sovereign British Empire. What kind of text could explain all this? Who should write it? What should this explanation be?

Emily Dickinson's "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'" was first published in an 1892 issue of *The Youth's Companion*, but was written in 1862, as both Ralph W.

Franklin's and Thomas H. Johnson agree, a year that had seen a lot of blood (Fig. 1).[64]

Dickinson's poem responds to a particularly bloody moment in the history of the nation state. As critic Tyler Hoffman reminds us, John Greenleaf Whittier called the fall of 1862 the "Battle Autumn," the seeming climax of an already disturbing year of the War—from ironclad warships and submarines, the surrender of New Orleans to Admiral David F. Farragut's fleet, the year moved to the return to Bull Run, the Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, and Shiloh, the bloodiest battle of the War (6).

Nevertheless, the poem is unusually gory and visceral for a poet who is still best known for abstract meditations on death and is still anthologized for her wonderful nature poetry. Dickinson defamiliarizes what "Autumn" is by way of blood. The season is steeped in blood, the landscapes are arteries and veins, blood vessels that transport platelets like soldiers through a great cycle of the national body, and that move away the to the hospitals. The body from which the blood flows is at once a single soldier and the body politick—Leviathan bled dry by the fraternal war. Read only as metaphor, Dickinson's topology replaces anatomy with its setting. In a progression from country to city, the poem moves from hills to roads, and into capillary-like alleys that hold the drops of blood in the pavement and from which the wind splatters blood around.

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64 *The Youth's Companion*, 65, 8 September 1892, p. 448 which reduces the last line to "And leaves me with the Hills," as I explain below. Also published in 1945 in Bingham's *Ancestor's Brocades*, in the 1945 *Bolts of Melody*, the 1955 *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, the 1960 *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, and in facsimile in the 1981 *The Manuscript Books of Emily Dickinson*. Fr 465, JP 656, MB 494, *Poems* 506, Fascicle 22 (H 105). Below, I explain that I consider the variant line part of the poem and so do not want to represent the poem in typing. Given on-going discussions about the nature and purpose of Dickinson's marks, the manuscript image is more useful. For general information on the question of transcribing Dickinson poems, see Domhnall Mitchell. Though this goes without saying among Dickensonians, I want to make clear that "Autumn" is, in fact, not the poem's title, but a scholarly crutch. Dickinson poems usually do not have titles, but scholars use either the standard numeration from the Johnson or Franklin editions or the first line of a poem to identify the text.

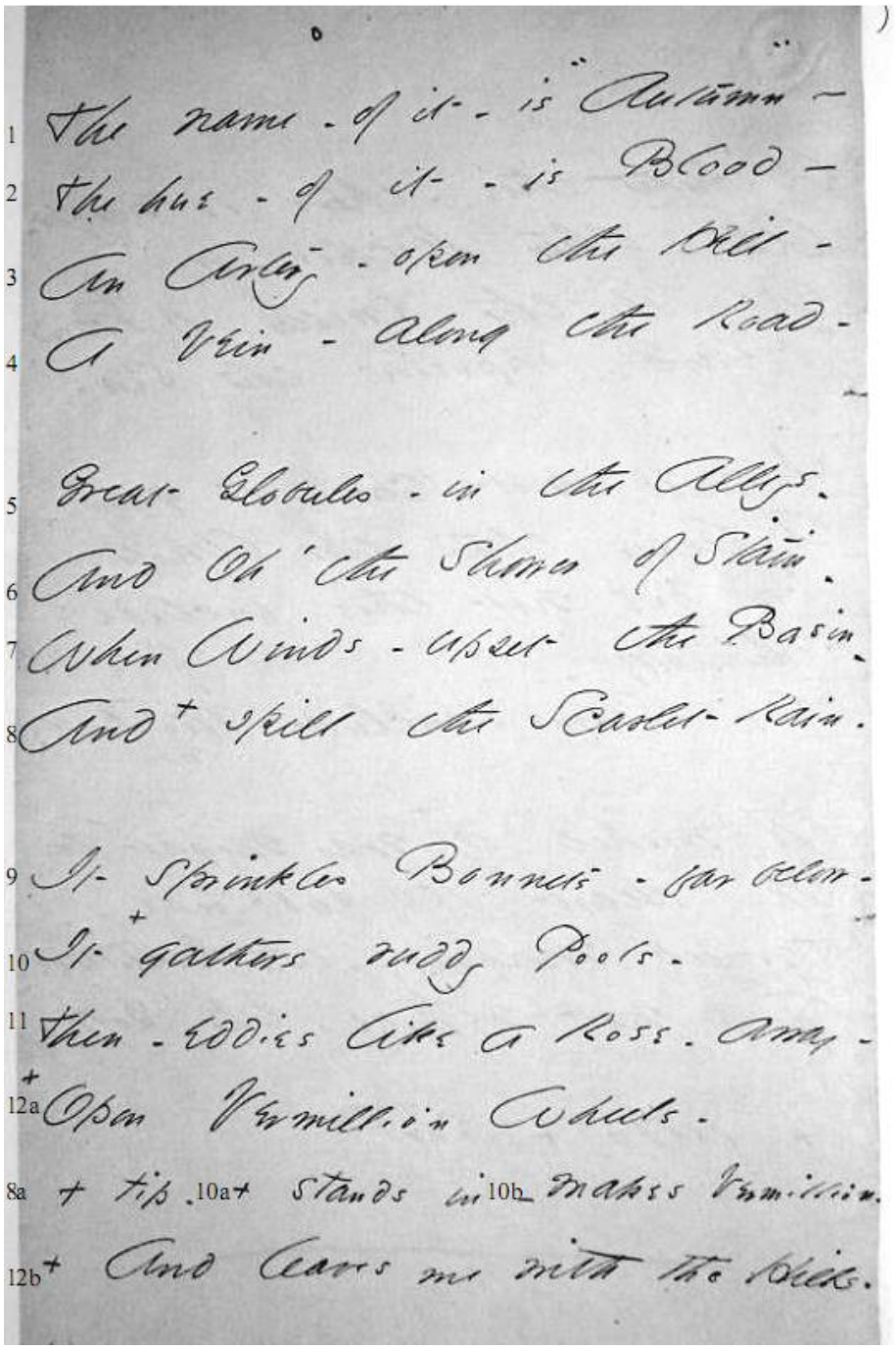

Figure 1: Facsimile of "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'" manuscript

(Franklin, *Manuscript Books* 494. My line numbers.)

Dickinson plays with the desire to avoid and ignore blood and focus on reparative metaphors of nature. This conflict still plays out in current scholarship. Tyler B. Hoffman reads it as a straight war poem: "Defiant of hope, Dickinson's poem insists that there be no ultimate redemptive value; instead, she focuses exclusively on the repulsive aftermath of battle" (9). He reads the "Basin" Dickinson mentions as Antietam Creek, whereas David Cody sees in it a tourist destination in New Hampshire and argues for a reading of the poem in the context of American nature writing, especially the problem of conveying the "stunning visual impact" of the Indian Summer to an audience ("Basin" 26, 31-2).[65] Though the intensity of Dickinson's description demands attention, Cody seems to place her on an art historical trajectory from Higginson to the Azarian's school, and in literature somewhere alongside Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, Sir Thomas Brown, and Ralph Waldo Emerson (32-5). This, however, exactly abstracts her reading of the War and removes from her poem the somatic level of war experience that I argue sets it aside.

Dickinson was no antiquarian poet who prioritized theoretical interests in aesthetics above the affective dimension of the Civil War. Ultimately, Cody argues, Dickinson responds to the War in much the same way Whitman does, in shock and grief,

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65 To Hoffman, the confusing transition in the last stanza, which seems to suddenly shift metaphors, is Dickinson's admission of a removed perspective, of being in the world of "Bonnets—far below" at the home front, the easy dismissal of casualty lists read in the morning, which are forgotten in the afternoon (13-4). I disagree with his removal of Dickinson from the thick of battle: even though she is not physically present, she is acutely aware of what the War means in its political and physical dimensions, and ingeniously blends the two levels in her poems.
Outside the Hoffman-Cody debate, scholarship on the poem presents a lack of consensus: Joanne Dobson admits herself unable to explain it and sees the change of topic in the last verse as simply unconvincing (95, 148). Barbara Packer sees the poem as the intentional violation of lyric decorum, as a breach of contract with the reader, as "inspired tastelessness" that pushes the occasional experiment in other works further, into a new kind of poem, one that uses deadpan humor and the shock of all fresh metaphor to create lyric pleasure (94).Cristanne Miller argues that what I see as serious, complicated engagement is ludicrous exaggeration, meant to be humorous (*Time* 247 n19). Obviously I engage the poem on a more material level.

and so he sees her poem as the religious trope of a national redemptive poem about the necessary blood sacrifice (39-40). As we have seen, however, religion during the War has a far more social and political meaning than Cody's reading of the blood-sacrifice acknowledges.

Even though I argue that "Autumn" is a Civil War poem, its exact reference remains unclear is. The key word "Autumn" could reference the fall colors and perhaps the topography of a famous tourist location like David Cody thinks, or be a phonetic pun on "Antietam" like Tyler B. Hoffman points out. The bloody landscape may well refer to Antietam, even to Bloody Lane. It might as well, though, refer to Shiloh, or to neither. If it is tedious to hunt down literal references in Emily Dickinson's poetry, would this not be true even if we read "Autumn" as a Civil War poem?

After all, most of Dickinson's Civil War poetry of Emily Dickinson is not documentary, but contemplative, not poetry *about* the War, but a meditation *on* war and on the challenges this new world posed. To read "Autumn" as an echo of both Shiloh and Antietam is not an argument for closure, a call to find the exact pond and waterfall—the truth. Rather, her poem fuses many aspects of life in the U.S. of 1862 into one complex discussion of related discourses, all of which find an expression in blood. Dickinson points to the "limitations of existing forms of lyric representation in responding to the national crisis," as Eliza Richards reminds us, and which we will again encounter in Whitman in the next chapter ("News" 157). Dickinson displays full awareness of the fall color cliché and engages it in a provocative rephrasing. By tracing back to its roots, the common nature imagery in connection with entirely uncommon masses of blood juxtaposes civilized domesticity with the horror of the battlefield.

Lundin carefully records Dickinson's distraught reactions to the loss of life around her, to the collapse of Whiggery and of social structures that "disintegrated quickly in the wake of the war" (184). Shira Wolosky likewise reminds us that not "only the soldiers, but the beliefs that had inspired them were to Dickinson casualties of battle" (*Voice* 59). This becomes clear in her re-interpretation of the wounded soldier's perspective as the diagnostic gaze on the national body, on the larger, political question that Dickinson sees in the material blood. But the Civil War was definitely violent, and Dickinson's overall vague concern with somatic experience culminates specifically in the discussion of the bloodshed in the War as a moment where language fails.

Indeterminacy and lack of clarity are central to the discussion of the blood on the battlefields. Blood seeped even into Amherst parlors, far away from the front lines. Dickinson's second line cuts one syllable and forms a parallel with the fourth line and its imperfect rhyme "Blood"-"Road." The most obvious reference to this image lies in the Sunken Road battlefield site at Antietam that was also called "Bloody Lane" (McPherson 541). As even an experienced northern war correspondent like Charles Carleton Coffin describes in his "Antietam Scenes," the bloodshed was unlike anything else seen before (Johnson and Buel, *Battles and Leaders* II 648). The sheer mass of blood on the road soaked into the ground. It stunned and disrupted the mind with its affective force. Blood is there, and reports about its overwhelming presence and tangible reality are clear, but Dickinson refuses to accept that blood is expressible. We will see that Whitman comes to the same conclusion, though he unlike Dickinson insists on a solution.

Though she never fought in battle, Emily Dickinson was in the thick of the War when she listened to addresses like Otis Philips Lord's 1862 Amherst commencement

speech, which emphasized the civic duty to support the War and when she exchanged letters with Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who served as a captain and as colonel of the First South Carolina Volunteers, the first federal regiment of recruited freedmen (Wolosky, *Voice* 60). [66] Eliza Richards and Faith Barret remind us that Dickinson was also immersed in all relevant conversations of her day through magazines and newspapers and thus fully aware of the affective force of modern mass war ("News," Barrett, *Fight Aloud* 2-13). She would have seen the first photographs of the carnage appeared printed in such journals and read other popular texts reacting to them. She was fully informed about details and used them in her poetry, for example, in mentions of the Minié ball that signals not just awareness of new weapons, but an awareness that the substance of warfare had changed, that the nature of war as such needed reconsideration.[67] With all her sources, Dickinson understood the material reality of blood on the battlefields.

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66 As Cody reminds us: "even as she kept a crucial distance between herself and a larger world that seemed to have little interest what she had to say, she was fully immersed in, and responding to, the ongoing cultural conversation of her day—a conversation some echoes of which, it would appear, may still be revived" ("Basin" 41).

67 Barrett correctly points out that Dickinson even refers to not just any bullet, but to a Minié bullet or "minie ball" ("Drums" 110-1). This reference is more than mere word play: invented in 1848, this muzzle-loading spin-stabilizing rifle bullet soon became infamous during the Civil War as the bullet known for its whistling sound (Coggins 26). The "common ball" Dickinson wrote of early on was superseded by this Minié ball (Fr 480). As the .69 caliber U.S. Minié percussion rifles replaced smooth-bore muskets in the 1850s, it quickly became clear that firing a comparatively heavy, soft, and expanding bullet was not only more precise but also more devastating. The bullet's soft butt part expanded, squeezing into the rifled barrel to give the bullet stabilizing spin and greater precision, but the deformed and softer end of the bullet also tore much larger holes into human tissue, shattering bones, shredding organs and blood vessels along a path filled with bone fragment, pieces of clothes, and other debris (Freemon 48-9). As Appia, Nunn, and Edwards put it in 1862: hardly "had improvements in transport and dressing of the wounded given surgeons the hope of being able to preserve limbs which shortly before would have been doomed to amputation, when that hope is destroyed by the disastrous effect of the conical ball" (12). The sober reminder of the new weaponry employed in the Civil War that lead to masses of amputations—a soldier "spinning around" has not only a symbolic meaning, but is the material reminder of the force of the Minié bullet (Coggins 117, Figg and Farrell-Beck, Dickinson Fr 518).

Yet most of these texts and speeches would appeal to an audience's sensibilities and sense of decorum by avoiding graphic descriptions of bloodshed, like those Dickinson uses. Her poem therefore poses the broader question of how to address the bloody horror of the War without working through the bloodshed. The affective force of blood goes beyond a speechless vision of gore if it is to mean anything. Dickinson's readers have to reflect on the act of seeing blood, on the impulse to give it a name, and on the taxonomical and political categories which inform our process of making sense of the blood we see.

Emily Dickinson does not flaunt her knowledge of the battlefield, but engages the literature that gave her this knowledge in both its form and content to forestall the sense of mastery or immutable, epistemic certainty.[68] This critical emeshedness appars most powerfully in Dickinson's variant lines. As written, the manuscript of "Autumn" does not settle the poem's ending, but leaves a selection of possible variants in play. Instead of displacing blood as a central part of the War, they destabilize the episteme of the nation state. Read this way, the variants Dickinson wrote down deepen her critique of writing that relies on assumptions about what blood is and how we can discuss it. Especially the significant difference among the variants of line 10 indicates in just how many different ways liquid blood itself behaves. Dickinson's details go far beyond the prosaic meaning of "blood collects in a puddle":

10 "It gathers ruddy Pools—"

68 For more on the variant lines, see Domhnall Mitchell. While I find many of Mitchell's calls for caution against excessive manuscript criticism relevant and important, I do find the quantity and quality of the variant lines in "Autumn" substantial enough to warrant my argument for the poem as, to quote Melanie Hubbard, "not a system of equivalences, but as a system of relationships requiring mediation and construction by a reader" (28).

10a “It stands in ruddy Pools—”

10b “It makes Vermillion Pools—.”

The difference here lies in the verbs, prepositions, and color adjectives. Between these variants blood develops its specific quality from the connoted context: we might imagine the gathering of undisturbed blood into pools as by a cleaning crew at a hospital, but also a slow, gradual merge of blood, almost by its own accord.

Dickinson’s precision demonstrates that literature conflates the many specific aspects of blood and simplifies the complex challenge blood poses for the author. While 10 and 10b express action, 10a describes stasis. “Gathers” emphasizes a relation to and collection of the “Rain” drops from the preceding verse, “And spill the Scarlet Rain –”. “Makes” here develops relation through action as that between particle and whole and the unification of many drops of blood into a homogenous whole fluid called blood. This is different from the process of accumulation into puddles through an external force like gravity. So while a Civil War journalist might be content to mention the ghastly sight of blood standing around in pools, Dickinson refuses to accept even this impression as a valid explanation of just what blood is, why it has this effect on us, and what exactly happened to the blood. Read as part of the poem, these lines exist in and express simultaneity, multiplicity, even in a compromise necessitated by the challenging question at hand, the blood and the referent “it.”

The multiplication of meaning and the refusal of closure resonate with the rest of the poem. It would therefore be a mistake to try and “fix” a supposedly correct version of the poem by treating variants as alternatives or to dismiss them altogether. Dickinson frames all three variants by “It” and “Pools,” leaving no doubt that the subject and object

were clear in her mind and that the problem which gave rise to this complex solution is the predicate. In other words, even though "It" remains unspeakable, its result, pools of blood, is certain, though language fails the poet in expressing just what happens and how we come to know it. In this poem, language is incapable not only of fully determining the nature of the War trauma, but also of both naming the process by which it functions and of determining the nature of that process.

Writing about blood pushes the limits of expression, of knowledge, lexicon, and taxonomy. Dickinson faces this problem in her poem by providing several simultaneous registers and connotations. From the beginning and throughout, this simultaneity rules out fixedness, closure, stability, and thus epistemic certainty. Dickinson's closing line ends on a note of loneliness, on an ending without closure, an absence instead of presence, on silence instead of an answer:

12 "Opon vermillion Wheels—"

12a "And leaves me with the Hills."

"Opon" and "Hills" echo the diction of the first stanza, and "vermillion" the second in its variant: "An Artery - opon the Hill – / A Vein - along the Road –" Both variants stress a movement of "it" away from the speaker, who is made explicit only in the first variant to the last line. The double image is one of red-stained wheels rolling away and returning the speaker to the "arterial" landscape of the hill, i.e. the front line of the battlefield. They provide no closure, answer, or central referent to stabilize the meditation throughout.

Even on this deeper level, the critique of "Autumn" targets genteel tropes. Radical Romanticism attacks the fireside image of the "Rose," which no longer stands for love or passion, but for an eddy or bloody vortex, a sign of threatening engulfment, perhaps of

drowning, and of loneliness: “Then - eddies like a Rose - away –”. Given the poem’s premise as a play on and break form conventional tropes, the “Rose” again juxtaposes poetry and reality, *poiesis* and *mimesis*, apparently dissatisfied with poetry’s insufficient representation of reality beyond mere journalistic record-keeping. Dickinson instead lingers on the cyclical, spiraling, traumatic confrontation with blood, on the War as a challenge to U.S. narratives of domestic civilization and liberal progress, on the bursting forth of the abject from within the capital of the republic.

Going beyond an individual meditation, Dickinson’s autumn poem also stands out among other “Battle Autumn” poems.It faces the horror of war and unflinchingly openly considers the implications of the blood to which the blood gives rise, not of the nature metaphor. It is therefore not just a response to the War, but also to other War poems. Let me illustrate this contrast by way of example. Dickinson and Bryant both published in the *Drum Beat* and both participated in a poetic oconversation about the trope of the “Battle Autumn.” Written in October 1864, two years after “Autumn,” William Cullen Bryant’s “My Autumn Walk” was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1865 (Barrett and Miller 161-2, Karen Dandurand 19).[69]

As used by Bryant, the trope of fall redness and its association with blood is identical to Dickinson’s “Autumn.” Both associate the red leaves in a New England fall with the blood-drenched battlefield dead. Bryant’s poetic confession comes in his wonderful line “And I think of days of slaughter,” a frank admission that he, too, can’t shake the Civil War in looking at the autumn foliage (161). To him, however, the Civil

69 For another study of a popular poet’s ‘conventional’ reaction to the War, see Carol Iannone.

War is an occasion to meditate on the contrast between life and death on the terrors of war as a sublime terror. The poet never questions the power of language to represent the bloodshed or what blood itself is. Bryant's last verse replaces the lost bodies with the "living buds," with offspring and continuation (162). He sees bloodshed not as a horror, but as one of many referents in a Romanticist-nationalist conception of nature.

I argue that Dickinson goes much further than Bryant. To popular, male, white poets like Bryant, the torn bodies of soldiers are horrific, but the bloody, unusual, and disturbing, i.e. the affective force is aesthetically integrated into the national imaginary: "Beautiful is the death-sleep/Of those who bravely fight" (161). Carol Iannone and Hoffman point out that John Greenleaf Whittier also saw nature and its fertile, fecunt power of recovery as a consoling response to the Civil War.

The poem's topic is blood. Dickinson avoids fashionable literary tropes to focus on the disconnection between the act of naming the traumatic event and the reality of the blood. The association of liquid blood and autumn collapses into mere artifice, a tangential relation to the bloodshed. At the same time, the poem's absent antecedent renders the fascination with exact dates, names, and places pointless, disturbing her contemporaries' obsession with data. The poem itself denies any quantifiable fact and stresses that the affective reality remains an "it," an unspeakable core that stubbornly lingers even after it seems to have departed. Not surprisingly, we will see below that the poem's later editing in *The Youth's Companion* does not encourage such ideas.

Dickinson's poem stresses the affective dimension of blood, its shocking quality. She even makes a rare exception to her capitalization of Germanic nouns with "hue" (< OE *híw*). Although unlikely, I would therefore not categorically dismiss the possibility

that Dickinson may indeed be using the obsolete noun meaning "war-cry" (< OF *huy*). This usage would introduce sound into a remarkably silent poem and would again underline the war theme. However, the more obvious reference to color is in keeping with the poem's visual emphasis and opens the many references to redness—the redness of blood.

Dickinson plays with conventions. In semi-regular hymn meter, "Autumn" responds to Bryant's and a number of other poems about the traumatic war experience and the way the bright fall colors trigger this trauma. These poems reflected the experience of the bloodshed in a Romantic trope of recognizing the human in the natural and that saw a connection between the visual and the visceral. Few of them, however, came to any worthwhile conclusion beyond poetry like Bryant's and what Faith Barrett calls the "fiction of a harmonious and unified American landscape" (*Fight Aloud* 143).

Bryant stresses the beauty of the dead out of patriotism, because "those who bravely fight/In their country's holy quarrel" do not simply die in a war, but "perish for the Right" (161).This poetic construction of a Romantic image against which the blood of the War is set off in fact aims, I would add, at the absorption of blood and at subsuming blood under the prioritized national imaginary. As we saw in Hawthorne, authors can expel blood by way of narrating a map and its displacing powers of knowledge; a nature poem that touches upon blood only to hide it behind patriotic clichés can do this just as well.

But Dickinson goes further than just confronting us with blood. She challenges us to think about the blood itself, the bodily fluid, to hold on and meditate on it. Thereby, she undoes the comforting metaphoricity of Bryant's poem. "Autumn" formally and

semantically ponders the disruptive, manifest out-of-place-ness of blood. As Joanne Feith Diehl points out, it upsets the reader's probable expectation of "red" (87). The adjectivized noun does not align with the noun "Autumn" because it is a descriptor for the "hue" of "autumn."

Blood does not exist as an adjective and thus interrupts the grammatical parallel

article	noun	preposition	auxiliary	noun
article	noun	preposition	auxiliary	noun [adjectivized]

Where an adjective might appear, "Blood" pushes aside the genteel opening about fall colors, booming and forcing the overwhelming reality of war back into a text that seemed like a nature meditation.

From the beginning, "Autumn" questions lexicon and, implicitly, taxonomic categories that the description of blood tacitly assumes and that the reader takes for granted. Dickinson points out the discrepancy between lived reality and description, the civilian's and soldier's experience of the War, and lingers on the thus destabilizing question of what that bloodshed is, what it means, and if these two questions are reconcilable in the national imaginary on which the Romantic poem relies.

Far beyond the surface impressions of bloodshed, the blood in her poem draws our attention to words, things, and names. The meticulously structured verses with their careful sets of alliteration and anaphora combine lines into internal points of reference, guiding us through an unsettling inquiry ("The/the," "of/of," "it/it," "A/A," "Great/globules," "When/Winds," "It/It," "Shower/Stain," "shed/Scarlet"). The poem's falling rhythm and conventional hymn meter adopts masculine rhymes, ending the lines in decisive strokes, giving the impression of declarative, strong arguments.

"The name" stands for a closed, holistic concept of intellectual certainty, for information, and classification. The very concept of a name is, however, undercut by the pronoun "it," for which the poem never gives a clear antecedent. The poem's topic is thus located outside the poem, in an unspoken, perhaps unspeakable space.[70] Tyler B. Hoffman points out the unclear antecedent of the pronoun "It" in the poem's first line ("Limit" 4). But instead of an unclear word, is it not a clarification of Dickinson's—and by extension her culture's—confused situation, the questioning of epistemic stability ("Limit" 4)? "It" is named, troped, but never defined. I argue that this is precisely because it is not clearly visible, not-yet-named, not-nameable.

Additionally, the quotation marks introduce a tension between the "name" and its authority and the named, the signifier and the signified. The quotation marks signal a faithful reproduction of the information, confirmed by the preceding "is," which grants presence, existence. In this line, then, the unknown referent stands in an ambivalent tension to its descriptive name, its title, and thus to its place in a classificatory order, which seems to at best insufficiently express its material content, the defiant affective force of blood.

Dickinson challenges the *poiesis* that one part of contemporary War poetry relied on. Whereas Whittier and Bryant's place the Civil War in a larger network of political, theological, and cultural meaning, she suspends the associative leap to nature in mid-air, so to speak, and calls us back to the blood itself. She also arrests and challenges efforts at *mimesis*, especially like the detailed, journalistic poetry that chronicled the War's events,

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70 As Shira Wolosky remarks, Dickinson aims to "register, directly or indirectly, the civil conflagration raging around her" (xviii). Also, we do well to keep in mind Roland Hagenbüchle's lesson: Emily Dickinson's poetics rarely if ever admits to specific referents (36-41).

but did not ask the complex, fundamental questions of Dickinson's poem.[71] The poetic image of a "battle autumn," in the end, provides no meaningful response to the War but merely reverts to nature imagery that elides the material blood by way of reference to New England fall colors.

Beyond this meditation on the War and a critique of popular Romanticism, "Autumn" also investigates the possibility of representing blood in all its dimensions and even the possibility of representation itself. Beyond redness, Dickinson turns over what "it" is and if "it" can be expressed in language. Language and form reflect the content in a critique of simplified representational patterns. Of course blood is red, but this is little more than belaboring of the obvious. What is the true color of blood, that specific, bright red that triggers the affective response in the first place? Dickinson responds in a circular riddle about what is known and how it can be expressed in writing. The interjected mesodiplosis "—of it—" ties together the first two lines: the next line elaborates upon the first by mirroring the grammatical structure of the first: "The hue—of it—is Blood—." However, the second line does not discuss ambivalence. The first line distances the stated "name" and "Autumn" from "it." The name and the thing do not coincide, signifier and signified are arbitrary.

But no quotation marks set off "Blood" in the poem. That means that "it" has a color, not just a name for a color. But as I argue that "it" is the experiential dimension of blood, then the color of blood is blood. The circular expression denies the signifier access to the signified. It is *not* possible to signify blood. Blood is itself, without a word that can

71 Faith Barrett has recently argued that the intense poetic exchange over the Civil War eclipses simplifications that scholarship clings to (*Fight Aloud* 44-5). I agree, but will still wager that the epistemological and ontological depths Dickinson plumbs are very unusual.

be attached to it, written, and quoted. This is an essential part of Dickinson's argument because both Romantic poetry and the anatomic taxonomy we turn to below insist that it is possible to give a name to blood, that it is a transparent reference, and that there is no question as to what is meant. Signification *is* possible. We will see in chapters four, five, and six that this play between the representation of blood in metaphors becomes crucial to the development of medicalized blood-as-race. Indeed, most of the changes detailed in this study hinge on the growing consensus that blood is not unknowable, but can be signified and made into an artificial occult carrier of race.

The poem's first verse thus at once dismisses Romantic clichés and methodically probes the relation of authority and reality by discussing the power of naming and the power of seeing. It affirms the bloody hue or the blood-like hue in its visceral dimension, its affective triumph over cognitive efforts. The blood that soaks this sphere is not only present on the battlefield, Dickinson insists. An initially puzzling transition leads from the battlefield into relatively urban spaces. To the poet, the blood is everywhere; she paints the picture of a blood-drenched nation, of stained bonnets in polite society, of puddles of blood on the roads and on wheels and hills.

The blood Dickinson sees transgresses the boundary of self and other, it ties the life of the witness to that of the soldier, the parent, the child, the people that make up the nation, and the nation state. From the critique of the circular referent "it" to the variant lines that indicate different ways of understanding blood, blood is more than just disturbing. Beyond signaling pain and injury, blood itself challenges the way literature names phenomena and conflates complexity. Blood questions the cultural limits of negotiable experience and destabilizes the imagery of fireside poetry by destabilizing the

relation between signifier and signified. Dickinson's emphasis of grounding the critique in the trauma of war and the literal blood itself presents a challenge to liberal imaginaries like Hawthorne's that writes blood out of the record as well as recuperative attempts at summing up all specific appearances of blood under the headline "blood."

From the poem's response to the Civil War and its critique of literary tropes and thoughtless language, I now turn to the third central aspect of Dickinson's critique, namely her engagement with medicine and taxonomy. Also placing "Autumn" in a larger literary exchange, critic Joanne Feit Diehl stresses its disruptive power. Diehl argues that Dickinson takes apart verbal constructions meant to render natural events harmless. To her, Dickinson references a dissected body and projects it as a landscape in order to dissolve barriers between the internal and external, renders authenticity a sham, and in effect pushes the poem "over the edge of the surreal" (89).

Although I agree that the tone of the poem overtly alludes to medical vocabulary, I do not exclusively read it as surreal or deconstructive, but as a more specific critique. Diehl rightly notes that Dickinson does not use an emotionally-accessible narrative voice, but "presents her intensely subjectivizing vision as definition" (90). In this second part of the paper, I argue that both tone and vocabulary of "Autumn" critiques just that kind of language, namely taxonomy, and thus combines the critique of Romantic nature poetry, and war writings with a critique of scientific vocabulary.

To better illustrate another specific way contemporary texts discussed blood, I now want to turn from the question of established ways of writing about blood to blood in the hygienic lessons of Calvin Cutter and Dickinson's use of his textbook. I want to return to the use of "Artery" and "Vein" in the poem here to consider the political work

of taxonomy. In this second section of my argument, I focus on Emily Dickinson's anatomy textbook she received at Mt. Holyoke Academy: Calvin Cutter's 1858 *A Treatise on Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene: Designer [sic] for Colleges, Academies, and Families*.

David Cody explains that this is the likely source for Dickinson's use of "Artery" and "Vein," but he does not delve deeper into the question of the textbook as an ideological text (30). Before she wrote most of her poems, Dickinson received an excellent education at Mt. Holyoke, a female seminary related to Amherst Academy, and we do well to examine carefully the texts she studied so closely. Her education was quite literally iddle-class, as she, like many students, did not return to Mount Holyoke after her second year, called "Middle Class."

Recently, Miriam R. Levin argued in *Defining Women's Scientific Enterprise* that Mount Holyoke was a most unusual place for the training of women in the sciences. The enthusiasm of the Seminary's founder Mary Lyon shaped the coming decades and made the school one where anatomy lessons were part of a larger purpose that aimed at shaping the leaders of the future by way of illustrating nature as a model (37-41). Dickinson's Middle Class of 1847-8 studied not only Latin, but worked through and passed exams on other texts about the natural sciences like Calvin Cutter's *Treatise* (1858), Benjamin Silliman's *First Principles of Chemistry* (1850), Jr, Denison Olmsted's *Compendium of Natural Philosophy* (1833) and *A Compendium of Astronomy* (1841), Alphonso Wood's *First Lesson in Botany* (1849), Samuel P. Newman's *Practical System of Rhetoric* (1827), and Archibald Alexander's *The Evidences of Christianity* (1831). While we cannot be certain how these texts were taught in the classroom, I want to propose that we

read their pedagogical program of rote learning and terminological instruction as widely accepted.[72]

Since Nina Baym's study of the sciences and Dickinson's time at Mt. Holyoke in *Styles of Affiliation* (2001) for its important combination of questions regarding science and education lie at the heart of examining classroom texts. Baym points out that Dickinson's poems "involve questions of scientific terms rather than of scientific fact or law, and they connect to Dickinson's insistence that many experiences cannot be expressed in language" (150). My findings overlap with some of Baym's, especially with the crucial distinction between commenting on the content of science and the way science worked. Unlike Baym, I obviously focus only on blood, Dickinson's school text about blood, her bloodiest poem, and the social dimension of blood, and on texts about blood.

Even this narrow focus adds a layer to Baym's conclusion that scientific representation is simply different from nature's creative work. In the previous chapter I already pointed out that the difference between *mimesis* and *poiesis* is by no means neutral regarding Hawthorne and Reizenstein. In the same way I argue that scientific taxonomy is not just a flawed tool to represent the vital principle or the inaccurate generalization of subjective experience. Taxonomy serves to cleave reality into socially-constructed categories; these categories provide an epistemologic matrix, the

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72 The history of rote learning pedagogy is a research desideratum. The most exhaustive study of science teaching at Mount Holyoke during the nineteenth century, Miriam R. Levin's *Defining Women's Scientific Enterprise* (2005) stresses that the faculty at Dickinson's school carefully balanced their goal of finding and educating female students as future teachers with the more conservative demands of teaching them skills seen as practical and applicable in real life (3-4). However, we may assume that even if critical reasoning skills were taught at Mount Holyoke, this would unlikely have been practiced fifty years before educational reformers like Horace Mann implemented the lessons of pedagogues like Pestalozzi at the turn of the century. Also, I argue that there really is no other way to learn the rudimentary basics of anatomy vocabulary Cutter focuses on because there really is nothing to understand, only to take in.

precondition for any further understanding and experience of the human body. To write a schoolbook based on taxonomy, then, is a social political act. I argue that Dickinson's poem makes this point.

In the reading of Cutter's *Treatise* below, I argue that such textbooks are themselves ideologically-charged texts. In this context, schoolbooks were a way to discipline students and initiate them in a classed, raced, and gendered vocabulary. Taxonomy serves hygiene, and hygiene serves the social order of the nation state. "Autumn" challenges this frame of reference and critiques the conceptual language of anatomy, physiology, and hygiene as another instance of naming and the ultimately circular logic of nomenclature that substitutes words for the unspeakable blood..

Dickinson points out that blood poses a challenge for writers and the national imaginary at large, but does not embrace the solution that taxonomy proposes—rewriting the dictionary into a manual for anatomy, physiology, and hygiene. Instead of proposing clear answers and thus suggest epistemic stability, she suspends the moment of instability, ponders it, and refuses to come to a conclusion. Instead of offering meaning, this poem, in keeping with much of Dickinson's other verse, instead points to an absent referent: what is "it," and what is this bloodshed, to us and to the nation at large? Is it possible at all to get past a naming process? Are such processes always indebted to the moment and certain prevailing discourses?

Now I want to show that Cutter's textbook offered the a coherent system of symbols that made it possible to interpret blood, the visible liquid, as an instance of a category and a taxonomic rubric and the instability that blood brings with it. This way of abstracting blood is unusual, because it doesn't write blood out of a record, like

Hawthorne's maps and deeds and portraits. Rather, it stresses that its terms represent the material reality of blood. The school textbook insists on its non-metaphoricity even as it constructs a self-referential system of words and signs to describe the visible that make no mention of anything outside itself, like class, or religion, or the affective dimension of the body.

Like her fellow students, Emily Dickinson appears to have diligently learned how to describe blood through these taxonomic labels, quantitative measurements, and physiological processes in an idealized form divorced from real experience. In "Autumn," however, she rejects her school lessons as irrelevant to the questions she has about blood. Instead of answering her questions about the Civil War, her textbook only diffuses the questions blood raises. It never answers the epistemic question of how we can understand the experience of blood, how we can know that which seems unspeakable. Nor does Cutter's vocabulary enable Dickinson to find any conclusive language to describe blood exhaustively, even though taxonomy stresses precision. Blood has an affective dimension that assaults reason, and that explodes into the narrative of clinical medicine as a progress of knowledge and science. I argue that Dickinson's poem insists that medical narratives disappear the blood itself in a sleight-of-hand and show the larger system of hygienic politics implied in this trick.

The question-and-rehearsal pattern that leads students and instructors through Cutter's textbook lends an air of authoritative certainty and epistemic stability to any topic. Such educational drills shore up uncertainty and can easily foreclose questions. Cutter's rote drill relies on self-evidence and the repetition of the name as a means to explain the thing, side-stepping critical evaluation and demonstration of the fact's

existence. Dickinson's training valued facts, information, and the market value of such knowledge, but her lessons also imparted social discipline.

Cutter's forty-six chapters consider discrete parts of the human body in sets of three chapters for each body part (for example, the anatomy of the circulatory organs, the physiology of the circulatory organs, and the hygiene of the circulatory organs). Though only three chapters describe the unit on the circulatory system, we find over four hundred mentions of blood in the book's roughly five hundred pages.[73] Cutter draws an elaborate system of interrelated physiological processes, all connected to each other through blood. As we will see in the later chapters, this does not mean that such a system is merely descriptive. In Cutter's hygiene blood is no sign of questioning or instability, but of propriety, of order, and of a *mens sana in corpore sano* philosophy that equated physical and intellectual health, of personal and political hygiene.

Clinical information and facts about blood were easily adapted to rote learning, the late didactic descendant of primers, horn books, and Sunday schools. For example, beginning his discussion of the "Hygiene of the Circulatory Organs," Cutter's textbook declares, for example, that "If any part of the system is deprived of blood, its vitality will cease; but, if the blood is lessened in quantity to a limited extent, only the vigor and health of the part will be impaired" and asks at the bottom of that same page "What effect will be produced on the body if it is deprived of blood? If the blood is only lessened in

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73 This great number stands out in even greater contrast if compared to half the number of mentions of blood in the almost seven hundred pages of Anthony Florian Madinger Willich's popular *Lectures on Diet and Regimen: Being A Systematic Inquiry Into the Most Rational Means of Preserving Health and Prolonging Life: Together with Physiological and Chemical Explanations, Calculated Chiefly for the Use of Families, in Order to Banish the Prevailing Abuses and Prejudices in Medicine* (1801), owned by Allan Melvill, Sr.

quantity?" (172). The notes for teachers indicate that these questions "in *Italics* are designed for this method of recitation" (9 italics in original).

To teach Cutter's system, "the teacher may call on a pupil of the class to describe the anatomy of an organ from an anatomical outline plate, afterwards call upon another to give the physiology of the part, while a third may state the hygiene, after which, the questions at the bottom of the page may be asked promiscuously, and thus the detailed knowledge of the subject possessed by the pupils will be tested" (9-10). The constant repetition, drilling in different forms, and calling on students to recite information bears out the prescriptive nature of the anatomy lesson.

As mentioned above, Dickinson opens her poem with the clinical terms "Artery" and "Vein." These terms probably stem from her school learning, but do not primarily rehearse school learning. Instead, they contrast medical taxonomy to the lived experience of blood. On the surface the poem does use a medical image, and shifts its register with the unusual metaphor: "An Artery - opon the Hill –/A Vein - along the Road –." On first glance it confronts the allusion to fall poem conventions with these clinical terms. Aesthetically, Dickinson offers anti-Romantic lexicon in the signaling of a new kind of war.

On a deeper level, though, the textbook definitions show that this is more than an aesthetic choice. Calvin Cutter defines the difference between "Artery" and "Vein" through the nature of the blood transported in each vessel: while arteries transport "pure" blood to the capillaries, the vein serves to let the "impure, dark" blood return to the organs where it is purified (Cutter 170).

In this way, the specific, clinical-sounding distinction between "Artery" and

"Vein" in "Autumn" might be read as an expansion of the supposed a-political nature of clinical vocabulary and physiological taxonomy to a contrast between Union and Confederate troops. The arterial blood transports "nutrious" blood, or, to put it in Cutter's verbiage, "pure" blood from the heart to the body, whereas venous blood is laden with waste matter or "vitiated" (205). Carried to its logical conclusion, the metaphor would represent the Confederate troops on the road as impure, a toxic part directed at Washington D.C. the heart of the body politick. This would make the Federal troops on the hill are fresh, healthy, life-giving blood flowing outward from the that supply even the farthest reaches of the national body with health.

For all that, this seems an oddly simplistic binary for Dickinson, who usually weighs a contrast more carefully. Implying the singular body politick, both belligerent blood vessels would be part of one system, dialectical opposites in the larger system, both necessary, neither inherently superior, but expression of a metabolism that collects and excretes poisons to live. Taking the nation as a circulatory process, Dickinson seems to hint at a oneness, at some small capillary that unites all. Dickinson's vein and artery seem to embrace the national imaginary while avoiding partisanship. While coherent, such a reading would put great weight on the first stanza, perhaps too much, given Dickinson's radical variants. Also, it simplifies the complex argument that emerges when we examine Cutter's textbook more closely. I argue that Dickinson's use of clinical blood vocabulary goes far beyond a metaphor or playful use of medical tone because she closely studied Cutter's textbook and knew that the taxonomy of blood incorporates all reality. In other words: using Cutter's medical vocabulary to describe blood means also seeing the rest of society through his system.

So rather than limit the reading to the literal, let us place Cutter and Dickinson's reference in the historical context. Dickinson's education was not just a discussion of information that could be debated or critiqued at will, but the incorporation of socially-inflected laws into every aspect of instruction—the disciplining of young citizens. Cutter's view of blood as a physiological fact is a class marker. Historian of medicine Michael Sappol explains that anatomy education became a middle-class fad in the United States in the early decades of the nineteenth century (*Traffic* 44-73). We might therefore also read "Autumn" as an anatomical pun from a decidedly middle-class perspective: the vision of blood pouring from the landscape could indicate a body and the bleeding body in turn a landscape. But in Cutter's system, blood is not disturbing mentally because he can explained it rationally: blood is a part of physiology.

If we follow Cody and consider Cutter's text merely as a source for medical vocabulary in "Autumn" without the significance Cutter places on blood as a whole and its relation to society, then we perform a distinction between social and scientific education that arose long after this period. The newly arising class valued its "intrinsically 'civilizing' effect," and while critics complained that this education in anatomy tended "to render the student a Materialist," its democratic appeal trumped these concerns in a public filled with anxieties and an instable new identity—a class "only a thin stratum above the anatomy rioters, and maybe not even that" (161). As M. Jimmie Killingsworth remarks about Whitman's era, the doctor, not Shelley's poet, became the "legislator of the New World" (73).

Cutter's preface makes it clear that he has a much larger system in mind than the description of body parts. Anatomy is more than the description of a body; it is the

prescription of society. His first words reference ancient Sparta. He praises the totalitarian military culture of disciplined and hardened bodies and claims that, if "sound morality depends upon the inculcation of correct principles in youth, equally so does a sound physical system depend on a correct physical education during the same period of life" (Cutter 1). Blood stands for more than body parts: it is the substrate for the nation's future in its youth. The body is both anatomy and society in a more literal form than mere metaphorics.

Even though anatomy, physiology, and hygiene seem descriptive, they are prescriptive. In Cutter's system, all organs from skin to brain are linked with each other and to the body's environment by way of the blood cycle. Blood determines the individual's interaction with the outside world as well as the body's internal workings (311-12). A chapter about other body parts nevertheless returns to blood and hygiene in this system. The nation state depends on the proper functioning of bodies and textbooks reflect this need in their medicalized politics.

He, for example, assumes that the skin excretes waste carried in the blood (298-300). If dirt blocks the skin, then the toxins remain in the blood and other organs must take over this function. The organs will fail if they are over-worked. So lack of skin hygiene turns the blood against the body, and hygienic actions, in this case bathing, are not just a sign of cultivation, but medically necessary parts of qualitatively evaluated, *proper* working processes—the neglect of which is thus a sign of ignorance or even a pathological, self-destructive desire. As human bodies react to circumstances, their

productive "labor" depends on the proper maintenance of bodily functions (Cutter 374).[74]

Blood stands behind all bodily functions and all bodily functions only work properly if the medical rules of proper health maintenance, i.e. of hygiene are observed. Individual health for Cutter is not necessarily predisposed or fixed in the individual constitution. Health depends on social dimensions. Age, sex, socio-economic group, and occupation, all play a role in the maintenance of proper health. While quantity of blood matters to maintain the circulatory system, digestive and mental processes should not need blood at the same time, the crucial point is the quality of blood (147). But blood can also be of inferior quality. Cutter insists that only "pure" blood makes possible a functioning brain, which in turn depends on a great amount of and superior quality of air (360, 239).

So when Dickinson writes about an "Artery" and a "Vein," she does not merely signal medical lexicon, but reveals the ideological sway of taxonomy: there is no individual "Artery" or "Vein," but the whole of society. Cutter prescribes not just washing but personal habits in general, posture, choice of clothing in material, cut, color, and style. To breathe deeply, women's dresses must therefore not be constricting, lest the blood receive too little oxygen—an idea that I will revisit in chapter five in connection with the racist scientific argument for innate inferiority of black persons. Cutter also details proper methods of cleaning of clothing and bedding, actions in relation to time of day and the season, the quantity and quality of intellectual pursuits and the nature of reading materials, the quantity and quality of diet and exercise, the place of residence, the

74 Acts like quick costume changes for ladies, the improper enunciation of sounds, or even structural faults like erroneous architecture all influence the blood and through it society at large (Cutter 274, 234).

architecture of the abode, the school schedules, even the modes of transportation and their construction.

The *Treatise* discusses descriptive elements as one with their prescriptive social context and blood therefore as a knowable part of society. In effect, blood flows through the entire textbook, extending to all reality. Blood means people, and the way people dress and behave matters to the quality of their blood. Society is literally fluid, flowing from the outside world into the body through blood, and the many organs and bodies are united in one human society through blood. Translated into social analogy, the "parts" or embodied social roles must self-maintain to avoid a breakdown. One member of the social body performs specific duties, for the lack of which other members have to compensate at their expense. Cutter's rules of how to improve or maintain blood thus lie at the literal and metaphoric heart of the nation. Blood ties together all aspects of life through the body, just like Dickinson's poem ties together all semantic dimensions of the Civil War through blood.[75]

Read through Dickinson's poem, Cutter's rules extend to all and every detail that concerns the body, from a "Hill" to a "Road," at the battle front to the city. Cutter's system explains blood in all its facets; but, as she points out, this is yet another effort of

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75 Hygiene is central to the abjecting process in more ways than one. While it exceeds my focus, it is worth reiterating that hygiene and sanitation are directly linked to social oppression by the nation state's institutions. For example, blood as an offensive matter also lay at the heart of the 1873 U.S. Supreme Court decision called *The Slaughter-House Cases*, 83 U.S. 36. Without going into detail regarding the ruling and the aftermath, the origin of the legal battle is noteworthy: offal. The offensive, quite literally sickening animal refuse spread throughout the city by many small, individual butchers, which was rumored to be filling potholes, gave rise not only to a focused effort at public sanitation and legal enforcement of hygiene in cities like Boston, New York City, San Francisco, and Philadelphia. However, the result of this 'hygienic' struggle is remarkable: Justice Samuel Freeman Miller's radical reading of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in effect deprived African Americans of legal guarantees by the federal government. Cutter's system is just one of many iterations of hygiene as a socio-political practice.

giving a name to "it," an effort that explains nothing even as it defines everything. Cutter's system aims to fashion socio-political reality according to its own rules, which are incapable of grasping the problem blood poses in the first place.

Dickinson demonstrates in "Autumn" that taxonomy offers only knowledge of blood, but no understanding of what it means. Cutter's text aims for knowledge, recommends rote learning, and indicates the proper pronunciation of organs and the isolation of the indisposed (9, 427). But the new medical episteme it presents offers no response to the affective force of blood, to the shock and horror of the massive bloodshed on the battlefields. Anatomy as taught in schools never responds to but displaces the cultural legacy of blood with facts. As we will see in chapter four, medical practice and publications by physicians nevertheless reinvest blood with cultural content, ultimately setting the scene for a new understanding of blood as race.

Calvin Cutter's *Treatise* stands not just for the dissemination of blood discourses in school textbooks, but as an example for a broader change in the way many texts considered blood in the second half of the nineteenth century. With the rise of clinical medicine came an entirely new way to frame blood in all of its dimensions, a frame of reference that did not have to draw on established blood discourses, especially not sovereignty. Clinical medicine also offered a blood discourse that included praxis—about which I say more in the following chapters—as well as theory and pedagogy.

While Cutter's textbook does not police women's bodies and their functions as explicitly as do the writings we see in Edward H. Dixon's texts in the fifth chapter, Dickinson would almost certainly have noticed the direct translation of medical theory into behavioral modification. Discipline is internal, in the blood, both literally and

figuratively. Even when it appears in an injury like it did on the battlefields, Cutter's system stresses that emergency response performs a good social order: "what *should be done*, and what *should not be done*, until a surgeon or physician can be called" (7, 426, italics in original). Yet what options did a student have to participate in the formation of this national imaginary? Cutter preaches that "Woman, from her constitution and habits, is the natural nurse of the sick; and, in general, no small portion of her time is spent in ministering at the couch of disease and suffering" (432). Dickinson *was* a woman, so she had to *act*. But what did it mean to "minister" to the dead and dying soldiers in Amherst? She did not bear more bodies to send off into wars, and as an intellectual brought up in a Whig household, she was no Louisa May Alcott, let alone a Clara Barton. Even though the nation was drenched in blood, what should she do? What *could* she do?

Dickinson's Civil War poem shows that knowledge of taxonomy and hygiene does not help her understand the bloodshed or what "*should*" or "*should not*" be done in the case of the Civil War. Despite all the learning blood did not make sense. Even though or perhaps because she understood the medical, historical, and theological dimensions of blood, the blood of 1862 seems to have appeared grotesque in its suggestion not of a coherent nation, but a bleeding, porous, and open body politick. The knowledge that is Cutter's goal may include proper pronunciation of organs and the isolation of the indisposed, but the new bio-political *episteme* it presents has no interest in what the recent mass destruction of human life *means* or what *should* be done about it (9, 427).

I don't want to be misunderstood: Emily Dickinson's poems are not political protest literature against all things hygiene. Quite on the contrary, her critique of hygienic taxonomy becomes all the more complicated if we consider her direct involvement in the

United States Sanitary Commission (USSC) in the form of publications. Historian Margaret Humphreys explains that the USSC rose from a women's meeting group in 1861 to a national organization wielding millions of dollars in donated cash and tens of millions in donated goods just a few years later (137). Its presence was quickly felt by soldiers, officers, and field surgeons, all of whom were torn between gratitude for the supplies and concern over dependence on a female charity organization (131-51). However, a central ideological concern of the USSC was its emphasis on "discipline and education over sentiment and spontaneous benevolence" (149).

At least some of Dickinson's poems raised money for the USSC. From what scholars know, ten of her poems appeared in print during her lifetime; of the seven poems published during the War, three appeared in the Union paper called *Drum Beat*, possibly with Dickinson's consent (Miller, *Time* 148, Dandurand, "Publications," Habegger, *My Wars* 403).[76] The USSC condensed its goals in the hygienic mandates that changed the national imaginary and found its way into school textbooks and hospitals alike: hygiene.

Hygiene became the means of a pervasive change in the participation of citizens in their nation in the patterned discipline of bodies, be it national holidays or school education. By advocating concepts like hygiene, groups like the USSC demonstrated one of the many ways in which this was truly a *civil* war, as the nation's, or rather, nations'

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76 The discussion of Dickinson's publications, guesses as to her intentions, of the venues in which she published, and of the influence publication may have had on her work encompasses much of Dickinson studies. For further detail that does not immediately concern the present discussion, see: Sewall (*Life* II 532-76), Wolosky ("Public and Private"), Richards ("Media" 163), Dandurand (18). For more on the Sanitary Commission, see Olmstedt. How far the newspaper-dominated scene is from Dickinson's usual form of engagement is pointed out by Richards ("News" 162). Her point is well taken, though we may need more evidence to prove that Dickinson would spend the bulk of her work exploring "the effects of print mediation on those who read about the conflict from a distance" (Richards "News" 164). For another recent survey of scholarship on Dickinson and the Civil War, see Barrett ("Public").

citizens took it upon themselves to project the national imaginary into the domestic spaces, manifesting their national imaginary in living, breathing, and bleeding bodies described through taxonomy and regulated by hygiene.

"Autumn," however, was not published in the *Drum Beat*, but only after Dickinson's death, and I want to now turn from Dickinson's responses to Romantic and medical blood tropes ot the last part of the chapter and the way *The Youth's Companion* tames the unruly blood through editing. We saw the ways that a physiology textbook accumulated and disseminated blood as the substrate for socio-political interventions of hygiene. Dickinson's critique of this medical narrative, however, disappears in the publication three decades later that instead stresses that same rote-learned clinical frame for understanding blood.

We first find "Autumn" published in the pages of the nation's largest children's journal, *The Youth's Companion* (fig. 2), printed alongside instruction for and elaborations on Columbus Day, 1892. The *Companion* began as a Christian children's magazine in the publishing group of Nathaniel Willis and Asa Rand, and at its peak reached millions of readers (Apol 64). Its text selections and editorial decisions develop gendered and political stances that confirm Dickinson's critique in "Autumn" in their aggressive editing of her poem.[77] Alongside Francis Bellamy's "Pledge of Allegiance," the poem becomes part of the broader political aims of the magazine's issue edited by Mark Anthony DeWolfe.

As critic Philip Keierle explains, the *Companion's* efforts to influence the

77 This is not unusual for a Dickinson poem. Until scholars rediscovered her work, Dickinson's poetry often appeared as children's literature, edificatory literature, sentiment books, and nature poetry.

Columbus Day celebrations in this issue aimed at defining "Americanness," especially in public schools. The goal was to the reconfiguration of U.S. expansion as a communal process of growth, not an exercise in "rugged individualism," which led to the need for "constructing a memory of the Civil War that relegated slavery and sectional conflict to the background in favor of a memory stressing the fraternity, self-sacrifice, and bravery of white veterans" (45-6). So the *Companion* publication aimed at a reinterpretation of the Civil War legacy in the context of territorial expansionism. Much like Hawthorne's shift from sovereign magistrate to family domesticity I explained in the first chapter, the individual now serves as evidence for a horizontal distribution of democratic value, underpinned with racism, sexism, and classicism. Bloodshed in the War no longer posed a threat by the end of the century because blood itself became a qualitative sign of race, as I will explain in the next chapters. It no longer signaled a political crisis, but through the symbolic political unity rested on a desubstantiated conception of blood, the evacuated locust of instability and precarity, void of meaning, just as Dickinson says. The *Companion* insidiously uses her words to achieve exactly this evacuation.

As Courtney Weikle-Mills points out, the *Companion* valued uniform rituals for children, essentially invented Columbus Day, and promoted the Pledge of Allegiance and U.S. flags in every classroom as collective performances of the national imaginary and citizenship.[78] This was especially evident regarding the memory of the Civil War, which

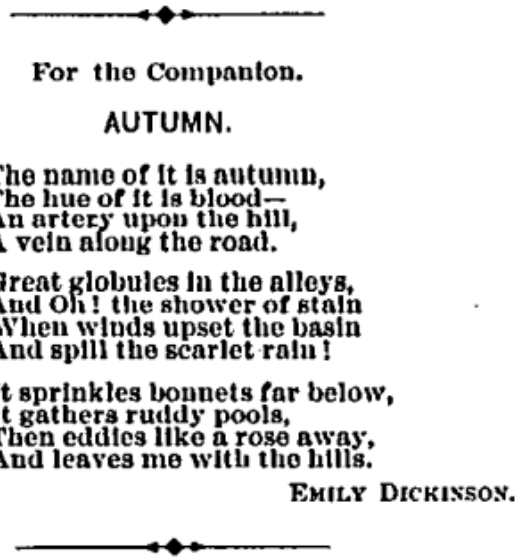
78 Especially the "Pledge" promotes "a different form of children's citizenship than Emerson imagined, a common understanding of nation that is enforced not through identifying natural impulses for community, but through drilling" (Weikle-Mills 214). The "Pledge" invests the Reconstruction political order with epistemic stability when the citizen who "pledges his allegiance to the imaginary symbols of nationhood" performs a "fantasy that nature and nation are compatible, that the flag and the language of the pledge itself can actually stand for the natural entities of community and citizen" (214).

the *Companion* revisits as an internal affair inside *one* nation, without addressing the questions Dickinson raises. Her hymn form and poetic condensation becomes invisible, as does her focus on the blood that binds the nation. A full-page instruction for Columbus Day precedes the either earnest but perhaps embittered pondering of an advice columnist on the question why women write: "because they *can* write a little and cannot do anything else at all" (446, 447).

There is no massive trauma, no suspended moment of radical inexpressibility in this published version of the poem, no tension of simultaneous possibilities. Keirle calls the *Companion's* Reconstruction attempts to rework history into the stuff of liberal-progressive nationalism a "veil of forgetfulness to be drawn over the passions and hatreds" of the War that was essential to the disciplining of U.S. youth in what the magazine advertised as white men's patriotic duties (39). Despite its critique, Dickinson's poem becomes part of a political effort at affective reconciliation necessary to celebrate a national Columbus Day as the holiday of white, male nationalist patriotism (57). One holiday for North and South unites the *Companion*'s issue, which displays deeply gendered and classed narratives, poems, culminating in the first printed version of the "Pledge of Allegiance."

Together with Cutter's taxonomy, the national imaginary of the hygienic nation and its sanitized history become a question of pedagogy, of drilling the nationalist imaginary into children and disciplining the future citizens by programming their affective responses. I want to point out that the political argument implied in the publication's framing of the poem is similar to Hawthorne's argument we saw in chapter one. Hawthorne's progressive-liberal national imaginary expels blood from the domestic

space and disappears the red tide of imperial history into a daguerreotype, a representation that claims mimetic verisimilitude. His narrative omniscience creates this representation, the daguerreotype plates of history. Reizenstein insists, however, that this



For the Companion.

AUTUMN.

The name of it is autumn,
The hue of it is blood—
An artery upon the hill,
A vein along the road.

Great globules in the alleys,
And Oh! the shower of stain
When winds upset the basin
And spill the scarlet rain!

It sprinkles bonnets far below,
It gathers ruddy pools,
Then eddies like a rose away,
And leaves me with the hills.

EMILY DICKINSON.

Figure 2: "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'" as printed in *The Youth's Companion* Sept 8, 1892, 448.

repressed bloody history leads to an uncanny domesticity and thereby prevents any meaningful progress or reform short of violent revolution and rivers of blood. In a similar way, the *Companion*'s effort at glossing over the divides of the Civil War aims to render blood innocuous or invisible and deemphasizes the nation state's bloody history. While Dickinson insists on the specific, material dimension of blood, this political narrative expels the abject blood by way of taxonomy, rendering in rational in precisely the way Cutter advocates.

The *Companion*'s issue presents several texts, illustrations, and ads that set a tone of paternalistic and chauvinistic nationalism, for example by describing Mexican citizens

as "semi-civilized" and by lionizing Pinkerton agents who fought steel workers' strike efforts at a Carnegie steel mill (444). The page layout that includes "Autumn" aims to convey clear information about the nation, gender roles, progress, miraculous technological inventions, body hygiene, and school education. Before ever reading "Autumn," readers have already seen ads for inventions that herald technological and social progress, that laud hygiene and school education, and ads that allude to violence, especially misogynist violence.

This political position appears in the editors' treatment of the poem. DeWolfe and his editors neatly contained it between ornamental separators, cleared of Dickinson's lines, punctuation, and variant lines, introduced it by "For the Companion," and signed it as though to indicate personal intention of an author who had already been dead for six years. This editing limits the poem to its surface level as a poem about fall leaves, turning "Autumn" into a good poem for children and young adults. Dickinson's semi-regular hymn meter, a favorite of hers, makes it suitable for children and commendable in form. If we choose to read it as a nature poem, much of the gory imagery disappears, as the word "blood" appears only once to indicate color. Edited this way, the imagery in the poem rests on the bright red fall foliage of New England forests after a frost and the epistemological crisis of the Civil War disappears.[79]

Beyond editorial and contextual effects, the page on which the poem appears directly steers the reader's associations—much like Cutter's rote questions. The connection between Dickinson's critique of naming, i.e. the power to name blood and the

79 As an aside, this choice is even more appropriate than she could have known: the red component of chlorophyll, and human hemoglobin in fact hints at the possibility of remote evolutionary kinship (Hardison).

pointlessness of such an effort, Cutter's hygienic taxonomy presented through rote learning, and the political effort of the *Companion* emerges clearly in one item on the page, a big corner of "Suggestions." The box discusses "THE BLOOD" through a series of questions (fig. 3). Set off visually in an attention-grabbing design, the questions in this box begin with the usefulness of blood, its quantity, about the rate of heartbeats per minute, physiology, and comparisons of animal fluids.

These rote questions, on a picture of a cloud, or perhaps a smear of blood, are mere "suggestions," but they precede the poem in a series of frames that direct the reader to textbook lessons, information, and medical framing of blood just like a teacher would direct the student or the physician the patient. The *Companion*'s edited page thus establishes a frame that veils the poem's critique in rote questions, the same kind of informational memorization used to teach Cutter and other school texts.

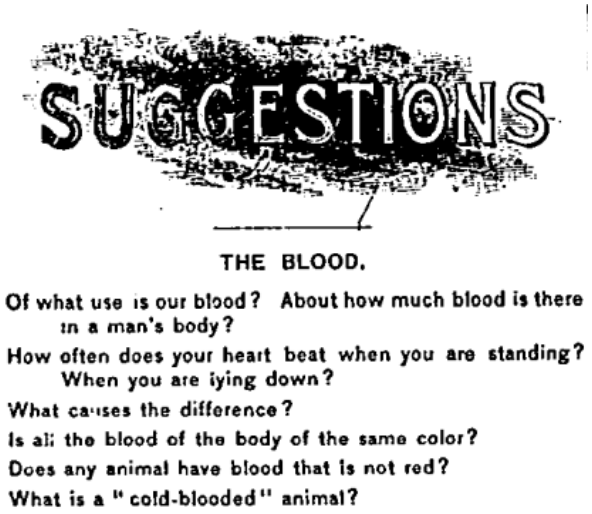


Figure 3: Rote questions accompanying

"The name – of it – is 'Autumn'"

in *The Youth's Companion*.

In Dickinson's discussion of blood and her poem's textual history, we see that blood is part of a pedagogical effort to support the national imaginary in alignment with the nation state. Holidays and rote questions drilled the citizen's mind in the supposedly proper way to understand blood. To belong to a nation not only means knowing who Columbus was and what he supposedly did, but how much blood pumps through a body and the difference between the blood of humans and non-humans.

The Companion's editorial choices seem excessive and together convey an effort to curb the poem's destabilizing force. Rote questions drill the civilized body into knowing blood as an informational goal, as a problem of proper rehearsal, not understanding or confrontation with the disturbing dimensions Dickinson discovers. Her effort was silenced by the *Youth's Companion*; but extracted from this context and placed in conversation with her education, the poem still registers an abyss, a deep, unknowable quality in blood. Cutter's physiology lesson and the *Companion*'s civics lesson both bring blood to the fore, openly focusing on blood so as to disable its most troubling aspect, the silent force of affective shock, the visceral jolt in the encounter with blood, the unspeakable, terrifying quality of a bloodshed as vast and in itself incomprehensible as that of the Civil War. Dickinson's "Autumn" points to exactly this register, and suspends blood in the refusal to accept the taxonomic pacification medical knowledge offers.

Poetry as a genre is perfectly suitable to communicate a scientifically-inflected imaginary, medical narratives turn to prose and its possibilities of elliptical bespeaking. Poetry's focus on the single word—"blood"—demands greater depth of inquiry, and while we will see next how Whitman's long *vers libre* form dances on the line between poetry and prose, Dickinson's brevity refuses elocutionary ellipsis as a substitute for

content. “Autumn” confronts attempts at overwriting the troubling aspect of what the dripping, spraying liquid meant with names and quantitative reasoning. Dickinson’s challenge in 1892 underwent the same aggressive editorial coverture that most of her work underwent—and is to a far lesser extent still undergoing. However, her warning in the face of the Civil War is clear: any author handling blood will have to come to terms with its elusive quality, that space between the mimetic and poetic, its affective force, and that uncanny connection between humans that is our blood.

In what follows, I continue to follow changes in the relation between texts about blood and medicine, and argue that the development of scientific racism depended on medical taxonomy. In this chapter we saw the groundwork for such changes, how anatomical taxonomy expressed positions ultimately informed by politics. In the next chapter we turn to Walt Whitman’s focus on the Civil War hospital, which also relies on existing vocabulary and clinical observations about blood. We thus see that the cultural resonance of clinical and anatomical readings of blood did not spontaneously emerge, but arose from an existing circulation of texts about blood and hygiene.

So here I want to also point out the problem of delimiting blood in scholarship like this study. Blood flows through discourses; it carries with it accumulated assumptions, definitions, and historical echoes. Definitions of blood abound in a textbook and in a children’s journal, just as they do in political discourses, but their effort at defining, framing, and editing blood reflects another goal a desire for political and social control, for the regulation not only of the written word “blood” but of that thing for which, as Dickinson says, “it” stands. Her full knowledge of this attempted epistemic regulation in the face of the Civil War results in a remarkable poem that bespeaks the

defiance inherent in blood, its unruly nature.

Chapter Three — The Smell of Blood and Grass: The Civil War Hospital and the Politics of Absorption in Walt Whitman's 1865 *Drum-Taps*

> "Blood—human blood—stood about in pools." – Sergeant Achilles V. Clark.
>
> "I do not wish to sit side by side with men whose garments *smell* of the blood of my kindred" – Senator Thaddeus Stevens.
>
> "To-night, beautiful women, perfumes, the violins' sweetness, the polka and the waltz; but then, the amputation, the blue face, the groan, the glassy eye of the dying, the clotted rag, the odor of wounds and blood…" – Walt Whitman.

For years after the end of the Civil War, Walt Whitman gave a lecture on the death of President Abraham Lincoln. Though he wasn't there in person, he used his poetic and editorial talents to meld a riveting account for his audiences, one that close to the end asks this question: "Strange, (is it not?) that battles, martyrs, agonies, blood, even assassination, should so condense—perhaps only really, lasting condense—a Nationality" (*Prose Works* 314). Whitman thought about the nation and its people most of his life and the thought that its cruelest, most violent, least poetically beautiful moments provided some of the strongest national ties gave him pause. How did this process of condensing nationality work and how did Whitman successfully work through the Civil War blood so as to maintain his poetic project of a poem that expressed the nation?

This chapter first reexamines the disruption of Civil War bloodshed that we already encountered in the previous chapter, especially for Whitman's earlier national imaginary in his 1855 *Leaves of Grass*. After that we turn to Whitman's use and manipulation of what medical manuals declared practice was supposed to be in the Civil War hospitals. Finally, I turn to readings of Whitman's 1865 *Drum-Taps* and propose that

medical thinking and practice greatly influenced Whitman's struggle with questions surrounding blood. His existing interest in hospitals and nursing led him to shift his poetic mode from cataloging to absorbing, two very different procedures as I will detail below. His prior interest in hospitals led him to consider medical practice as the most vital response to the question he, like Dickinson, saw in the bodily fluid that soaked the grass of the battlefields—the grass that meant so much to his national imaginary: why is blood so important for the nation? Whitman's solution to this dilemma of the real and the unspeakable lies in the Civil War hospital, in nursing, and in the promise of medicine to give him a way to write about blood.

As critic Anthony Szczesiul carefully works out, the *Drum-Taps* cycle later became part of *Leaves of Grass* as the climax in a dramatic arch that focuses on healing the national divide, on closing the wound, and on absorbing the blood (13-1). As Whitman adopted medical images of absorption, he also incorporated the tension between medicine and radical democracy into his work. Aspiring to be the voice of the common people and the representative of a Romantic authenticity, Whitman, like Dickinson, refused to hide behind tropes, metaphors, or Victorian gentility in the face of carnage. Yet as this chapter explains, the challenge of the real blood and the unspeakable silence at the core of the real blood threatened Whitman's greatest endeavor: the poetic representation of the United States in its entirety, i.e. the writing of "America" as a picture and celebration of all existing reality in the nation.

In his lecture on Lincoln, Whitman expresses his continued bafflement over the strange role blood plays in the formation of the U.S. national identity. Lincoln's blood lay at the heart of Whitman's attempts to understand the fate of the nation: "And in the midst

of that pandemonium, infuriated soldiers, the audience and the crowd, the stage, and all its actors and actresses, its paint-pots, spangles, and gas-lights—the life blood from those veins, the best and sweetest of the land, drips slowly down, and death's ooze already begins its little bubbles on the lips" (*Prose Works* 313). Lincoln's "life blood" is just the blood Dickinson wrote of, that real blood, indefinable yet all-important, visceral, real, true, and pungent. Blood has a real and disruptive force of its own, anchored deep in our primate instincts, probably even fixed in human brains (Meyer 1).

Blood was especially terrifying in the War when it collected in pools and colored whole streams of water red. Blood saturated the soil, stained houses and clothes, filled the eye as well as the nose, and still carried at its center a silent truth. It was impossible for Whitman to ignore the material, affective dimension of blood and the problem it posed. During the Civil War, Hawthorne's vision of affective control and individual empowerment of liberal, progressive nationalism free of bloody sovereign power collapsed into a disturbing reality closer to the Reizenstein's river of blood. Read in the development of Whitman's later years, his turn to absorption already indicates his turn to Hegelian dialectics as a means of resolving irresolvable oppositions. As I argue, Whitman makes a conservative turn to medicine, which lets him integrate blood, the unruly signifier of chaos and terror, into his national narrative.

War was too real and important to ignore or euphemize. As we will see, the Yet it was impossible to integrate the blood into the catalogues Whitman had invented for his 1855 *Leaves of Grass*. These long poetic, free-verse lists of material reality imbued with the poet's spirit could not properly capture what occurred because the Civil War blood exploded boundaries of poetic representation. It challenged all received wisdom of *ius in*

bello—the law of proper warfare. For instance, after his 1864 raid on a Mississippi River Union navigation station known as the Fort Pillow Massacre, Major General Nathan B. Forrest proclaimed in a speech: "I have seen the Mississippi run with blood for 200 yards, and I'm gwine see it again" (qtd. in Davidson and Foxx 346). Sergeant Achilles V. Clark of the 20th Tennessee Cavalry remembers that at Fort Pillow, "Blood—human blood—stood about in pools," and a contributor going by R.H.C. wrote to the *Christian Recorder* that "through this bloody sea lies the land of liberty; and although we may have to pour out rivers of blood, liberty is not attainable without it" ("R.H.C."). There was no denying of the reality of violence or that citizens of the nation shed unimaginable quantities of blood in the heart of the nation.[80]

In his 1865 *Drum-Taps*, completed just before Lincoln's assassination, we see a wrestling with blood and the coming to terms with its material reality through a process of absorption. In focusing on "absorption," I am not quoting a theory Whitman develops

80 There is no straight-forward account of the Civil War. As Herman Melville wrote in *Billy Budd*, truth "uncompromisingly told will always have its ragged edges" (28). Melville's comment echoes Reizenstein's objection to the neat seams of compromised history like Hawthorne's, but it also explains why we often find blood seeping from the ragged edges, literally ragged bodies. In blood, the Civil War corresponds both to and with medical, pedagogical, and institutional discourses. The blood on the battlefield exists only as a specific, material, individual liquid body tissue, but the sheer mass of individual injuries in the Civil War turned the individual drop into part and particle, to speak in Whitman's terms, of one massive injury, one torrent of blood. The topic at hand is not the Civil War and its impact on U.S. literature, a topic recently elaborated again by Randall Fuller who points out his predecessors Edmund Wilson, Daniel Aaron, George M. Frederickson, Alice Fahs, Timothy Sweet, and Jolen Daws (ix). My question is not one of *mimesis*, but of the relation between the affective trauma wrought by the War, i.e. the questions that a massive bloodshed opened in the minds of authors who lived in the middle of what liberal politics advocated as a blood-free nation and how it changed their thinking about blood. We can see that, by and large, the answer lies with a sense of suppression and avoidance, a turn to the same old abstract ideals and euphemistic gilding that characterized the antebellum debate: Christian faith, honor, *pietas* (in the Virgilian sense) or duty, and the like. Dickinson and Whitman present exquisite exceptions to this regular repression.

explicitly, though he carefully develops images of absorption, as I will detail below.[81] Rather, I propose this image to describe the solution medicine offers him to reconcile the wet blood he sees with his beautiful national imaginary. So I mean the literal act of absorbing blood in hospital bandages made of lint and charpie adnt eh poetic strategy Whitman models on it.

It helps us see that these are not at all dissimilar if we think about the bandage materially for a moment. Before industrial bandage manufacturing, the bandage connected the nation with the solider. As Union nurse Mary Ashton Rice Livermore remembered, once "lint and bandage mania" set in early in the War, physicians soon took up the question: the New York Medical Association created to supply hospitals "actually held meetings to discuss the lint question and finally opened a lint and bandage depot" (121).[82] The absorptive capacity of bandages absorbed the nation at the home front, as Livermore remarks mockingly: "every household gave its leisure time to scraping lint and rolling bandages" until lint machines relieved them from their posts (121). Once in the hospital, these bandages absorbed waste blood and bodily fluids, preventing their reabsorption and thereby reducing infection and inflammation. Absorption of blood is thus a material process with great metaphorical potential for a poet like Whitman.

At the same time, I also allude to the psychological state of absorption, the state of being engrossed, of assimilating information and impressions. Just like blood is always material and metaphor, liquid and affect, absorbing it means using bandages, lint, and

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81 Whitman uses "absorption" in four *Drum-Taps* poems: "From Paumanok starting, I Fly Like a Bird" (18); "Rise, O Days, from Your Fathomless Deeps" (37), "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown" (44), "Pensive, on her Dead Gazing, I Heard the Mother of All" (71).
82 Fore more on Livermore, especially her suffragette activities, see Wendy Hamand Venet.

sponges, but also social narratives that can absorb it metaphorically. Social psychologists Suzanne M. Roche and Kevin M. McConkey define absorption as a trait that "involves an openness to experience emotional and cognitive alterations across a variety of situations" (92).

Renée Bergland explains that the act of overlooking is crucial to internalizing nationalism, however, because overlooking leads the displaced private affect into the self-denial of national sentiment, which is especially evident in the "overt violence of the battlefield" as well as "the symbolic violence of disembodied, abstract nationalism" is easier ("Eagle's Eye" 136). So citizens not only invest the national imaginary with affect, but must project themselves into it in order to make any sense of it, must be willing to be absorbed. If any poet was ever open, it surely was Whitman, who himself absorbed the blood, as did his poems, and in this process resolved the tension with the hygienic imperative of the post-sovereignty nation. I argue that the encounter with blood forced him into some of his most trying intellectual challenges, but it also allowed him to solve the crux of the War.

Beyond an individual effort, Whitman hoped to express his national imaginary, including this war. Absorption was not always Whitman's poetic strategy. The earlier effort in *Leaves of Grass*, to express the totality of the real in catalogs and encyclopedic lines scholars commonly understand against the backdrop of Romantic nationalism and a poetic liberation from the gentility and formal constraints seen as a poetic inheritance of European ideals carried on by the Fireside poets and Boston Brahmins, as Ed Folsom points out ("Past" 4). More like Hawthorne than Dickinson, Whitman literally and figuratively embraces the seductive power of literature and observes the same effect in

his *vers libre*. For instance, his "Christ, my fit is mastering me!" follows the bloodiest scene in "Song of Myself" in which the poet's self presents an amputation scene—the surgery also most frequently mentioned in the Civil War—and describes its affective impressions as "irretrievable" (LG 695). As we will see below, his summation of impressions fails in the Civil War. Read with his notebooks and the *Memoranda*, Whitman's *Drum-Taps* appears as a versified Romance that bespeaks a national imaginary, relying on medicine as a cornerstone to absorb the affective force of blood. Whitman's 1865 *Drum-Taps* indicates blood as a problem and proposes absorption and national medical discourses as a meaningful response.

The Civil War changed Whitman's career as most scholars agree at this point.[83] Without trying to sum up the entire one hundred and fifty years of texts on Whitman and the Civil War, starting with his own claims in *Democratic Vistas* (1871), *Memoranda during the War* (1875), and *Specimen Days* (1882), one should mention the ground-breaking texts. Charles I. Glicksberg's 1933 collection of Whitman's own War writings began the scholarly inquiry in earnest. *Walt Whitman and the Civil War* collected a number of published and unpublished sources to prove Whitman's preoccupation with the War beyond the well-known pieces. Thomas, M. Wynn's 1987 *The Lunar Light of Whitman's Poetry* establishes that the poet saw a broader, national struggle in the War, especially between pro- and anti-democratic forces (185). Like many of his contemporaries, Whitman saw the Civil War as a turning point, dividing the chronology of the nation and of his own work.

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83 As any current research on Whitman, this chapter also draws on the amazing wealth of material, both critical and archival, provided by Ed Folsom, Kenneth Price in *The Walt Whitman Archive,* as well as their many contributions on paper.

More recent critics have followed this path, especially Betsy Erkkilä's 1989 *Whitman the Political Poet* brought scholars who read Whitman in an increasingly personal, private vein to bridge his private and public, political ideas, from detached observer or inspired scribe of the nation's fate to participant with vested stakes embroiled in political and social struggles. To Whitman, politics is more than government, and the War paralyzed Whitman in part because he was shocked by the war that the people wanted. Roy Morris wrestled much available biographical and primary material into *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War*, which opens a more detailed world of Civil war hospitals and therapies to the reader.[84]

In July 1861, Whitman had feared to see his brother George Washington Whitman among the dead and dying when he read George's name in the Brooklyn casualty lists (Allen, *Singer* 281-3). His search for his in fact mildly injured brother led to a dual career in D.C. military hospitals and various government employs. Famously, he visited the hospitals, giving comfort to the injured and dying, passing out gifts, and apparently striking up more than one Romantic acquaintance among the young soldiers there.

Visiting a hospital was no new experience for Whitman, who had visited victims of accidents and other patients in Brooklyn hospitals, even had his brother Jesse committed to one in 1865, and felt quite at ease there, as Joann Krieg notes (44). He had written a sketch of Broadway Hospital in New York for his series of "City Photographs"

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84 Recently, Ted Genoways' *Walt Whitman and the Civil War: America's Poet During the Lost Years of 1860-1862* (2009) offers a collection of primary and secondary material in a study that fills in the two blank years immediately preceding Whitman's arrival in D.C. Its impressive scholarly detections and elegance fall outside my inquiry, though.

that was published in the New York *Leader*, March 22, 1862, in which he elaborates on the hospital's medical museum—describing some of its "memoranda" and "specimens" in an anticipation of his later title for recollections—staff, surgery procedures, even the hospital's architecture and history.[85] There, he did reporting, but also got treatment for his younger brother Teddy, and his mother.

As Peter B. Martens and Joann Krieg have explained, Whitman was generally engrossed in medicine, science, and the occult when he wrote reviews of medical texts by practitioners like Edward H. Dixon—to whom the next chapter returns—and William Osler (Martens 213, Krieg 52). Read in this way, the medical bent of *Drum-Taps* comes as no surprise. Medical images of absorption largely determine Whitman's response to the blood of the Civil War, bringing with them the fraught relation of medicine and social hierarchy.

Too little scholarship exists on Whitman and Civil War medicine in particular, but the contributions of Martin G. Murray, Joann P. Krieg, Ed Folsom, and Robert Leigh Davis provide an ample foundation to build on. Murray's "Traveling with the Wounded" offers an excellent summary of the hospitals of D.C. and the position of a visitor like Whitman in their workings. Joann P. Krieg's "Whitman and the Prostitutes" is a useful study of not just sexual mores, but of Whitman's position on public hygiene as it concerned women's bodies, and serves as a useful reminder of just how familiar Whitman was with hospitals long before the Civil War.

For Whitman medicine also offered a theoretical aid to think about social and

85 Edward F. Grier also comments on Whitman's fascination with the architecture (*Writings* 445 n30).

political changes, including the epistemic crisis of the War's blood and his source for personal reform during the Civil War. A journal entry only a few days after the firing on Ft. Sumter addresses an ascetic resolution for invigoration, "to inaugurate for myself a pure, perfect, sweet, clean-blooded, robust body" through a manipulation of diet (qtd. in Justin Kaplan, *Life* 262). This simultaneity of physiological, aesthetic, moral, and political hygiene anchored in a quality of blood determined by "pure" food and drink corresponds to contemporary medical recommendations and educational material like the one we saw in Emily Dickinson's anatomy textbook in the previous chapter. Whitman, however, accepted the fundamental premise of medicine, including its connection of politics and physiology.

Robert Leigh Davis' *Whitman and the Romance of Medicin*e offers the most sustained and focused inquiry into the poet and the profession. Davis argues that the hospital and Whitman's work in it helped the poet to work through the division in the nation. Davis sees the hospital as a liminal space, which allowed for new inter-personal formations and mobile, queer desires. The "incomplete" bodies of soldiers stood between life and death, health and illness, and the war and the nation, incarnations of the provisionality that Whitman saw as central to democracy (8). Davis sees the hospital as a shadowy "epistemology of the romance" in which the stark political oppositions are fluid and in which Whitman can experiment with them (11). While that is plausible, I don't see Whitman's use of the medical gaze as above or beyond binaries. Below I demonstrate that the medical gaze offers the stability he needs to finally overcome the aporia that lies at the heart of "A March in the Ranks, Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown" and the trickling, red blood so defiant of poetic expresion.

Beyond his summary of Whitman's history with medicine, I do find Davis' use of "romance" useful and will return to it at the end of the chapter. The promise of medicine in the face of horrible wounds, the promise of a healthy, virile, beautiful body striving forth without the blood bursting from wounds is part of what Davis calls the "romance of medicine" (14). He argues that for Whitman, "homosexuality, like medicine and convalescence, evokes a mode of relation based on continual risk, continual doubt" (14). Without opening a discussion about homosexuality, I am skeptical about the stability of Davis' terms "medicine" and "convalescence," which are indeed hotly contested but, as especially my next chapter will demonstrate, also contingent on specific medical therapies and the choices they imply.

We also should note that blood threatened Whitman's gendered fantasy of erotic democracy. Far from affirmative of queer positionalities, blood destabilized Whitman's own homosocial ideals of "adhesive love," an expansive addition and cosmological completeness of the self through attachment to another.[86] Blood in the War was apart from the body, trickling away, covering and disfiguring the body. Yet love for the virile, healthy body is fundamental to Whitman's social ideals. Many of his hospital notes focus on blood as a problem, as contrary to the beautiful, youthful body: "the profuse beauty of the young men's hair, damp with the spotted blood, their shining hair, red with the sticky blood,—clotted with spots of blood—/—the shining beauty of the young men's hair dampened with clots of blood—" (*CW* 670).[87] Here, Whitman's familiar focus in *Leaves of Grass* on the body's beauty slips into a struggling, halting description of blood.

86 For the political dimension of Whitman's homosocial and homoerotic theory as a means to solve social discord, see David S. Reynolds ("Affection").
87 Glicksberg sees this scene as part of the composition process for "An Artilleryman's Vision" (123 n13).

The young men's beautiful hair and the blood in that hair seems irreconcilable to Whitman, at once fascinating and frustrating, until the "shining beauty" itself becomes the object that is "dampened" by blood. To find the beloved, beautiful body, Whitman first had to find a way to remove the blood that covered the body and unsettled Whitman so much, and he found this way in absorption. As I mentioned above, the problem of blood was a poetic problem for Whitman's use of catalogic poetry.

So let us look at some instances that should make clear just how deep this complication ran. Whitman's first attempt to grasp what blood means in his 1865 first edition of *Drum-Taps* begins to develop nursing, hospitals, and medicine into the solution for the onslaught of affect he finds in blood. Only these medical agents make possible the absorption of blood that reunites the nation by swallowing all. Not the soldiers save the nation, but the heroic nurse and medicine. In "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown," the speaker is a soldier who is rendered helpless by the horror. An impromptu hospital in a large, old church building at a cross-road—the Romantic setting par excellence is now an empty shell, repurposed and literally filled with medicine. The speaking soldier is literally and metaphorically "fain to absorb it all," unable to take in the blood (DT 44). His inability to absorb sounds, sights, forms, but especially odors—the sense so important to Whitman's War descriptions—makes of the fighting soldier a disoriented individual, lost in a period no longer stabilized by Romanticist gestures to Nature's absorptive capacity. Here we see the most threatening aspect of the War blood: it cannot be taken in (absorbed) or expressed (represented) with common poetic means.

I will return to both material and spiritual implications below, but for now want to consider the cognitive process that stabilizes the shocked mind. Medical narratives and

their clinical-diagnostic vocabulary offer consolation and a stabilizing, all-encompassing theory of reality and a practice that aims to absorb blood.

Whitman's experiences during the Civil War lead him to an *aporia* at the center of blood that is the same as the one I explored in Emily Dickinson's poem in the previous chapter. Established poetic tropes and cultural modes of negotiating the crisis of blood fail. Whitman's many poetic challenges to Victorian literature would make the choice of an uncomplicated adherence to mourning rituals and textual responses an unlikely reaction to the War. More likely would be a way to understand the War blood as part of nature, as an element of an all-inclusive, Romantic reality. Yet we find the biggest struggle exactly at that point.

The first sight for the speaking soldier is "beyond all/the pictures and poems ever made," a sight of vague chaos and disorder, lit by torches (DT 44). The first distinct human figure the soldier encounters lies on the ground, one specific encounter in the hospital: "At my feet more distinctly, a soldier, a mere lad, in/danger of bleeding to death, (he is shot in the abdomen;)/I staunch the blood temporarily, (the youngster's face is white as a lily;)" (DT 44). Whitman does not turn toward mid-century conciliatory commonplaces of literature, to Nature-as-rescue, but portrays soldiers as helpless, disoriented, terrified. In the *Memoranda*, he clearly describes his inability to reconcile the discrepancy between a pleasant night in Nature and blood: "all Nature so calm in itself" seems to contradict the same place and moment's events, "the red life-blood oozing out from heads or trunks or limbs upon that green and dew-cool grass" (14). Whitman's Nature is unable to give meaning to the seen and thus denies comfort to his readers.

In "A March" we see the stabilizing effect medicine offers in this moment of

disorientation and inexpressibility. Here, the soldier longs for structure, his eyes searching the infernal scene, trying to make sense of it, but he sees only what William Tecumseh Sherman had predicted: a country "drenched in blood" (qtd. in Foote 58). The poem describes something indescribable, a feat made possible when the affective dimension of experience is filtered through medical structure:

> Faces, varieties, postures beyond description, most in
> obscurity, some of them dead;
> Surgeons operating, attendants holding lights, the smell
> of ether, the odor of blood;
> The crowd, O the crowd of the bloody forms of soldiers/
> —the yard outside also fill'd;
> Some on the bare ground, some on planks or stretchers,
> some in the death-spasm sweating;
> An occasional scream or cry, the doctor's shouted orders
> or calls;
> The glisten of the little steel instruments catching the
> glint of the torches;
> *These* I resume as I chant—I see again the forms, I
> smell the odor;
> (DT 45, my emphasis)

Betsy Erkkilä argues that the sense of disorientation here is Whitman's sense of chaos and disorder (*Political* 224). However, the ordering principle comes from medical discipline: anonymity and the lack of defined bodies are not signs of chaos, but mark the medical gaze. This scene is teetering on the brink of chaos, but only seems chaotic to those who do not, like Whitman, follow the medical gaze. Not that the soldier chants not his own words, but the doctor's orders, that the light is not direct, but reflects off surgical equipment, and that thoughts and narrative follow the medical lens even as the traumatic affect washes over the soldier again—"*These*" items among the entirety of the sights and smells. The surgeons' and nurses' medical practice allows for the negotiation of the experience, the possibility of resuming a path, of progress, of a moving on. Blood is

incomprehensible to the soldier until he rationalizes the youth's impeding death by diagnosing the injury and performing what temporary relief a field hospital offers.

The mass of bloody forms, human bodies mutilated beyond recognition threaten to overwhelm the solider, but the controlling voice of the doctor, the disciplining voice of order, reason, and control halt the collapse. The hospital itself frames the soldier's intellectual and physical retreat from the affective turmoil and offers relief in the absorption. Only the surgeon's presence stops the flood of affect, only the ether can undo the smell of blood. Blood is less threatening in the presence of medicine; it is legible *and* material, voided of its threatening affective dimension. The glistening surgical equipment catches the confusing, pre-industrial torchlight and transposes it into a modern scene of medical control. Thus, Whitman's elation at the hospitals is not at all ironical, as Erkkilä reads it (*Political* 202). Rather, the hospital provides an epistemic frame, a way to understand blood and thus to incorporate into the medicalized national imaginary that leads Whitman to "America and the Modern" (*Memoranda* 106-7).

Whitman's poetic voices find refuge, uneasy though it may be, in the hospital. His turn to the medical lens is both a formal an theoretical shift from earlier positions. Whereas ten years before, the narrator of *Leaves of Grass* commanded: "unscrew the locks from the doors!/Unscrew the doors themselves from their jams!" in a flurry of sexual and religious revolutionary fervor, *Drum-Taps* proceeds with more weariness, sadness, with the "hinged knees" of the Dresser (LG 680; DT 32). Perhaps this shift of

tone can account for the initial lack of applause for his Civil War poetry.[88]

Moving from the battlefield to the hospital, I want to examine more closely the figure of the Dresser. Perhaps the most famous figure in *Drum-Taps* and the one who stands on the border between the blood and the absence thereof, simultaneously covered in blood and the embodied agent of its removal. The veteran survivor of war saw blood and perhaps lost some himself and seems above all tired of the shedding of blood, but remains mindful of the obligation that those carry who live to tell of bloodshed. He is not the boisterous poet of the "recruitment poems" of the early sections of *Drum-Taps*. That figure pours out his verses "with streams of blood, full of volition, full of joy" (9). Nor does the Dresser launch into a detailed account "of these scenes" of carnage he witnessed, unlike the Centenarian does (DT 31).

The poem's frame echoes Whitman's 1885 "Song of Myself"—famously, the narrator "Song of Myself" launches into the poem at large in response to a child who asks him what the grass is—and "Leaves of Grass" of the same year that became "The Sleepers" in 1871, in which the poet also wanders, "swiftly and noiselessly stepping and stooping,/Bending with open eyes over the shut eyes of sleepers" (LG 665, 723). The erotic tension and voyeurism, however, now becomes the silent diagnostic gaze, steeled against the horror by its reliance on medical narratives: "I/enter the doors—(while for you up there,/Whoever you are, follow me without noise, and be of strong heart)" (DT 32). The prohibition against loud noise disavows the cacophony of war, the noise of the armies, the triumph of the victor, and the groans of the wounded. While amusement is

88 Of the thirteen contemporary reviews of *Drum-Taps* in the *Whitman Archive*, four are positive, with the others agreeing on the volume's incoherence and rudeness.

acceptable, this superficial noise has nothing to say about the silent truth of blood, that Whitman has a hard time absorbing.

Instead of sanguine, bellicose throbbing, we see phlegmatic, weary silence in the Dresser. As Michael Moon points out, the feeling of impotence, anger, and resignation stayed an important part of Whitman's later versions of *Drum-Taps*: Whitman placed a four-line epigraph in front of the poem "Drum-Taps" that opened the 1865 and 1867 editions (Moon, *Leaves of Grass* 244 n. 1). In all versions after 1881, he merged this epigraph with the re-named "The Wound-Dresser" poem. This epigraph shows no euphoric, sexual, aggressively inclusive poet-narrator of earlier poems: "Arous'd and angry, I'd thought to beat the alarum, and urge relentless war,/But soon my fingers fail'd me, my face droop'd and I resign'd myself, To sit by the wounded and soothe them, or silently watch the dead" (qtd. in Moon, *Leaves of Grass* 244 n. 1). Failing fingers, a drooping face—the very first lines point not to a resilient, virile witness but to a beaten, impotent man, a weakened spirit who turns his back on the world of action to the world of domestic care and death. The bloodiest lines of all of Drum-Taps are also its weariest, carried forward not by an urge, but by medical necessity, and by silence about why blood must be absorbed.

This silence reflects, of course, a hospital ward with sleeping trauma patients who try to bravely suffer without a sound, but it also changes the mode of speech into an absorptive pattern. The dresser has nothing to say, but mutely labors over the blood of the wounded: "Thus in silence, in dream's projections,/Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals" (DT 33). In the hospital, disorderly noise and blood are both unidirectional: they emanate from the patients and doctors and nurses absorb, process,

and communicate them. Whitman and his speaker witness, they record, but their speech must parrot the medical language to make sense of the suffering.[89]

Uttered speech and ordered dialogue mark bloodless civilization when the prerogative of the doctor, especially in the affirmative, epistemically stabilizing imperative forms the instruction. Whitman would surely have been familiar with the widely-read genre that represent the supreme medical instruction: the medical manual. Among the most important instructive medical manuals of the Civil War are Samuel D. Gross' 1861 *Manual of Military Surgery; or Hints on the Emergencies of Field, Camp and Hospital Practice*; John Julian Chisholm's *Manual of Military Surgery for the Use of Surgeons in the Confederate Army*, published the same year; and John Hooker Packard's *A Manual of Minor Surgery* (1863).[90] Like Whitman's medicine, such manuals give order to chaos. Their explanations go beyond his, however, in that they declare a bloodless, hygienic ideal that is out of keeping with surgery's gory reality—the same conflict Emily Dickinson addresses. Tables are without blood, and the slippery, smelly, affective reality plays no role in these manuals because they explain not what *is* but what is *proper*.

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89 As John C. Long notes: "Whitman beholds the scene at the sickbed with a clinician's gaze. His poetry palpates, auscultates, probes and debrides diseased bodies of wounded soldiers" (132). As Toledo-Pereyra and Toledo sum up: "physicians had practically no knowledge behind their treatments during the Civil War" (134). Whitman's concern for soldiers, his insistence on loving care that Fahs reads as a sentimentality, Whitman sees as "the most solid of facts" (Fahs 111). He does this not to defend sentimentalism, but in the social context of the hospital, in which a different war raged: the war over who could decide the fate of the soldier, the male, educated surgeon or the female, untrained nurse, also expressed by Louisa May Alcott's 1863 *Hospital Sketches* (Schultz, Behling 50-1). Samuel D. Gross is here especially relevant since he was during his lifetime seen as an embodiment of the surgeon *per se* and immortalized by Thomas Eakins' portrait *The Gross Clinic* (1875).

90 To go into great depth on all of these texts would go beyond the scope of the inquiry. However, the social context that Gross provides my reading is muted in Packard's manual, which limits the inquiry to medical procedures. It should be noted that Packard's entire chapter IV is a celebration of "surgical depletion" or bleeding, which was nor proven science but an ancient folk remedy that had been taken over by surgeons. Thus, the borders between "social" and "scientific" text is more fluid than it seems. For more on bleeding, see Estes.

To physicians like Samuel Gross, but also Calvin Cuttter whose textbook we saw in the last chapter and, as we will see in the next chapters, also Edward H. Dixon and Samuel A. Cartwright, the surgeon is not just a healer. He is the—presumably male, white, middle-class—arbiter of medical and social rules that restore order immediately after the war and that save humans from their own weaknesses. Gross declares that, as "soon as practicable after the hurry and confusion attendant upon a combat are over the surgeon should classify the wounded and disabled taking care that those laboring under similar lesions are not brought in close contact lest witnessing each other's sufferings they should be seized with fatal despondency" (31). Gross frames affective horror as a contagious disease.

The battlefield is the realm of epistemic disorder, or, to put it in the context of the political shift I explore in the first chapter, the sovereign disruption of the progressive national imaginary. In the medical manual, blood is decidedly non-confusing and purely symptomatic. The surgeon restores certainty by classifying bodies, i.e. by discriminating. Here, medicine shows its Enlightenment roots (which we see practitioners betray in the interest of racism in the fourth chapter). Medicine ensures moral spiritual well-being as much as physical. The surgeon's gaze hovers over the chaos of war, untouched by the bloodshed, making sense of it all.[91]

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91 Schultz notes that Civil War surgeons' diaries rarely regard patients as individuals, but rather as cases, abstracting the bleeding bodies into bio-political elements of the nation state (378-9). The shift in the rise of gendered orders that Schultz traces in the professional lives of nurses is strikingly parallel to the development that, as I argue, Dickinson confronts: "In illuminating the coping strategies of female hospital workers engaged in military and male-defined surroundings, I suggest that Civil War nurses' eschewal of medical models of professionalism was a protest against male authority—a protest that flourished as long as nursing was in its transitional, pre-professional phase, but that was gradually silenced after the war as hospital training schools placed nurses at the bottom of a hierarchy founded on obedience and discipline" (365).

In Whitman's poem, the Dresser's medical gaze at once preserves, stops, and seals the epistemic rupture of the national body. In medicine, the pail tells the tale, as Whitman notes regarding a dying Wisconsin officer: "Notice that water-pail by the side of the bed, with a quantity of blood and bloody pieces of muslin—nearly full; that tells the story" (*Memoranda* 25). The Dresser's medical equipment does not consist of things, but of tools that objectively measure the nation's health: "An attendant follows holding a tray, he carries a refuse pail,/Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied, and fill'd/again" (DT 243). In the absorptive bandages and containers, medical practice absorbs the liquid blood and removes it in an endless, cyclical tasks, a ritual rhythm of absorption that stabilizes the disorder and makes sense.

For one, Whitman's details in the poem reflect hospital reality. Rarely do scholars point out contemporary sources to clarify what is real, though, and so I want to take a moment to fill that gap. In 1862, Surgeon-General William A. Hammond initiated the publication of the U.S. military guidebook for all hospitals, J. J. Woodward's *Hospital Steward's Manual*. In its section "On Dressings," it details the exact dimensions of dressing trays to be made, the exact contents of lint, charpie, roller-bandages, plaster, isinglass, ligatures, and so on, and that besides "this tray of dressings, basins with warm water, a bucket to receive soiled dressings, and a tin can filled with boiling water . . . will be needed" (297-8). Surgeons "will generally need one attendant to carry the tray, and one for the basins and sponges, the bucket for soiled dressings, &c." (298). So Whitman's absorptive materials come directly out of the physical reality of the hospital, and are thus related to the hospital's highly regulated, disciplining function. The sufferers are no longer beautiful bodies to behold, but patients to be handled, with bodily excretions to be

absorbed.

This realism aside, though, we should not leap to the conclusion that Whitman's text endorses military hospitals in the way the Surgeon-General's office conceived of them (if such an ideal place ever existed). Woodward classifies medical labor based on which and against which nurses had to do their work in six different designations for medical laborers in Union hospitals: "1. Hospital Stewards. 2. Ward-Masters. 3. Nurses. 4. Female Nurses. 5. Cooks. 6. Laundresses. (Called also Matrons in 'Army Regulations.')" (12). In Woodward's description, nurses are first assumed to be either male workers from the hospital corps or enlisted men on temporary detail, broadly charged with cleaning, administration of medicine, meals, record-keeping during visitations, and personnel management, all while officially functioning within the military hierarchy.

Whitman was no nurse, nor is the Dresser. In the figure of the Dresser, Whitman fuses or, rather, absorbs locales and occupations, situation, times, and identities. The veteran who walks "Where they lie on the ground, after the battle brought/ in; /Where their priceless blood reddens the grass, the/ ground;/ Or to the rows of the hospital tent, or under the roof'd/ hospital" is simultaneously Clara Barton and a nurse and neither of them (DT 32).In reality, no occupation exists that covers the duties the Dresser describes—he does not exist as a classification for actual medical labor.

As an Attendant follows him, perhaps the Dresser is a Steward, who manages many of the workings of the hospital and would not be specialized on this one task alone. The dressing of wounds Woodward's official manual explicitly designates as a task left to surgeons, and only rarely to hospital stewards—an entirely different class of medical

laborers with far more responsibility and a higher pay grade. "In the army hospitals of the United States as at present organized, the dressings are usually made by the surgeons, assistant surgeons, and medical cadets, and comparatively seldom by the hospital stewards" (299).

When I say that Whitman adopts the medical gaze, I therefore do not want to give a simplistic reading of his poetry as documentary, but as a complication of medicine that nevertheless accepts its epistemological premise. His idea of absorption, however, roots in the material context of the hospital. Sans sewage and plumbing, many Civil War hospitals and especially field hospitals thus indeed merged water and blood, and both entered the soil as nurses and orderlies disposed of waste.[92] In a period before anti-microbial regimes, the spaces of surgery, embalming, and nursing often lacked running water. Nurses cleaned soldiers' corpses with running water as the main solvent, at most mixed with what today would probably be mild soaps. Waterways, as I will discuss below, took up the blood of patients, fusing the building with the soil. We know of the chaotic situations in the military hospitals from which arose the nurse and so much of the medical profession of the second half of the nineteenth century, and Whitman's Dresser stands defeated and resilient, inside the hospital's logic and outside it.

Whatever his rank, Whitman's Dresser manages to strip blood of its affective

92 The question of sanitation and drainage dominates much of the medical literature. As an example stands an 1862 report of the prison camp and hospital at Camp Douglas, near Chicago, Illinois: "The grounds are so low that no drainage, without much expense, can be had. Every rain converts the camp into a mud-hole, and in consequence of the flatness of the ground and the want of drainage, all the filth and refuse of the company quarters, of the men's sinks, and of the hospital, are to be removed *only* by the process of evaporation. Already there exists in and around the company quarters and hospital sufficient animal and vegetable matter to contaminate the whole camp and generate fevers of the most malignant type" (MSH III.1 64) Though most hospitals were in much better shape, the admixture of blood and water in and around them would not have been a remarkable sight.

force by adopting a nurse's medical gaze. The more blood is visible, the more Whitman needs to refer to "the story," the case narrative that spells inevitable death, but that contradicts Whitman's interest in individuals, in persons, in private information.

> "I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep,
> But a day or two more, for see the frame all wasted and sinking,
> And the yellow-blue countenance see.
> I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet-wound,
> Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so sicken-
> ing, so offensive,
> While the attendant stands behind aside me holding the tray and
> pail." (DT 244)

As he listens to soldiers and writes letters to their families, his poetry deflects the flood of individual tragedy by referring to the loss of blood, a quantifiable measure of life and death. The catalog turns into a collection of symptoms, the poem into a diagnosis. Indeed, as Gross mentioned, the "fatal despondency" is quite contagious, also for those who nurse the dying (31). Existential fears and epistemological anxieties result in a turn to medical narratives.

The destabilizing force of blood extends far beyond the present moment, however. Blood indicates crisis, and, as Dennis Joel Reader notes, "America was failing, for anyone to see, and Walt Whitman was frightened" (68). This affective disturbance stays with Whitman throughout the War and later leads to images of doubling and disruption, to an uncanny, gothic D.C. where the past blood lingers in the blood-free capitol, not unlike Reizenstein's New Orleans:

> To-night, beautiful women, perfumes, the violins' sweetness, the polka and the waltz; but then, the amputation, the blue face, the groan, the glassy eye of the dying, the clotted rag, the odor of wounds and blood, and many a mother's son amid strangers, passing away untended there, (for the crowd of the badly hurt was great, and much for nurse to do, and much for surgeon.) (*Memoranda* 44)

Blood troubles the present because, I argue, the present political imaginary insufficiently justifies its presence. Whitman feels an out-of-placeness not just of blood, but of those who witnessed it, who know blood. Blood itself assaults the senses, displacing national sentiment with affective disorientation, filling the mind with its bright red color, its smell, its heat, its sticky, liquidity that find no suitable expression in political discourse. How should citizens, even visionary ones like Whitman be able to put aside the lived experience of blood if the nation's most prominent politicians engaged in vicious use of just that experience?

This crisis also extended beyond just Whitman's writings. For example, the "bloody shirt" rhetoric remained a fixture in Congressional fights throughout and after the War, as historian David W. Blight reminds us (*Race and Reunion* 51). Representative Thaddeus Stevens' closing remarks of a debate about the Fourteenth Amendment displays the multiple layers of affect and politics during and after the War, also echoing Whitman's olfactory focus: "I do not wish to sit side by side with men whose garments *smell* of the blood of my kindred" (qtd. in Marion M. Miller 445, my emphasis). The garment drenched in blood signaled the abnormality, the disruption of fashion, etiquette, and cleanliness in the War. The cherished memorial relic, and the hatred, the outrage at the bloody deed materialized in a tangible item.

As Blight remarks dryly, the difference forgiving the Confederate states or insisting on retributive restructuring depended largely on "how politicians remembered or forgot the 'blood' from the war" (*Race and Reunion* 52). In each moment, political enmity and rhetoric collapses into the flood of traumatized memory of the real blood the politicians had seen. The emotional appeal seized on the shared affective dimension of

the War, Blight argues, to establish guilt and express hatred.

For Whitman, such spatio-temporal disruption due to blood always harks back to the moment of anxiety, when the poet's language fails his project of celebrating the nation. Blood even disrupts the glory of a victory parade, a powerful nationalist ritual if there ever was one. As the regiments march past Whitman during the Victory Review parade, May 23-24, 1865, blood haunts and disrupts his enthusiasm for the national symbolism:

> 5th—& 146th NY
> The flags! the flags! the flags tatters & shreds—
> not the gaudy
> some of the men with bunches of flowers
> stuck in their hats
> The flags
> the blood—wet blood
> the ardor, devotion
> as they pass—
> (*Civil War* 779)

The "wet blood" is out of keeping as it brings the bleeding to life and gives the inquiry a freshness that denies the closure celebrated by the parade and once more turns the public space into a doubled, uncanny battlefield, troubling the spatial and temporal boundaries established by the nation. The tattered flag stands as an image of survival and so does a closed wound, but the fresh blood, not a crusted stain, is too intrusive to ignore.[93]

Such efforts were not limited to history proper, but part of a general effort at

93 Whitman was not alone in this association most popularly expressed in Archibald Willard's 1876 iconic painting *Spirit of '76*. Yet even Willard, himself a Civil War veteran, bandages the bleeding Revolutionary veteran and uses the contrast of red on white to indicate the battle wounds, while ensuring the viewer that the wounds have been taken care of, the bleeding stopped. David W. Blight points out that "Walt Whitman's never-ending quest to comprehend the convulsiveness of the Civil War can serve as a mirror of the larger culture's tendencies toward a reconciliation that would postpone, or evade altogether, its racial reckoning" (*Race and Reunion* 22). Despite this perhaps simplistic idea of reflection, Blight correctly reads Whitman's sensitivity to the remaining tensions in the national imaginary and his ability to anticipate solutions for these tensions.

framing the War's blood so as to give it meaning. Visions and the smell of blood surge up suddenly, in moments of traumatized affect, in the sensory experiences that fade away, but that were important to Whitman. A decade after the war's end, Whitman warns that, "Already, the events of 1861–65, and the seasons that immediately preceded, as well as those that closely follow'd them, have lost their direct personal impression, and the living heat and excitement of their own time, and are being marshall'd for casting, or getting ready to be cast, into the cold and bloodless electrotype plates of History" (*Memoranda* 65). To him, Reconstruction efforts to reinterpret the Civil War are so many representations of the events, Hawthornian daguerreotypes that affirm the national imaginary by ejecting the blood from its narrative.

This change lies not in the quantity but the quality of the literary description of blood. Despite this radical self-difference, the majority of Civil War ephemera follow a well-trodden rhetoric of military solace, of consolation for grieving family members, lovers, relatives, as Drew Gilpin Faust and Mark S. Schantz brilliantly illustrate, forever melding death and citizenship through the ritual of a good death and proper mourning.

Whitman runs counter to the general literary tendency to leave the blood behind. Contemporaries certainly recoiled at the massive bloodshed of the Civil War, though much of Civil War poetry mentions blood in some form, as I explained in the last chapter. For instance, Elizabeth Akers Allen's "Spring at the Capital" initially acknowledges that the beauty of a D.C. spring day is hard to reconcile with the awareness of the War: "How distant seems the war's red flood!/How far remote the streaming wounds, the sickening scent of human blood!" (qtd. in Barrett and Miller 110). It seems that the War is not merely metaphorical, but epistemic and somatic, an affective crisis in the national

imaginary.

Here I want to return to and stress the concept of absorption I introduced above. It turns out that absorption is more than a cognitive process. To absorb the blood also means to consider its materiality, and the relation between the blood of the body and the cosmos to which both are a part. Allen's poem ultimately dismisses the initial clear view on the blood with a recuperative gesture to "Nature," who heals all: "When blood her grassy altar wets,/She sends the pitying violets/to heal the outrage with their bloom, and cover it with soft regrets" (111). The utter banality of Allen's violets that cover up the blood-stained grass echoes sentiments of a nation at war with itself, yet often removed from the battles in its back yard. The poem ends on a note of hope, trusting "that these battle-stains are but the blood-red trouble of the dawn," ultimately turning the blood of the destroyed, maimed, and wounded into a sunrise, a most optimistic and progressive image (qtd. in Barrett and Miller 111).

Nature is no absorptive principle, but a floral cover for the "outrage" against eh senses, gently displacing the destabilization of the national imaginary with sentiment. Compare this to Whitman's observation of a battle: "There they lie, in the largest, in an open space in the woods, from 500 to 600 poor fellows—the groans and screams—the odor of blood, mixed with the fresh scent of the night, the grass, the trees—that Slaughter-house!—O well is it their mothers, their sisters cannot see them—cannot conceive, and never conceived, these things" (*Memoranda* 14-5). Ignorance of reality is bliss, but Whitman does not equate this to a cover of flowers. The blood must be expressed by the poet, taken in and absorbed as part of the real War.

Until the century's end texts like Allen's contributed an iconography in the

construction of a national imaginary, transposing the affective horror into familiar tropes and thus resolved the epistemic crisis—the affective assault that made a lie of narratives praising the nation as civilized, progressive, liberal, hygienic. Political documents like the "Gettysburg Address" gained prominence over the bitterly partisan speeches of Thaddeus Stevens.[94] Literature like Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward's 1868 *The Gates Ajar* focused on the bloodless heavenly thereafter, while Stephen Crane's 1893 *The Red Badge of Courage* used prose narrative to frame the desired closure and distance from "the red sickness of battle," which according to Crane was a "sultry nightmare" of the past, not of the future, the longed-for "existence of soft and eternal peace" (231).

Whitman continued his poetic use of natural elements, of course, but not to hide or digest, as it were, blood, but to absorb it like the cosmos' bandage. An under-studied poem from *Drum-Taps* illustrates the extent to which medical concepts of absorption pervaded Whitman's reaction to the Civil War even in nature metaphors. "Pensive, on her dead gazing, I heard the Mother of All" describes a mythical "Mother" gazing on the destroyed bodies of the sons of the United States, mere "forms," not grievable human bodies in the sense of the national ideal(*DT* 71). The "Mother" calls upon "her" earth to absorb her sons' blood in its waterways: "absorb them well, taking their dear/blood;" Whitman adopts not the poetic verbiage of pantheism to explain the merge of Nature and human body, but stresses that the absorbing earth "lose not an atom," addressing geological structures through the image of the natural sciences (71).

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94 Of course the "Address" was delivered on a battlefield that, as Historian Gabor S. Boritt describes, itself resembled one of Whitman's doubled spaces, which we see in Boritt's description: "Mans, shrieks, weeping, and prayer fill the houses, the barns, the tents, the fields and woods, the whole era. The land itself seems to wail. Nothing but suffering. Sights, sounds, smells unbearable. Horror. The piles of limbs dripping blood, the dying, the dead. Hell on earth" (8).

Is there another frame of reference in which the blood could be absorbed? Under which it is possible for an atom to "be lost?" Is it a matter of nature? Science knew of the law of the conservation of mass since Antoine Lavoisier in the 1780s. Whitman was struggling with the implications of the dissolution of the national body politick through the individual body just as scientists were considering these questions. Whitman focuses on blood as the vexing key to the workings of reality, the medium that connects humans to their environment and each other, but also forever divides them. He is squarely rooted in diverse scientific and pseudoscientific discourses, so the use of "essences" is both a bio-chemical and spiritual idea in which earth and the air immediately above it absorb and return in winds the essence of blood, even centuries later, a reparatory displacement of the crisis into the future.[95]

I want to be specific and stress that this absorption of blood is related to, but not identical with compost. Of course, absorption could also be read as an image of the human body returning to its natural source, the return of dust to dust.). Dead *bodies* pose no problem for the poet of the body—Whitman famously chanted "the white features of corpses" already in his 1855 "*Leaves of Grass*" poem that became "The Sleepers" (LG 710). As Franny Nudelman and others have argued, Whitman's concept of the natural life cycle seems to replace the trauma with an image of natural regeneration and holistic

95 Note that to focus on the blood in the 1865 edition leads me to different conclusions than well-known arguments regarding the body in later Civil War texts. Whitman's recuperative projection outlines a nation within the boundaries of the white, homosocial national imaginary. Carolyn Sorisio also reads Whitman also as advocating a merge, but points out that the idea of intermixture and seduction is threatening to women who tried to claim their bodies, to U.S. cultural domestic order, and most of all to those who were erased by the merge, African Americans and Native Americans (*Fleshing* 200-2). Unfortunately, Sorisio neither reads *Drum-Taps* nor does she mention Dickinson, so her interesting text falls mostly outside the present argument.

purpose.

In later writing, Nudelman shows that Whitman's own struggle with the Civil War eventually echoes the narrative plot of unity in the hereafter, of boundless passion erupted into unbridled violence and healed by fraternal love. His poetry associates the soldier's corpse with the soil into which it turns, as Nudelman has carefully explained and rationalizes the corpses and bloodshed he encountered by pointing to a natural cycle of organic transformation, and she claims that Melville contradicts this "organicist vision of a war as part of a natural cycle of death and regeneration" (*Body* 97

Blood is not the body. In a sense, I begin my narrative where Nudelman's leaves off when she points out that the abstraction of violence through sympathy and nationalism went "hand in hand" to form a collectivity of violence instead of a collective consolation ("Blood" 664). Beyond this, the absorption of fallen sons into the mother country's fertile soil also points to the oedipal dimension of Civil War remembrance. My final chapter enlarges on the role of blood in the Gilded Age U.S. as a continuation of slavocratic cultural logic, a stubborn obsession with death and questions about the grievable body, to abuse Judith Butler's term, of African-American and even Confederate soldiers (*Precarious* 34).

And yet, blood is not the body. For instance, even though Franny Nudelman specifically covers the 1865 *Drum-Taps*, she nevertheless focuses on the 1891-2 edition to make her case for "Whitman's wartime writing," which to her shows that "close scrutiny of the dead does not necessarily temper the project of nation building through war" (*Body* 83). The glossing of textual history leads to a conflation of bloodshed and corpse: whereas I focus on the shock that the still-living, near-living, injured, bleeding, or

just now deceased and thus precarious body conveys in the authors, Nudelman reads the body on the scaffold, the tortured slave, the moldering corpse, and the war victim as one and the same figure. Thus, blood is already a metaphor on the scaffold, but never, or so it seems, an actual material fluid ("Blood" 643, 648-9). Even though sentimental fiction emphasizes the corporeality of characters, these bodies never really appear in a somatic experience, but only as immediately re-framed in a rival ideology ("Blood" 646).

As the poem struggles with the blood of the soldiers, blood is bespoken, not defined, in increasingly helpless, traumatized terms. Initially, the "Mother" calls on the waterways to take the dead soldiers' "dear blood." As I mentioned above, the waterways around hospitals would clearly carry blood. In an effort to exhaust established frames of reference to understand blood and to understand the shed blood, however, Whitman goes on and expands the meaning of absorption in an attempt to reconcile scientific and material dimensions with its Christian significance. Blood, after all, is the sacrificial blood of Christ, offered to the faithful in the Last Supper (Matt. 26:28). He draws on Christian symbols to merge the material with the spiritual, the concreted with the abstract.

Whitman's parallel between topography and anatomy infuses water with blood in running water, an overt allusion here to a complex of tradition Christian symbols, blood, and running water. These fluids are commonly associated with death, the overcoming of death through the acceptance of Christ's self-sacrifice, and the Christian baptism, the ritual most universally focused on the question of life-in-death and death-in-life. Most central is the issuing forth of water and blood from the wound in Christ's side—reminiscent of the deep wound in the side the Dresser describes (John 19:34; DT 32).

This explains why the water in the poem does not wash away the blood, but absorbs it, just like Christ absorbs and redeems all human suffering.

The fusion of blood and water offers the restorative image of Christ's crucifixion: in the shedding of sacrificial blood, Christ offers souls the gift of eternal life in the kingdom one earth (Matthew 26:27-8, John 6:33). Baptism, preferably in living, i.e. running water, prepares the believer to receive this divine gift. To Whitman, the merge of blood and water restores the body politic to a pre-lapsarian, ideal unity. The mutual baptism of land and "essence" returns the "essence" to the land and its inhabitants in the future. Again we see the temporal dimension of blood as derived from biblical text, but with an emphasis on change, on initiation. We will revisit this crucial distinction between eternal past of the Hebrew bible and the redemptive moment of choice and change in chapter five with regard to scientific racism.

This spiritual consolation results from different motives, though. Unlike the precious, sacrificial blood of Christ, Whitman and the people of the nation cannot praise this trickling, staining blood, but must both absorb it and remove it. This theological dimension does not offer epistemic stability to the convulsive return of the blood and the affective disruption of what seems settled. The poem returns to the absorption of the children's "blood, trickling, redden'd" into forests (DT 71). Whitman amends the sons' "dear blood" by the recalling of the trickle and the stain, of material blood that *Drum-Taps* addresses over and over, the flowing, dripping, staining blood it wants to absorb.

What seems obvious, the blood, is in fact the central problem for Whitman. Once more the poem returns in a desperate struggle for definition expressed in hyperbolic repetition: "My dead absorb—my young men's beautiful bodies absorb —and their

precious, precious, precious blood." The repetition of "precious" raises more questions than it answers. The blood is "precious, precious, precious" to the "Mother," but why? The poem does not define blood, explaining wherein its value lies. Instead, blood becomes charged with a multitude of seeming associations that only lead to more questions without clarifying the precious nature. What constitutes the *pretiōsus* character of blood? Is it monetary, affective, or both? Is the blood more precious than the body? If the body politic depends on the cycle of money as well as the cycle of blood in a process of consumption and expenditure or, in the poem's terms, absorption and exhalation then we seem to be speaking about a kind of bio-theological respiratory cycle. But then why is this blood different from other plant or animal substance? One thing is clear: read in the context of the entire volume, nature in "Pensive" is no absolute, perfect, and safe principle of reality that blades of grass still offered in 1855.

This crisis in the Romantic conception of nature is the reason medicine becomes so important to Whitman. The threatening trickle of blood, the bleeding that cannot be staunched recalls the Dresser's Sisyphean "bandages, water and sponge," those modern instruments of absorption and blood-stilling: "An attendant follows, holding a tray—he carries a refuse pail,/Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied, and fill'd again" (DT 33).

So here we see the change that Whitman's writing about blood and the nation undergoes during the Civil War: to Whitman, a soldier's blood symbolically validates

that soldier's claim to citizenship as a sacrifice.[96] This process becomes problematic when we consider what this notion of blood silently drops from consideration. What role does the blood of U.S. citizens who swear an oath to the C.S.A. play? What the blood of non-citizen combatants? Is it a sacrifice for the nation if the blood is shed by immigrants, by African-American contraband, by Native Americans, by free blacks, and by fighting women?

Medical narratives intervene at this point by accessing the soldier's blood as that of a patient instead of a citizen, cleaning it up, and seeing it as a symptom, not a problem in itself. Medical practice offers a socio-political frame through which to read the epistemic crisis of blood, the appearance of the abject. Again, the question of absorption of blood lies at the heart of the affective force. The nation must absorb the liquid, take it in, literally and metaphorically suck it up into a vampiric nationalism that grows stronger through the love, even desire for the blood of its fallen children.

As I mentioned at the outset, Whitman's familiarity with hospital practice makes this change in his thinking not entirely surprising; I add that the same can be said for his poetic style. Here I want to return to the relation between the literary function of Whitman's poetry and absorption that I examined at the beginning of this chapter. At the outset, we saw that Robert Leigh Davis uses the term "romance" to describe Whitman's efforts in the hospital. This is a useful term to untangle the relation of form and politics

96 In one of the few considerations of the topic, journalist Barbara Ehrenreich suggests that the blood of a soldier fighting for a nation is a displacement of the aristocratic bloodline that replaces the king's with the nation's blood (200). After a century of heavy-handed propaganda, two World Wars, Vietnam, Korea and other bloody wars, it is almost impossible to imagine what the bleeding soldier might have meant in the 1860s. However, it seems certain that simple equations of citizen and soldier, of injury and valor needed narrative support, and more than that provided by Hawthorne's valiant citizen-turned-soldier-turned-knight of the 1848 U.S.-Mexican War.

that we began in the first two chapters, especially with reference to the difference between Hawthorne and Reizenstein's writing about blood I described in the first chapter. As I explained, Hawthorne's Romance attempts a compromise of history and imagninary by narrating a space between *mimesis* and *poiesis* even as its narrative poetically distorts history to construct a liberal-progressive domestic sphere. His distorted Romance expels blood and distances the nation state from the blood shed by the aristocratic sovereign. The narrative of that what should be bespeaks in measured long prose made amenable to its market function. Reizenstein's sensational serial, on the other hand, frames its fiction with history and pushes readers away from ideology.

Of course Whitman's poetry functions not inside this distinction as much as in relation to it. The parallel between the Romance and Whitman's free verse is striking. The poet embraces the medical prose narrative as a neutral and objective source of factual information not unlike Hawthorne's narrator and his own all-containing self. Such texts also consciously position themselves in relation to social prestige and political power, which, as we have seen in Dickinson's textbook, is merely surface.

Although many practitioners dabbled in the literary marketplace—Silas Weir Mitchell, John Kearsley Mitchell, John Keats, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. come to mind—their medical writings insist that medical texts are above that marketplace, even as they advertise the usefulness of the physician to the nation through elaborate prose. Yet these same authors avoid the formal features of fiction and poetry which would suggest invention, unreliability, and thus doubt. Like Whitman's poetry, these texts testify to the porous boundary between *mimesis* and *poiesis* as they describe blood. Medical prose provides a means to bespeak this absorption, to produce sense, to fit

the disruptive blood into a larger national imaginary. Verse and meter of established poetic forms could yield Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man,* a reading of reality through philosophy, but not absorptive poems like Whitman's beautiful effort to posit reality as philosophy.

Now we see the formal difference between the Romantic catalogs in *Leaves of Grass* and Whitman's use of absorption as a tool to write a poem of what he called "America," the spiritual and material sum total of the United States past, present, and future, expressed through the cosmos incarnate in the here and now. In his nationalism arises a dichotomy between our real, sticky, smelly blood and the abstraction of the nation's blood. For Whitman, absorbing blood is not merely a game with the physics of metaphors, but a political position that clarifies his thinking about blood and the nation. This denial of self and denial of blood shed on the battlefields solves the cognitive dissonance that arises in the repeating confrontation of individual and nationalist collective, of private critique and greater good, particular and general, local and federal.

We can thus return and examine absorption again, in contrast to the poetic mode Whitman is perhaps best known for, the long lists and catalogs. The root of the term "absorption" is *sorbēre* or sucking in, swallowing overtly marks a present agent. This agent who sucks in or swallows is present before or at the very least exactly at the same moment of this action. The concept therefore at least in part hints at an othering process that underlies and precedes this mode; obviously this is a different presupposition than that of the cosmic self that is equal with all others on an atomic level ("For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you" LG 3).

Up to this point, the tension in textual considerations of blood exists between a

careful consideration of its implications, a working-through of sorts, and the expulsion of these connotations by the stroke of a pen that defines it, denotes it, that renders it the invisible, spectral core of the nation. In absorption, Whitman succeeds to resolve this tension. But by drawing on the medical context, this resolution becomes lopsided, building on the diagnostic gaze of medicine that ultimately stabilizes blood as a signifier without ever addressing the epistemological implications of the War's blood.

Through absorption, a quasi-dialectical mode appears. Absorption directly relates to a Hegelian *Aufhebung* according to which the process of the absolute absorbs all finite concrete manifestations of contradiction. To absorb means, as Friedrich Hegel discusses, that thesis and antithesis undergo not reversion or cancellation, but a mutual infusion. In this the thesis is not lost, but contained in its positive aspects and exceeded in its negative ones in the antithesis, leading to a more advanced synthesis. The supposedly more advanced stage stores and indexes the lesser one—the medical diagnosis of blood overcomes the political struggle over blood. Applied to this tension of blood, the contradiction between its unbounded, threatening fluidity and polyvocal quality and its definable, affirmative concreteness and valence seems to result not in an endorsement of the unknowable in the knowable. In Whitman's absorption, the act of diagnosing is a performance that fills the threatening silence and lacuna at the heart of blood. Read in the political context, this is a position in favor of political expansion.

The hospital as Whitman sees it provides the means to practice and bespeak absorption, to live the hygienic imperative of progressive-liberal domesticity and its expulsion of blood. The bandage and the sponge, the tray and the pail are not just things. They are emblems of absorption, containers that set boundaries for blood, that limit its

excess and transgression, making its expulsion possible and protecting the civilized, non-bloodied domestic space. With them, Whitman can progress and move on past the Civil War without silencing history and in this way overcomes the tension between *mimesis* and *poiesis*. The "cold and bloodless electrotype plates of History" do not express the nation as Whitman saw it—though they do remind us of Holgrave's daguerreotypes as the last step in divorcing the nation from its genesis in Hawthorne's national imaginary.

As the next chapter explain in more detail, the turn to medicine is itself a political stance, even though Whitman did not see it as such. Yet his effort at combating ideological theories of history with lived history fall because he assumes medicine to exist outside social constructions of the body and the diagnostic gaze of anatomy to convey at least a glimpse of an extra-political Truth.

Also, Whitman himself acknowledged that his ideal process of absorption does not describe the general attitude toward memorialization of the War. Instead of holding on to the experience, the nation's leaders and the history books were all too eager to write hagiographies and sentimental accounts of heroism. We remember Reizenstein's warning that a disavowal of the bloody history leads to an uncanny nation haunted by the specters of past blood. This is precisely what Whitman sees in the nation's capital during Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Ball, March 6, 1865, in the "gorgeous array'd dance and supper-rooms" of the Old Patent Building, whose dazzling splendor does not help Whitman forget the historical haunt of blood:

> I could not help thinking of those rooms, where the music will sound and the dancers' feet presently tread—what a different scene they presented to my view a while since, fill'd with a crowded mass of the worst wounded of the war, brought in from Second Bull Run, Antietam and Fredericksburg. To-night, beautiful women, perfumes, the violins'

> sweetness, the polka and the waltz; but then, the amputation, the blue face, the groan, the glassy eye of the dying, the clotted rag, the odor of wounds and blood, and many a mother's son amid strangers, passing away untended there, (for the crowd of the badly hurt was great, and much for nurse to do, and much for surgeon.) (*Memoranda* 44)

In Whitman's eyes, the spaces of the Old Patent Building exist in a spectral twinning, with the past and the present. The simultaneity of blood and ball, pungent wound and perfumed waltz is not a comment on something aesthetically distasteful. This epiphany of History's shortcomings ("History" capitalized as the victor's narrative) makes clear to Whitman how much the sight and smell of blood disrupts the hygienic nation, the "bloodless electrotype plates." Without absorbing the blood *as* blood, the author cannot disable this affective force. History becomes a façade for an unspeakable and therefore unspoken past. As we will see in the next chapter, even a physician like Edward H. Dixon, whom we might guess immune to such ideas of gothic blood, felt the pull of blood, this unspeakable, unsettling dimension of blood.

This brings me to the way Whitman's absorption wrestles with the material dimension of blood. He attempts to turn his entire text into an absorptive medium, even in its physical form. Against the "cold and bloodless electrotype plates of History" he pits the blood-stained pages of the notebooks he kept in the hospitals (*Memoranda* 65). To rescue the events' "direct personal impression, and the living heat and excitement of their own time," he attempts to create books—made by just such a cold press, even if Whitman himself set the text—that contain the life itself, the life blood of the struggle (65).

Poetry becomes a relic to contain the nation's truth. The genesis of his Civil War poems from the notebooks in relation to blood confirms this reading of his poetics as politics. The poems result, sometimes without much change, from reports, sketches, and

jotted notes in his notebooks, which stand as the central relic of Whitman's recuperative iconography. They make possible a redemptive rescue of the national imaginary through the absorption of blood, giving rise to *Drum-Taps*, *Memoranda*, and much of *Specimen Days* that absorb the blood of the War both metaphorically and literally.

His Civil War notebooks are more than just text: "I leave them just as I threw them by during the War, blotch'd here and there with more than one blood-stain, hurriedly written, sometimes at the clinique [*sic*], not seldom amid the excitement of uncertainty, or defeat, or of action, or getting ready for it, or a march" (*Memoranda* 4). The presence of material blood on the pages of the notebooks lends authenticity to the content of the text and establishes an aura, to adopt Walter Benjamin's term ("Work of Art" 221). Whitman's sense of individuality uniqueness and authenticity or truth attempts to bridge the unspeakable and the printed word, anchoring the text in the *real* blood of soldiers.

Of course we must nto be naïve. This is still literature, printed by the same cold press as history books. Not even Whitman's brilliance change that. There *are* blood stains, but this presentation of evidence also rehearses a well-established prose convention in the appeal to veracity—again a parallel to Hawthorne stands out in the latter's famous "Custom House" preface to *The Scarlet Letter* that feigns a real fabric patch as the material witness to the story. The overt gesture toward the relation of text and reader, of the author and the customer in the literary marketplace, and between representation and documentation brings Whitman's poems close to prose conventions. And yet Whitman's choices clearly indicate to me that within this market place, *Drum-Taps* stands out. He overtly stresses the relic-like quality of *Drum-Taps* when he changes

the cover of the second edition from lush green to blood-red fabric in October, 1865—from the color of grass to the color of blood.[97] The volume itself looks as though it were soaked in blood, just like the notebooks that are its source.

Whitman himself "can never turn their tiny leaves, or even take one in my hand, without the actual army sights and hot emotions of the time rushing like a river in full tide through" him (*Memoranda* 4). However, Whitman's bespeaking *of* veracity also indicates his anxieties about efforts to convey what he sees as the true or real War, as the truth of the nation, not "History." Blood and its aura absorb and thus congeal not only Whitman's labor, but also the affective dimension of the War, keeping the wounds from drying up even as they serve a larger narrative.

So the change in Whitman's writing about blood is about absorption. The Dresser offers his pails and bandages to absorb the river that threatens to drown Whitman's sense of control. Whitman's poems absorb that which terrifies most: the real blood, but not by denying it, by resorting to "bloody shirt" divisiveness, ancient heroes, or Allen's "trouble of the dawn" (Blight, *Race and Reunion* 51; qtd. in Barrett and Miller 111). They frame blood in a system of signs that does not deny the material reality of blood, which it even stresses, but that blots it, defines it through absorption into a network of signifiers like

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97 For the publication history of *Drum-Taps*, see also DeWolfe Miller, Moon (*Disseminating* 234), and Gutman. Also see the groundbreaking scholarly work presented during the 2005 "Whitman Making Books Books Making Whitman Symposium" at the University of Iowa's Obermann's Center for Advanced Studies, and the commentary published by Ed Folsom on the *Walt Whitman Archive*. In my argument, I examine how the cycle reflects the first published experience of the Civil War and therefore base my readings exclusively on the April or May, 1865 first edition, with occasional references to the second edition *Sequel* as they are borne out by Genoways' evidence ("Disorder" 101-3), and making reference to other texts, poems, and editions only when relevant to this paper. My research is based on the *Whitman Archive's* photographic scans of an 1865 edition of *Drum-Taps*, held by the University of Iowa Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives, which DeWolfe does not list in his census of copies, cross-referenced for errors with Moon's critical edition and DeWolfe Miller's facsimile (liv).

pails, sponges, scalpels, probes, and bandages, into rituals and instruments that are national, a language for all sides to "speak" blood in books.

Drum-Taps makes room for the terrifying *aporia* of blood, but only to absorb it, to introduce the new national narrative of nurse and surgeon, of objective solutions for the epistemic crisis. As Anthony Szczesiul has shown, over the course of many more editions of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman ultimately re-worked this glimpse of the epistemic unraveling into a reconciliatory progress of historic progress, not the "History" he decries as "cold and bloodless" (131). Much like the textbook theory we saw in the last chapter, the professionalization of medical practice was no politically neutral social process, and it had its own "History," its own glossing and elisions of blood.

Whitman correctly identified the newest powerful force in the nation. As Charles Rosenberg reminds us about the real hospital in antebellum America, it was "a battleground for the conflicting values of traditional stewardship and the priorities of an emerging profession than as the coherent expression of a carefully-articulated vision of society. In so diffuse a setting, the patient could still maintain a degree of psychological autonomy despite the pain and deprivation which might characterize his external life" (429). Deeper and broader coordination of social and medical concerns arose, too, in boards of health, medical treatment in schools, professional school nurses, vaccination, and a pharmaceutical industry contributed to the image of a "public health" and orthodox medicine, which had long vied for dominance against homeopathy, a central social force. During the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction, the hospital and the school became inter-locked institutions in which blood comes to mean something new and different, and this change is visible in literature. As we will see in the next chapter, practitioners traversed

these institutions with political as much as therapeutic views of blood.

The conspicuous absence in Whitman's poem is the connection between blood and race. Ariela J. Gross and others point out that to speak of "blood" in an abstract way always elides its unsettling racial meanings and performs a privileged notion of equality that already created gendered, raced, and classed hierarchies decades before Jim Crow laws and the one drop rule that we again encounter in chapter six. Frederick Douglass' *Narrative* mentions blood frequently because he was aware of it first-hand, saw it, and remembered it as part of lived reality on plantations and beyond.

Compared to his text, Whitman's ringing praise of New York cityscapes is strikingly bloodless. Likewise, Sojourner Truth, herself a nurse in Civil War hospitals, knew other things about blood than either Whitman or Dickinson, and was perhaps not privileged enough to be able to be shocked by the blood (Truth, *Narrative* 183-4). Blood's affective force itself is a classed and raced marker. As we will see in the next chapter, this idea of absorption also has a disturbing, racist underside, though, and we can see why William Wells Brown, more aware of all dimensions of blood than Whitman, prefers to avoid any notion of occult blood.

He knew enough of the real thing not to have to look to blood as a gothic trapping to justify his practice. We will return to this topic in the last two chapters, but especially after Emancipation, the blood of African American soldiers became a matter of concern in the mid-nineteenth century, if not before, then certainly after the infamous Miscegenation pamphlet of the 1864 election, as Sidney Kaplan reminds us. This anonymous anti-Lincoln text, written by *New York World* journalists David Goodman Croly and George Wakeman, satirized claims for black and white equality. In ironic

exaggeration, it endorses biological reproduction between black and white U.S. citizens so as to improve them in a common race—an inflammatory stance in the heated political climate before Lincoln's reelection. Here we see the other way that, as Whitman said in the Lincoln lecture with which I opened this chapter, blood condenses "a Nationality" (Prose Works 314). While Whitman saw the blood on the battlefield, that in hospitals, and, at least in his mind, the blood of Lincoln, blood as the new carrier of race seems to have slipped right by him.

Chapter Four — Occult Blood: Medical Narratives, and the Medical Performance in William Wells Brown and Edward H. Dixon

> "Black blood of sin and red blood of Klan, mingle, mingle./Black blood of black sin — Run-ika ! — Run-ika Ku Klux!" – Edward H. Dixon, M.D.
>
> ". . . there is no such thing as 'pure white blood' . . . " – William Wells Brown, M.D.

My discussion of how blood and literature mutually inform each other began with the wrestling of nationalism with the legacy of sovereignty. It then turned to the dissemination of antebellum notions of blood invested with politics, something we might call hemopolitics, through middle-class pedagogies and taxonomy. Chapter three examined Whitman's struggle to uphold a progressive-liberal, nationalist narrative in the face of the Civil War and the promises of medicine as the absorbing practice and epistemological framing of blood. To Whitman, medical practice is able to still the "trick'ling" blood, as he says, and to cover the odor of a nation in peril with the hygienic scent of progress. Yet in many ways Civil War medicine presents an exception from medical practice. The War remains a marker for the birth of the contemporary hospital, for surgical expertise, the nursing profession, and the involvement of the federal government in medicine.[98] Civil War medicine was experimental and driven by a unique set of circumstances, so what role did blood play in medical texts that are not about the Civil War?

This chapter therefore follows two questions: how did nineteenth-century medical

98 On Civil War medicine, see Humphreys' *Marrow of Tragedy* (2013), Freemon's *Gangrene and Glory* (1998), and especially Ira Rutkow's extremely useful *Bleeding Blue and Grey* (2005).

practice regarding blood relate to literature and how did medical practice and theory relate to their social context? The chapter begins by sketching the period around the Civil War in medical history to frame the reading of texts by William Wells Brown (1814-84). Brown writes about bloodletting therapies as it was used on plantations under chattel slavery in complicated scenes of blackface minstrelsy. I detail that he tends away from this therapy in his own practice later and that he avoids bloodshed even when he is attacked by the Ku Klux Klan in 1871. I argue that his awareness to the semantic slipperiness of blood and its relation to racist violence leads him to avoid blood where possible and to reject readings of blood as what I consider an occult concept.

I then move to texts by Edward H. Dixon (1808-1880), beginning with his overt reliance on this occult or mysterious, opaque blood as the essence and physical dimension of race. His gory post-bellum, sensational novella about the Klan illustrates how the occult blood can displace any rational understanding of blood itself. Finally, I trace Dixon's use of blood back to his antebellum medical narratives and argue that this occult quality of blood does not stand in contrast to his medical ideas of blood, but forms a logical extension thereof.

Dr. Brown, an African-American practitioner best known for his creative fiction and Dr. Dixon, a white author known for his medical writings and practice differ in their medical views on the social function of medical praxis, which Brown sees as a social performance, but which Dixon sees as the application and confirmation of medical theory in reality. Both, however, take these positions against the social upheavals of Reconstruction and with special attention regarding an organization that condenses several blood discourses: the Ku Klux Klan.

While Brown survives an attack by the Klan by performing medicine in the guise of conjuring and thus keeps the entire encounter blood free, Dixon writes a gothic novella that reveals the occult quality blood achieves in his medical theory and praxis. His white fantasies of occult blood result in sensational scenes of blood as a gothic substance, as both, the mysterious essence of race and something to drink, write with, smear, and spill. Dixon's medical texts, finally, only superficially contradict his occultism with scientific objectivity. Even his medical narratives belie their purported rationalism. They claim blood as the clinical concern for orthodox physicians, but through it far exceed medical diagnosis and therapy, ending in normative theories of a good society—a white, middle-class society—not a healthy body.

To begin, let us follow Brown's encounter with the Klan. The anecdote is part of the preface to Brown's under-studied 1874 *The Rising Son; or, The Antecedents and Advancement of the Colored Race*, a counter-history of African-American origin, history, and innovation. One autumn evening in 1871, William Wells Brown arrived by train to give a talk in Pleasureville, Kentucky. On his way to the talk, his local guide suddenly disappeared and a gang of riders appeared—a Ku Klux Klan mob out for blood. After the capture, the mob heard the news that a man named Jim seemed to be dying and the group stopped at his house (*Son* 27). Brown pretended to be a conjurer and secretly injected Jim and later the mob leader "Cap" with morphine. Insisting that he had to keep watch over the men, he delayed their assault on him. The gang left only a dog and a sleeping guard with him. While Brown mulled over whether to murder the guard, Jim's grateful wife restrained the dog and let Brown escape. Brown played with social identities and the performance of medical practice instead of trying to gain his freedom by shedding blood.

I speak more of *Son* in the next chapter, but it is clear that this is not fiction, but activist history. One Alonzo D. Moore wrote the book's preface including this episode. I regard this episode as authentic, even though we should keep in mind Ezra Greenspan's mention of *The New York Herald*'s criticism of the episode. Brown had an on-going feud with this paper, which found the details all too convenient (*Life* 452).[99] Brown's version is confirmed by short newspaper reports before this longer version appears in a letter and as a telegram in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, September 28, 1871, which outlines the general story.[100] Brown then corrected and amended the account in a letter to the editors the same day. His letter appeared the next day and I also found it re-printed in the *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 10, 1871.

Can we read this anecdote as more than a documentary snippet? Does it not also speak to Brown's relation to social practice and the relation of blood and medicine? For

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99 There are few studies on *The Rising Son* in general. Greenspan points out that it was a financial "fiasco" (*Life* 499). There are no studies of this episode, though Ezra Greenspan mentions it in the biography (*Life* 450-30). Moore appears in no scholarship or published material on Brown and no biographical data could be verified. Brown's sophisticated narrative play with life experiences renders the question of historical veracity and authenticity ultimately pointless, as such tensions should be enjoyed as part of any reading of what Ann duCille has called "Brown's brand of realism," his oscillation between documentary incentive and narrative denial of the same ("Where" 458). After all, the episode is reported by newspapers, internally coherent, possible, and plausible, and so I read Brown's report as documentary. Suffice it to say that a reading of the anecdote as pure fiction would also demand more emphasis on the gendered composition of the scene, on Brown's use of eye dialect, and on the details of the attack, which might hint at treason by the suddenly-disappeared black guide.

100 The newspaper wire runs: "AN ADVENTURE — MR. WILLIAM WELLS BROWN MEETS THE KU-KLUX OF KENTUCKY. CINCINNATI, Sept. 27. -A colored man, representing himself as Dr. William Wells Brown of Boston, and president of the National Association for the spread of temperance and night schools among the freedmen of the South, reached here last night. He states that Monday afternoon he got off the railroad train at Pleasureville, between Louisville and Lexington, and started to go five miles into the country to lecture to the freedmen, and that on the way he was surrounded by horsemen who tied his hands, leading him some distance, with the evident purpose of hanging him. Finally they came ot a house where a man was suffering from delirium tremens, to whom he administered morphine which he had with him, by the hypodermic process, bringing instant relief, and claiming to work through the devil for the purpose of taking advantage of the superstitious fears of his captors. This delayed matters and all but one or two of the men went away, to return at four o'clock. In the meantime the person left ot guard him fell asleep, and the wife of the sick man then told him that they were going to hang him and advised him to escape. He reached a railroad and too a train for this city." ("An Adventure")

one, his letter advertises Brown's composure and self-control, the same kind of affect control we remember from chapter one as the hallmark of Norbert Elias' concept of civilization. So the black practitioner who manages to keep the blood at bay claims a more advanced civilized position than his white attackers. Bloodshed at the hands of lynch mobs was far more likely at this point in Reconstruction history, when racist violence against freemen had become almost commonplace (Hannah Rosen 186-8).

So the elements of this story illustrate Brown's actions as more than just a reaction. He escaped the attackers by giving an astounding performance: the physician and expert on minstrel performance played to his audience by pretending to be a conjurer, thus gaining access to the bodies of the Klansmen. He was able to sedate his attackers because of his sophisticated medical knowledge and skill of subcutaneous opium injections. His mission itself is a sign for Brown's constant emphasis on self-control. He visited Pleasureville to speak as president of the "National Association for the Spread of Temperance and Nightschools among the Freed People of the South" a few months after he successfully presented for the Association together with Sojourner Truth in Boston, as Larry G. Murphy points out (113). In the spirit of reform movements, especially temperance and suffrage, Brown's activism aimed to educate, not agitate. He did not preach militant resistance or self-defense, but militated for literacy, against the shedding of blood and for peaceful reform. Ironically, this mission was more personal than he initially realized: he prevented the shedding of both his own and his attackers' blood.

This chapter reads Brown's Dixon's texts for the way their medical practice relates to the absence and presence of blood. As we will see, especially medical writing builds on the oscillation between material and metaphorical blood. Scholars like Ezra

Greenspan, Ivy Wilson, Ann DuCille, and Paul Gilmore read Brown as engaged with the generic conventions of the novel, the essay, the speech, the poem. They do not, however, read his texts as written by a physician, even though his medical practice appears in his writings and deserves attention. Does medicine influence his way of thinking? And how can we read Brown's few mentions of medicine in connection with the large body of text produced by Dixon? My focus on blood bridges the gap two narratives, two genres, and two authors, between the claim for rational objectivity of medical writing and the gothic excess of a violent and racist tract. I propose that to read the physician as author and the author as physician yields new ways of reading Brown and Dixon's medical and fictional texts in a broader cultural, social, and political context.

Scholarship on medicine and literature in general is a rich and rapidly growing field. Scholars like Cynthia J. Davis, Jennifer Tuttle, Sharon M. Harris, Stephanie P. Browner, and Ellen Samuels depict a complex relation between the medical profession and the literary one. Davis's *Bodily and Narrative Forms* (2000) especially stresses that literature and medicine stand in a constant exchange of generic conventions and topics. Katherine Bankole's *Slavery and Medicine* (1998) and Todd L. Savitt's *Race and Medicine in Nineteenth-and Early-Twentieth-Century America* (2007) have unearthed a long legacy of African-American medical professionals, especially in Southern slavery. They point out that black doctors had a central role in the development of nineteenth-century medicine.[101] We also know that when we speak about blood and medicine, we often imply the bifurcation that Harriet A. Washington's *Medical Apartheid* (2006)

101 For more of African American medicine and the social organization of medicine in the U.S. see Robert B. Bater et al and Savitt ("Proprietary," Race and Medicine, "Plantation").

stresses, a bifurcation between different "kinds" of medical practice and theory for African Americans and Anglos that continues until today.

But how exactly does the blood as represented by physicians differ from the ways the *belles lettres* represent blood, and how did these notions play out in medical practice beyond the battlefield? Does it matter who writes these texts? What role does race play in medical literature? To read medical writing together with literature for the blood still poses a methodological conundrum. Often, scholars read medical texts on their own terms first and then against theory to illuminate medical practice, with an assumption that medical texts are not literary.[102]

Blood, however, transgresses such neat divisions between that which is a description of practice, creative literature, or contemporary scholarship on the one or the other because it never is just one or the other. Blood is never just bodily fluid or just metaphor. The one always infuses the other. The problem of reading medical texts as literature is not that literary scholarship has nothing to say about medical primary texts. Brown first shows that medical practice as such is a socially-inflected performance, a set of actions determined not by an abstract, ideal rule of medical knowledge, but grounded in considerations of the performer's relation to the audience, i.e. to political questions, to racist prejudice and the dissemblance of therapy.

To help us understand his position, let us first consider what we mean when we speak of medical practice. What counted in medicine up to the Civil War was practice—

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102 For example, an important contribution to the development of narrative medicine early on asserts that literature is important to medical students, but implicitly draws a fixed line between the disciplines, thereby insisting on medical texts as something different than the texts literature examines (Hunter, Charon, and Coulehan 787).

handling blood and making it work in therapies, not theorizing it. In this market, much to the chagrin of critics, it was not a degree on paper, but practice that made medicine. As historian Jon Harley Warner reminds us, "extensive knowledge about medical science" did not make a physician because there were few if any non-practicing physician (*Revolution* 14). Because practice lay at the heart of the medical identity, a practitioner who was not exclusively practicing "lost his professional identity as a true physician and became something else" (14). Although even those trained in medicine and even an M.D. frequently worked in businesses, farmed, or taught, they were not physicians: "In antebellum America the physician was a practitioner" (14).

Practice draws on and in turn enriches some of the most sensational ideas about blood. In this chapter I therefore explore writings about practice as conjectures of medicine, as expressions of a medical imaginary that undergirded blood as a central concept in discussions of U.S. nationalism, especially with regard to race. We remember from the second chapter that Emily Dickinson was fully aware of medical theories of blood and remained suspicious of taxonomy and social hygiene. We also remember from the last chapter that Whitman focused on practice, not theory. Though he reviewed some medical texts for the *Brooklyn Eagle*, among them a text by Edward H. Dixon, Whitman's focus was on pails and sponges filled with blood, not textbooks discussing it (Michael Moon, *Disseminating* 22-3).

Brown bridges their views and adds the perspective of the practitioner. He was clearly aware of not only literary metaphors and medical theories of blood, but also of the blood shed at the hands of humans—he was born into slavery and escaped from the violence perpetrated against him and others. So his texts contain blood as a fact, but he

disdains superstitions about blood. His fight against racism leads him to mock white conceptions of blood-as-race as well as blood-as-medicine, and the resulting superstitious belief in an occult blood.

So if practice a physician makes, should we differentiate between college-educated practitioners like Dixon and those who learned medicine as a practice in the first place, apprenticed physicians like Brown? As I explain below, William Wells Brown first learned medical praxis while still enslaved, but theory only three decades later. Although training for physicians was still largely unregulated, this was not the norm.

Most critics today largely ignore that William Wells Brown, the African-American author best known for his 1853 novel *Clotel*, was not only an activist, lecturer, and liberator of escaped slaves on a Lake Ontario ferry, but also a practicing physician for the last thirty years of his life.[103] He received his training while still enslaved. Ezra Greenspan's new biography of Brown, *William Wells Brown: An African American Life* explains that Brown began assisting in the medical office of Dr. John Young as a young boy of about six (34).[104] Young, who held Brown's entire family in captivity and who, after moving to St. Louis in the late 1820s, increased the volume of his patients by teaching Brown to treat other enslaved persons with routine medical procedures (34, 51).

Brown escaped his enslavement in 1834, toured Europe with abolitionist lectures during his involuntary exile from 1849-1854, and returned to the U.S. after his supporters

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103 Concerning the beginning of Brown's medical career in 1865, Greenspan's "Chronology" remarks that, "After years of reading medicine, [Brown] advertises himself as a medical doctor operating out of an office in Boston and maintains a practice for the remainder of his life" (*Writings* 979). Linda M. Carter remarks that Brown had established a medical practice by 1860 (56). He is also mentioned as a practitioner, without any further detail, Kelly Miller (106) and Axel C. Hansen (266).

104 Due to the recent publication date this monumental contribution to scholarship on William Wells Brown unfortunately does not find the notice it deserves in the present study.

purchased his freedom. He also, however, read medicine from the 18050s onward and turned his entire energies to a medical education around 1860 (420-2). He probably added "M.D." to his name around this time. Brown opened a Boston practice in 1865 that he moved to South Boston and the East End, practicing medicine until the end of his life.

As I will detail below, Brown's own medical praxis avoids blood, seeking more advanced, progressive treatments in favor of the old bleeding he knew so well from his youth. With this choice he aligned with new medical practice in a changing medical landscape. [105] After Jacksonian legislators had repealed medical licensing laws in the 18320s, who or what physicians were was a question for the market place, not Medical Licensing Boards, and patients were free to choose from homeopathy, eclecticism, botanics, or orthodox allopathy as they saw fit. For example, John S. Haller explains that eclecticism consciously inserted its system into the tension between homeopathy and allopathy, with a market in mind.[106]

On the other end of the professionalized spectrum, Edward H. Dixon studied in one of the best colleges of New York. Despite his own elite training, Dixon found what he saw as the declining standards and ethics of the elites appalling. The second issue of

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105 Change does not mean decline, though. John Harley Warner rightly warns us of grand narratives that describe the rise and fall of a medical profession, including its heroic agent-physicians ("Discontents" 773-4). What critics saw as a declining quality of medicine was at least in part the adjustment of the European Enlightenment model of academic medicine to the existing realities of the U.S. market, and both Brown and Dixon write within a literary as well as a medical market. The most prominent institutions of orthodox or allopathic medical education like the Rutgers Medical School in New York and the Medical College of Philadelphia relied on ever-increasing numbers of student enrollment, which led to what critics saw as a race to the bottom the quality of medical education (Bonner, John Harley Warner *Revolution*). The history of medical education is a contentious field and I only mean to indicate the broadest trends here. Fore details on general disagreements, see Hodges.

106 "Throughout their history, the eclectics had an affinity for homeopathy, partly because they found common cause in facing the power and politics of old-school medicine. This affinity also derived from the strength homeopathy claimed among many wealthy and cultured Americans who objected to the 'sledgehammer' doses of medicines then in vogue" (*Profile* 19).

his self-published quarterly, *The Scalpel*, opens with Dixon's article entitled "Medical Education in New York the Cause of Quackery," which decries the vast numbers of students awarded diplomas passed out each year, "proof enough that their professors are not guided by that elevated sense of duty that should govern them in their sacred trust" (53).

As historian Martin Kaufman explains, Dixon's focus was the return to a modified system of medical licensing that would give local boards of expert physicians the power to regulate medical education and thus the medical scene as a whole, which Dixon feared would be slowly but surely ruined by the corrupting influence of money (408). That medicine physicians like Dixon did not control medicine created a lucrative side-income for anyone with sufficient training and intelligence and especially presented opportunities for social groups barred from entering the profession.

Changes in the social practice of medicine went along with the rise of racist violence by groups like the Klan who both depend on the notion of blood as an occult, opaque concept. Around the Civil War, medical practice changed as practitioners had to reinterpret their own social roles and present this image to their patients. Blood becomes a cause of disagreement not only among physicians and sects, but among social groups, and especially among the professional practitioner as the embodiment of white masculinity in the nation. These discussions extend beyond the passage of the thirteenth amendment and reconstruction to 1871, when we still find Brown fighting for the dignity of fellow freedmen.

At the same time, anti-Reconstruction groups gathered and conducted decentralized, racist terror. That groups like the night riders conducted local terror

campaigns, often with specific goals in a local context, this changed with the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1870s.[107] The Klan, especially as imagined by Dixon, invested its racial violence with a pseudo-religious, occult quality that focused on blood as a symbolic condensation of its racism. But what do we mean by this term regarding the Klan? According to Wyn Craig Wade, the Klan's occult dimension was first entertainment and then borrowed from older secret orders like Boston's anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant Order of the Star Spangled Banner (39). I don't have sufficient space here to detail the inter-woven metaphors used by this older Order. This Order dissolved into the Know-Nothings, which gave rise to the Knights of the Golden Circle with its filibustering goals. The connection between Hawthorne's knights and the Klan here seems more than accidental. As Ludwig von Reizenstein points out: there is a thin line between occult humbug and murderous crime, one drawn in real blood.

In the occult blood lies the connection between medical practice and racist violence. Susan Gillman, in her classic study on race melodrama and the occult *Blood Talk* (2003), points out that literary conversations about race toward the end of the nineteenth century often found a useful flexibility or wide-ranging confluence in writing race as an occult topic. The occult is a mystery that is imperceptible to the uninitiated and that perhaps exceeds even the understanding of those who know (*Blood Talk* xx-i).

Though she does not explore this direction, her argument explains quite a bit

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107 For the night riders, see Hannah Rosen (179-242). For more historical background on the Klan, see Wyn Craig Wade. Even though Wade documents the early origins of the KKK as entertainment and pranks played by bored rural folk, he does not question the documents for their perspective, their tone of comfortable privilege and ability to play on the freedmen any joke they please—if not a physical, certainly a symbolic form of control and clear communication to the local black community (35). For a particularly instructive example of how the Klan interfered in Reconstruction efforts, see Kenneth W. Howell.

about nineteenth century medical theory and its relation to praxis. In medical terms, an occult disease is difficult or impossible to determine and not accompanied by symptoms (OED). It should be noted here that this is basically the dialectical opposite of Whitman's concept of absorption. While the occult closes down the insight into blood, absorption openly confronts it and takes it up. Below we will see that Dixon's concept of occult blood indeed arrives at another, darker kind of absorption: blood drinking. John Harley Warner points out that the basic work of nurses and physicians intended to be open and accessible, to provide common sense therapy instead of occult mystery ("Professional Mystery" 115-8).

In the occult, the mysterious rubs up against medicine, and blood stands at the center of the discussion. Blood is both, vexing puzzle and initiation into the mystery. It surprises, it is opaque, it lures with the promise of certainty, of meaning, of final certainty and knowledge. In occult notions of blood, medical and social aspirations meet, and the leap from diagnosis to social discrimination seems effortless. As we will see below, blood lies at the heart of therapeutic methods, which turn out to be political choices.

To find this occult quality in medical writings about blood, however, I need to find the relation between the medical text's form and blood. I will go into more detail below, but in order to read medical texts for such a literary structure, I turn to what scholars of medicine like historian Michael Sappol have termed case narratives. This formal frame allows us to analyze primary texts written by practitioners for their social concerns.

As I explain below, the case narrative carries out three distinct functions simultaneously that become visible in the many semantic functions of blood. First, the

case narrative celebrates the physician's labor through case, data, and description of proper medical practice. In this sense, blood is a material bodily fluid, a symptomatic marker. Second, case narratives advertise the physician's actions as desirable, useful, positive, and part of reform efforts. At this point blood oscillates between fluid and metaphor, between what patients and practitioners can see and an expression of what is desirable through existing associations of blood and social concerns. Third, and as I argue most importantly, physicians who write case narratives make epistemological arguments, i.e. broad theoretical claims about society to harmonize medical theory and practice. In this third way, the medico-occult conception of blood in theory emerges. As we will see in the case of Dixon, blood is at once mechanism and all-explaining, universal key word in which the individual body and its symptoms fuse with the social imagery. Brown refuses exactly this dimension of the case narrative and instead historicizes medical practice.

Medical history gives us the context to understand the ways Brown and Dixon write about blood because medical practice functions along the boundaries of implementation of social hierarchies. It should be clear by now that to speak of "medicine" in this context might be misleading because practice is relative to practitioner.[108] As we will see in chapters five and six, blood-as-race overcomes the

108 Obviously, I am consciously bracketing non-Anglo healing practices like Santeria, Mexican *curanderas*, or Native American therapies. Depending on the specific practitioner, the degree to which U.S. Anglo medicine is ever purely "white" medicine may be hard to determine. For example, the liminal figure of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Roger Chillingsworth in *The Scarlet Letter* 'goes Native' in a medical sense and oscillates between the two conceptions of medicine. For Native American medical traditions, see Virgil J. Vogel. Jeremy Agnew has pointed out the irony that the public's view of Native American therapeutics as inferior changed when it was almost assumed to be superior during later crazes for patent medicine cures (222). Obviously the commodification of stereotypes made for some mollification. The true value of a comparative reading of different therapeutics does not, however, lie in their acceptance or dismissal by

dichotomy Warner observes in early nineteenth-century medicine: "medical science was progressing at an unprecedentedly rapid rate, yet therapeutics - what the physician actually did to the patient - was in a troubling state of confusion" ("Bloodletting Controversy" 241).The practices of specific physicians differ radically in theoretical approach but also in what historian John Harley Warner calls "local knowledge" (*Revolution* 72).

Brown's "local knowledge" differs from that of Dixon, and this difference emerges in their treatment of blood. In the hands of physician writers, blood becomes a flexible social concept that bridges individual and collective, symptom and nosology, body and pathology, liquid and metaphor. The struggle to redefine blood in the context of progressive-liberal domesticity not only depends on the hygienic imperatives we saw in chapter two, but on the implementation of scientific findings in praxis and thus on a narrative that turns theory into therapy. I argue that in texts written by practitioners about blood, we can see not only a grappling with this paradox but also a narrative, and indeed a literary solution that exists alongside the gradual transfer of authority from the practitioner to more abstract laboratory research.

Even a cursory glance at only the three largest schools of medical thought among mostly Anglo practitioners illustrates disagreements in therapeutic practice. Historian John S. Haller and practitioner David Robert Grimes explain that to treat the same patient with the same symptoms, a Thomsonian botanist would have drawn on neo-Galenic theory and used a botanic *materia medica*, whereas a homeopath following Heinemann

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white society, but in questioning what, indeed, constitutes the categories medical professionals accept as given and stable: health, ability, illness, and wellness. For more, see Trafzner and Weiner (vii-xx).

would have applied the "law of similars" to create a healing response through dilated substances meant to produce the same symptoms as the disease itself (Haller, *Profile* 13-6, Grimes 149).

An allopath, also known as orthodox physician, finally, would most likely have applied phlebotomy to bleed a patient and prescribed a regiment of emetics, diarrheics, purgatives, and blistering substances. These painful therapies caused violent reactions, which practitioners considered successful in the understanding of disease and therapy of the 1800s, as Jeremy A. Greene et al remind us (1077). A recent historical summary by Ralph G. DePalma points out that bloodletting counter-acted the workings of an illness—not the symptom, but the underlying physiological processes themselves (Palma et al 132-3).

Perhaps the most iconic therapeutic intervention of nineteenth-century medicine, phlebotomy during the nineteenth century became the bone of contention between allopaths and other sects.[109] More than other sects, allopaths held phlebotomy in high regard.[110] Based on experience, an allopath—at the time usually a white male—determined the location of the cut and the duration of the bleeding. In this way, the practitioner was usually able to determine duration and intensity of the flow of blood from the patient's body, as Liakat Parapia explains (491-2).

Among orthodox practitioners the practice was so popular that Dr. John E.

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109 The literature on phlebotomy has been growing for about a century and scholarly fascination with the subject never ceases. To mention only the most important sources, I want to point out Kay Codell Carter's exhaustive recent study, *The Decline of Therapeutic Bloodletting and the Collapse of Traditional Medicine* (2012).

110 We must be careful not to rush to arrogant dismissal of medical practices that seem so distant. Physician Clif Cleaveland, points out that the administration of Calomel was still an annual ritual during his childhood, in LaGrange, Georgia—in the 1940s (*Sacred Space* 20-1).

Snodgrass wrote a poem, "To My Spring-Lancet" in 1841 (Davis and Appel 15). We will focus on Edward H. Dixon below, but his choice in the matter was clear: to stress his focus of allopathy Dixon in 1851 reprints a report about a robbed homeopath, supposedly versified by Victor Hugo. In the "Awful Robbery" poem, a fashionable homeopath's usurious fees not only make him a target for robbers, but his therapy renders him unable to comprehend the situation: after he fights a robber off with a knife, he stands baffled by the quantity of blood, a satirical jab at the blood-free practice.[111]

William Wells Brown had allopathic training, but his own practice seems far more eclectic. Of course this could just be a medical choice. The procedures of heroic allopathy were quite painful and dangerous—bleeding famously hastened the demise of President Washington (Duncan P. Thomas 73).[112] While bleeding was routine in medical practice, there was no modern surgical steel and not every doctor could use an elegant—though extremely unhygienic—spring-loaded apparatus like the scarificator lauded by Dr. Snodgrass (Davis and Appel 22-4). To echo historian K. Codell Carter, it seems likely that it was not the therapy itself that declined, but that therapy changed along with the practitioner's social role in relation to the needs to which medicine was responding (220).[113]

I argue that Brown had no interest in making blood visible and placing it at the

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111 "It seemed as if the blood,/In a wide, devastating flood,/Had swept my office through—Carrying off papers and pills,/Boxes, letters, and bills,/And staining everything that was in view!" ("Awful Robbery" 316).

112 Calomel induces acute symptoms of poisoning, with the body reacting to mercury and the other compounds with "excessive salivation, gum inflammation, loosening of the teeth, gastrointestinal upset," pallor, tremors, nerve disorders, "unusual timidity and personality change headache, tremor, and fatigue," even "spasticity, blindness, hearing deficits, and dementia" (Larry E. Davis, Long et al, *Tintinalli's* n.p.)

113 Phlebotomy fell into disrepute as new clinical knowledge made its way from the French hospitals to the U.S., but never quite disappeared until the 1900s, and was certainly still routine practice until well past Reconstruction, and in some places even into the twentieth century, as Duncan P. Thomas points out (76).

center of his therapeutic regime because he was familiar with many kinds of bloodshed and unwilling to regard blood as an ahistorical, occult substance. In his praxis, Brown aimed to set himself off from the popular old therapeutic measures of heroic medicine, which frequently involved blood. Ezra Greenspan provides a valuable glimpse into Brown's praxis by detailing the therapy Brown prescribed for Helen Garrison, wife of William Lloyd (*Life* 421-2).

Brown used a brand-new technology he imported from Germany, the *Lebenswecker*, which I would translate as "life awakener."[114] This tool tried to imitate and amplify the exematic eruption of a mosquito bite that, as its inventor Carl Baunscheidt believed, aided the excretion of toxic matter from beneath the skin (Spennemann 6). As Baunscheidt emphasizes in his handbook that came along the tool and a bottle of his patented oil, "The needles of the 'Lebenswecker' will slightly pierce the skin, without however producing pain or the loss of one drop of blood" (qtd. in Spennemann 6). This non-bloody tool seemed to Brown the more advanced medical solution, though this therapy, a kind of homeopathy called dermapathy, only provided temporary improvement for Helen Garrison (Greenspan, *Life* 421).

Without seeing Brown's visitation notes I cannot determine exactly why Brown chose exactly this therapy, but it is clear that his practice opposed phlebotomy. I argue that he opposed this method not merely out of medical concern, but because he was aware of the social dimension of medical practice. To bleed, the practitioner intentionally caused blood loss in a patient, but this was more than just therapy. Medicine is always

114 Greenspan conflates Baunscheidt's Lebenswecker with the "artificial leech," a different instrument. While Brown may have had the leech, my point is that he preferred the non-bloody therapy. For Baunscheidt's tools, see Dirk H. R. Spennemann.

social practice and politically inflected and Brown presents heroic allopathy as a possible form of internalized white violence against black bodies.

Brown did more than simply decline phlebotomy in his practice. Drawing on his writings, we see that he historicizes the practice and links it to conditions of chattel slavery. Due to a lack of available resources on Brown's own practice I now turn to his views on practice as presented in his fiction, especially in *Clotel* and *My Southern Home* (1880). In *Clotel*, an enslaved person named Sam performs the role of substitute doctor. Brown stresses that Sam learns the therapeutic interventions of heroic allopathy from his "Old Boss," an allusion to Dr. John Young, the man who held Brown's family enslaved. Brown stresses that in antebellum medicine "Bleeding and a dose of calomel was always considered indispensable" (Brown, *Writings* 120-1). Phlebotomy and calomel—a mercury compound usually used as a purgative—were exactly the mainstays of mid-century rural practice that Brown rejected in his own practice.

Brown later elaborates on the scene of Sam in *My Southern Home*, which gives the names of Cato and Dr. Gaines for Sam and his "Old Boss" (*Writings* 700-5). The practitioner's name is an obvious allusion to his greed that makes him wish for more sick people to charge. Brown repeats the episode we saw in *Clotel*. When Gaines leaves, he instructs Cato to attend to any servants: "Feel their pulse, look at their tongues, bleed them, and give them each a dose of calomel" (701). Cato's practice mirrors the expected behavior of a physician in the fun-house mirror of minstrelsy. Before pulling the wrong tooth from an enslaved man named Bill, Cato treats Pete and Ned. He first bleeds both, and the narrator comments: "'Come out in de shed, and an' I'll bleed you,' said Cato, at the same time viewing himself in the mirror, as he passed out. After taking a quart of

blood, which caused the patient to faint, they returned" (702).

In Brown's antebellum texts, phlebotomy is a correct though violent performance of orthodox allopathy. Medical practice itself becomes a minstrel act with painful consequences. I argue that the painful and violent dimension of bleeding becomes an antipode to Brown's understanding of medical practice. At least initially, assistants like Sam or Cato would not have bled other enslaved persons, but certainly assisted in the bleeding. Once Cato substitutes for the physician, however, he must shed the blood of his fellow enslaved persons at the order of a master. For him to avoid having his blood shed means shedding others' blood—even if it is in the name of medicine.

Our awareness of the literary nature of the text further complicates what we might see as a simple medical procedure. Sam's and Cato's performances of medical practice certainly are episodes of blackface minstrelsy. The central ideological function of Jacksonian blackface minstrelsy is, as Alexander Saxton has pointed out, the denial of human status to nonwhites ("Blackface" 28). Minstrel performances were exactly not documentary or realistic, and did not stress the experiential suffering of enslaved bodies or their shed blood but the social dynamic at play. The physician-enslaver threatens an unruly enslaved body with violence: the shedding of blood can be therapy or punishment or both, as we will again see in Samuel A. Cartwright's theories in the next chapter. To avoid punishment, an insurrecting enslaved person must superficially signal obedience, formal performances but without any ideological substance.

Paul Gilmore accordingly reads Sam as a minstrel figure whose performance of blackness destabilizes racial categories ("Genwine" 757-9). Following Gilmore, we must then read the sham doctor as performing both medicine *and* minstrelsy. The knowledge

of the enslaved person creates a double, the split between superficial performance that looks like a stereotypical laughing face of the so-called minstrel darky, and an interior critical, subversive personhood under the protective guise.

According to Gilmore, the minstrel performance depends on the white fantasy of happy enslaved persons in peaceful subordination to masters who stand for a bodily pleasure in a body outside market forces, disembodied bodily pleasure (752). To the white audience, whiteness is associated with bloodlessness, which renders closeness to blood a racialized marker—the white fantasy of a bloodless domestic space depends on the disembodiment of blood.

Brown's blackface minstrelsy exposes the social artifice of medical practice along the social structure of chattel slavery and gives us a valuable insight in the relation between blood, slavery, and medicine. By drawing on this tradition Brown's complicated play with exteriority and interiority allows us to see that in medical practice blood serves to create an illusion of depth that amplifies the surface. This again echoes Calvin Cutter's taxonomy in chapter two and Hawthorne's maps in chapter one.

To stabilize the de-humanizing, abstract social identities of "slave" and "patient," blood cannot exist in an individual with personhood, agency, and subjectivity, but only in a body that stands for a social category. We will see in the next chapter that this logic of race also implies the impossibility of individual development. Only the relegation of blood to an embodiment in a social other makes possible the civilized domestic space that is free from sovereign legacy and free from the troubling questions blood brings with it.

Brown is keenly aware of the social dynamic of racialized medical practices. Neither the enslaved person nor the patient-in-the-abstract are individuals with agency,

but containers of physiological processes that exist independently of volition, conscience, intelligence, character, and so on. Instead of living, breathing humans, medical narrations about practice thus construct an abstract patient in whose body blood is, as we see below, an opaque, occult substance. Medical narratives over-write lived, experiential reality of bleeding bodies with diagnosis and displace the suffering of the "slave" suffering with the ailment of a "patient" and thus uphold these de-humanizing, abstract identities.

A critical reader might object that white medical therapy is the same for black and white bodies. Is one therapy not equal to another if the system of slavery forecloses both the patient's and the therapist's consent? However, the difference lies in the practitioner's motivation and thus in the choice of therapy. Medicine under slavery is an intervention motivated by economy, not compassion. Economy becomes the core of white agency, limiting the practitioner's freedom to recognize a patient as a person. In the last chapter we see the extent to which the nation state's legal and political order depends on the racialized idea of freedom.

We must therefore amend the above reading of Sam's situation into a doubly-foreclosed humanity. Sam's unofficial title of "Black Doctor" surely is an absurd pun to most of Brown's audience and his minstrel performance the source for laughter. Yet we must take care not to mistake Sam's earnest medical performance for Brown's bitter satire—the narrative about the threat of bloodshed for the avoidance thereof. When Sam starts "bleeding, pulling teeth, and administering medicine to the slaves," he does it with an awareness of the prestige, the social power of white medicine that removes him from having his blood spilled in punishment as he spills others' in therapy (*Writings* 120). When Cato takes a quart of blood, he does it as a doctor, not a fellow human being (702).

Sam's and Cato's blood is absent *because* their fellow enslaved persons' blood is present. Blood of an enslaved person is the enslaver's property, and by performing what looks like internalization, Sam protects his blood. The enslaved person's blood *is* the impossible property of property.

Despite the involvement of white practitioners in practices of enslavement, Brown, himself later a "Black Doctor," does not mock medicine as such, but leverages it against the power of minstrelsy in a way that the medic cancels out the minstrel and the minstrel the medic—two negative performances making a positive. As Gilmore points out, the multiplication of racial roles ultimately undercuts and destabilizes the stability of race through a *reducio ad absurdum* ("Genwine" 754).

While indeed stereotypically clumsy, Sam's minstrel performance nevertheless retains the figure of the practitioner as a stable element in which to anchor the satire. Sam does not see his labor as additional profit extraction, but as valid practice. He feels fully legitimized once he examines and treats a patient on his own. As well he should. The performed rituals are part of diagnosis and therapy: listening to a patient, examining the tongue, and feeling the pulse are no mock rituals but sound diagnostic tools (*Writings* 121-2). Sam is a doctor when he can read his patient. The humor of the situation arises precisely because Sam performs this ritual correctly and thus creates a dissonance between practitioner and practice that is informed by racism and elitism. The humor results from the incongruity between slave and doctor—between the one whose blood is to be shed and the one can make the blood be shed.

We have seen that the Civil War changed blood discourses, but *Clotel* is an antebellum text. How does this complicated play of racial and medical performance

through the presence and absence of blood work after the Civil War? Obviously, the increased textual production of free African-Americans and invigorated activism aimed at improving the situation of the freedmen change the nature of texts themselves. But the formal end of slavery does not mean a sudden end to the symbolic values of blood. Quite on the contrary: while the legal narrative described in chapter one brings blood and inheritance into constant conjunction, the end of slavery brings to the fore the construction of essentialist racism, which finds no more of a potent signifier than blood.

In the 1871 anecdote with which I opened this chapter, Brown manages to escape the KKK lynch mob without any bloodshed by practicing sophisticated, bloodless medicine in the guise of the stereotypical conjurer. Instead of considering the Klansmen as quasi-supernatural representatives who manipulate occult blood, he diagnoses them and treats them as desperate patients—after leveraging their own superstitious racism against them. He pretends to be a conjurer so as to access the men's bodies, but also because conjuring allows him to bridge medical practice and social performance.

Brown can draw on his insights of the relation between race and medicine in his guise of the conjurer. Theophus H. Smith describes conjuring as a metaphor that encompasses "black people's ritual, figural, and therapeutic transformations of culture," but also as a bridge between metaphor and reality, as "a magical means of transforming reality," i.e. a way to structure the world through signs (4). Brown complicates the simplistic dichotomy between medical and social practice, between medicine and literature, and between medicine and the occult.

During the confrontation, the central shift in Brown's position was that from victim of the Klan to physician in disguise. Read alongside Sam's performance, this is the

shift from victim of bloodshed to shedder of blood that occurs in the performative utterance of the diagnosis. As historian Keith Wailoo reminds us, "Medical pronouncements on disease identity helped to legitimate physicians' tools and legitimated their own identities, whether reformers, healers, scientists, advertising men, or racial theorists" (*Drawing Blood* 10). Medical language diagnoses reality and thereby creates a social order. Brown uncovers this process when he himself echoes the minstrel performer who practices medicine.

In the text, Jim's labored breathing is audible through a window, and Brown diagnoses Jim's suffering as "an extreme case of *delirium tremens*," which he has treated with morphine in his practice (*Son* 27).[115] Brown's diagnosis of Jim's *delirium tremens* is a turning point in the episode because it narratively establishes Brown's credibility as a practitioner able to examine, diagnose, and treat a patient. The diagnosis grants agency through the performative utterance that diagnoses political as well as medical problems—after the diagnosis, the threatening mob in the text becomes the "most desperate set I had ever seen" (28). Brown claims both professional prestige and *black* national manhood for the "Black Doctor," insisting that this white identity does not exist in isolation from the racist bloodshed that plagued the nation.

The moment of diagnosis is the turning point in the narrative, but Brown has to translate his diagnosis into a social therapy that protects him and prevents bloodshed. Brown's therapeutics-as-performance and medical minstrelsy succeeds because no body

115 *Delirium tremens* or ethanol withdrawal remains an accepted diagnosis. Malnutrition aggravates ethanol withdrawal, and so Jim's sudden withdrawal may hint at changes that poor, rural farming populations underwent at the end of Reconstruction. The man's name might even be an allusion to the colloquial term for delirium tremens, the "JimJims" (OED). For more detail, see Charles Henry Webb.

bleeds. As I indicated at the beginning, Brown's medical knowledge was neither taxonomic observation nor the absorption of blood that Whitman values. Blood becomes an element of narrating the performance of medicine.

Even though he points out his medical diagnosis in his narrative, his actions appeared to be those of a conjurer. He ordered the men to stare into Jim's eyes, injected the morphine, hid the syringe, yelled out to break the stare, performed vague conjuring gestures, and commanded devils to depart. As Jim recovered, a man called out: "A conjurer, by h—ll! you heard him say he deals with the devil" (*Son* 30). Brown had to pretend to agree with his attackers—his audience—on what blood meant to *them*, which mollified them because he did not challenge their ability to shed blood, nor their assessment of his therapy.

Instead of raising his prestige and risk angering the gang by making them aware of their ignorance, Brown-as-conjurer played to his audience. The sufferer became the supplicant and the conjurer a granting agent. Using the racist stereotype, Brown-as-conjurer reintroduced a transaction between real bodies, involving the complexity of exchange, gift, favor, and healer. Defying his audience's assumption of their biological superiority, Brown introduced the possibility of exchange and the mutual recognition implicit therein.

To his readers, Brown comments on his performance as a conscious decision to play a different part to achieve his therapeutic end. He immediately decided to "impress" his attackers with a story—he derived his "power to relieve pain from some supernatural source" (*Son* 28). When the mob leader "Cap" complained about the time the lynching took and of his hip trouble, Brown seized the opportunity and declared that he could

"give this man complete relief in less than ten minutes from the time I lay my hands on him" if he were permitted to conduct his "dealings with the devil" in private (28). Brown's tone in the text makes clear his superiority: "Nothing so charms an ignorant people as something that has about it the appearance of superstition, and I did not want these men to see the syringe, or to know of its existence" (29). Once alone, Brown took out his needle case, fitted the needle, filled the syringe with *acetate of morphia*, hid the syringe in his vest, and returned (28-9).

The difference between the bloodshed in the antebellum medical practice is clear: Sam must dissemble his intelligence to practice medicine, while Brown leverages the discrepancy between his attackers' ignorance and his intelligence to hide his medical training. However, continuing his minstrel performance, Brown hides the needle so as not to arouse anger. The mere presence of an educated black man would likely have threatened the whites' stereotypes and their claim to superiority. In *Clotel*, Sam may be a doctor when he reads a patient, but his therapeutic techniques never exceed those of the "Old Boss." Orthodox medicine under slavery was largely insider knowledge of white practitioners, buttressed by a regime of violence. In 1871, Brown, a black physician, shatters the threat of violence and power relations, however, by focusing on white ignorance.

Brown's praxis is not limited to phlebotomy or Calomel because he has progressed beyond neo-Galenism and blood as a humoral substance, to clinical medicine and pharmacology. This superiority and credibility only exists in the knowledge of the reader, however, and Brown is determined not to let his attackers know. The syringe brings relief to the attacker *and* Brown, but he has to dissemble this relief to avoid a

symbolic threat to the white attacker's bodily integrity.

Harking back to 1850s minstrels performances, Brown plays on what Paul Gilmore has discussed as the "slippage between performative and essential notions of blackness and manliness in 1850s minstrel performances," the idea I outlined above regarding the bleeding black body and the bleeding (blood-shedding) white body ("Genwine" 756). Consistent with what we saw from his Boston medical practice, Brown does not shed blood, but takes advantage of new medical technology to inject a substance into the body.[116] Brown first diagnosed his patient—"I treated the malady successfully by the hypodermic remedy, and having with me the little instrument, the thought flashed upon my mind that I might save my life by the trial"—then sized up his audience, decided on a manner of presentation, and finally disguised his medical technology (*Son* 27). To Brown, pain management is cutting-edge medical therapy and a social exchange at the same time.

Though non-fiction, this new medical technology's psychological dimension is worth pointing out. The penetration of white skin by the needle held by a black practitioner would present a phallic threat to the attackers' masculinity. Brown therefore places the physical act of administering the opium in a cultural context that alludes to white fears of African-American agency and quasi-Christian superstitions about Satanic forces. Blood shed in lynching *is* redemptive to these white men, but only in redeeming their political, so-called lost cause and their essential superiority. Brown can enter in a

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116 H. W. Morgan describes hypodermic needles like the one Brown carries, first invented around the 1850s, as symbols "of progress in the developing alliance of science, technology, and medicine" (24). A relatively recent advance, hypodermic injection of morphine was still widely discussed in medical journals that frequently lauded new applications (176 n. 59).

role only by seemingly confessing Satanic powers—an exceptional social situation in which he can be alone with only one white male, and prick him with a needle.

In Brown's narration medical sophistication we see that medical practice itself is a political act, not just a profession. Turned on the white assailants, medicine's political function emerges, a social diagnostics that overrules the gang's racist and violent assertion of white manhood based on bloodshed. As Dana D. Nelson has explained, the white fraternity of orthodox practitioners was a touch-stone for the construction of white masculinity in the nineteenth century, which made possible a homosocial national communion of males who claim to penetrate and probe the mysterious otherness of women, and, by extension, other races (*National Manhood* 157). To Nelson, the practice of medicine is thus an implicitly political performance of white identity, the embodied claim to belonging to a new, professional middle-class, with the medical gaze of the white practitioner, ostensibly supra-political, neutral, objective—bloodless. Below I illustrate that Dixon's posturing as an objective, neutral practitioner itself is a pretense, as medicine itself was in many ways steeped in the blood of slavery, of experiments and vivisections.

Instead of confirming the firm boundaries of the white, middle-class male, Brown's specific guise illustrates the fluid boundaries between the assemblage of performances narratively designated "medicine" and all that is not. In the accounts, Brown focused on the social interaction and the nature of his performance, on which mask to wear and which words to use to access white bodies and claim agency, to disaffect his therapy, and to perform a stereotypical conjure. Brown can rely on his audience's ignorance regarding conjure. To his amusement, the attackers don't realize

that his mumbled phrases are from a well-known Methodist hymn (*Son* 31).

Though in the hands of the Klan, Brown-as-conjurer was neither submissive nor disempowered. He rendered the gang passive, furious, and helplessly cooperating with him, waiting until the magic works. Brown did not challenge his execution, but instead directed its staging. The conjurer enforced a distinct authority and the gang followed his instructions. Often conflated with other cultural and therapeutic practices like Voodoo, and Hoodoo, the conjurer figure forces us to reconsider medicine as fluid, as an on-going cultural, political, and social self-fashioning.

Though contemporary doctors often depicted conjurer as drawing on fears and as using psychological intimidation of the sufferer, Sharla M. Fett explains conjurers are individuals who use their intimate knowledge of nature's working to "model human conditions and relationships" (22). Conjuring as a performance is thus a systematic network of communication, a structuring of reality through signs and cultural performances, or, as Theophus H. Smith defines it, "the curative transformation of reality by means of mimetic operations" (5).

A conjurer superficially appears as an anti-rationalist figure whereas conjure in fact describes flexible and ingenious ways that enslaved populations developed to mitigate the pains of slavery. The conjurer, in other words, does not focus the symptom, but reworks social situations by way of mimesis, altering the underlying social-cosmic cause of suffering. This practice-through-performance, Fett points out, is historical: conjuring often served as a masking performance of such African-American practices as were banned by Europeans, i.e. as resistance to regimes of spiritual doctrine based on redemption-through-blood (19).

There is another good reason why Brown chose the conjurer as a role: conjure is a largely bloodless form of therapy. So while blood as an occult ingredient for rituals would locate the conjurer closer to rituals involving occult blood, the conjurer does the opposite. Conjurers are authority figures not because of their magical powers, but because of a social awareness they use in conjunction with therapy—a form of practice. They are not ignorant of orthodox practices like phlebotomy, but focus on the social cause of the illness before attempting to fix the body. As the body is thus not an independent, discreet dimension of therapy, there is no way to read blood as an indicator of race the way white allopathy does.

As Marie Jenkins-Schwartz points out, the measure of a conjurer's success is the social acceptance of a successful cure, not on theory, ideology, or institutional orthodoxy (*Birthing* 58-9). And so Brown chose an orthodox treatment he was sure would work, the injection of morphine, and a performance he was sure would work, the conjurer. Blood is occult in the sense that it can serve a specific function, the mechanisms of which are invisible to a wider, holistic understanding of nature. But this occult quality is the result of the fundamental inter-connectedness of humans. Avoiding blood is the mark of an intellectual practitioner.

Brown is not empowered by shedding blood, but by avoiding the shedding of blood. In an old gesture of submission, Brown relinquishes his right to shed blood—in Thomas Hobbes' terms of the social contract to the sovereign—but only because he rejects *any* blood-shed. To Brown, medicine is not a displaced ritual of sovereign violence, but a narrative performance in which the structuring categories of patient and practitioner are similar to those of reader and author, and to the reader of his letter. His

practice of medicine is a narrated performance of identity claims, an assertion of bloodless therapy in the face of racist violence and ideology.

In the end we see that Brown does not try to indicate conjuring as superior to medicine. it is not just conjuring that gives Brown back his agency, but medicine. Asserting his voice during this ritual, he turned the assailants' silent power and into the hush of patients. Brown was indeed "anxious to get [his] hands on" the gang leader, but he wanted to drug him so "he should never have an opportunity of putting a rope around my neck," not kill the man (*Son* 30). As he lead "Cap" to a room, an assailant calls out "'You aint agoin' to kill 'Cap,' is you?' 'Oh, no!' I replied" (30). Brown never denied that he *could* murder "Cap," but sarcastically confirmed that he will not challenge the agreed-upon fantasy of the white man's power to shed Brown's blood by shedding their leader's blood.

The attackers' anxiety regarding betrayal and lack of authenticity of conjure and therapy makes clear that the episode almost exactly inverts the minstrel scene in *Clotel*, through a play with the presence and absence of blood in the face of medicine. Brown's own therapy-in-blackface is like Sam's in that both uphold a social agreement between patient and practitioner: the patient delivers himself into the hands of the practitioner without question, while the practitioner will perform actions expected of a doctor. However, while Sam must shed blood to perform allopathy, Brown knows that he must conjure up an image to work his medicine.

The episode is bloodless because Brown's performance dissolves the border between allopathic orthodoxy and conjuring, because he disables blood-as-violence and blood-as-race while appearing to confirm both. His social praxis collapses dogmatic

categories like supposedly white medicine and so-called black conjuring as empty performances, just like the performance of white supremacy through violence collapses.

His medical knowledge together with his skin color place Brown in between social roles, between the professional and the lay healer, the institution and the tradesman. He leverages this flexibility and turns his correct practice into a performance against his attackers. As performance and writing of medicine are social and political, it comes as no surprise that legal personhood and potential agency of black bodies exacerbate white anxieties surrounding the black male and, as we will see in Dixon, his blood. Brown is a doctor and through the medical system of signs communicates social meaning by confirming the patient's expectations of a treatment, an agreed-upon ritual of allopathic therapeutics. His initial diagnosis and the performance render racist killers hapless and child-like in his eyes, much closer to the stereotypical so-called plantation darky of minstrelsy than Brown's own conjurer figure. His subtle sarcasm—"'Oh no,' I replied."—is a performance of submission that testifies to the temporal distance between Brown's minstrel plays and this episode.

This distance also reflects the difference between medicine under slavery and in a racist system legally free of slavery. While the overt humor of the minstrel performance comes at the expense of black masculinity. Brown's joke diffuses but underlines the mere possibility of a black male's lethal self-defense and thus the anxieties about a black male body invested with subjecthood and agency. Large looms the question what happens when, like Nat Turner, the black body exits the Hobbesian contract and reclaims the sovereign right to shed blood.

Stepping back from the episode's details for a moment, we see Brown's

remarkable talent and ingenuity, but also his place in the overlap of several of the larger themes discussed thus far. As we have seen, the liberal-progressive national narrative depended on the abjection of blood from the domestic core in an attempt to redefine blood as a concern of hygiene, and on medical discourses so as not to collapse into the Civil War. Also, medicine was a performance and its practice relative to larger social, political, and cultural developments. Brown's performance simultaneously exploits this relativity, making it visible to the reader, and confirms his claim to belonging to the same, liberal-progressive professionals who tried to deny his personhood in so many ways. He therefore avoids the violence shunned by, as Norbert Elias would see it, civilized groups, while exposing the abject threats to this racial order, the lingering presence of a Hobbesian civil war that can only end with the return of the sovereign Leviathan.

Brown plays with his belonging in the newly-emergent, professional middle-class, but also points that his bloodless therapy is distinct from and superior to the bloody reality of racist violence. Racist violence is quite visible, an open secret, but also painfully banal these clansmen are not mysterious creatures. They do not belong to an occult group of elite warriors initiated into some mystery of blood as we will see Dixon describing them, but ignorant, backwards people, a "desperate set" that needs an elaborate ruse to act in their own best interest and let a professional like Brown go unharmed.

Brown never avoided confrontations with racists and in no other case disguised his scientific disdain for occult superstitions regarding blood. In a letter denouncing the racism of a Grand Templars Lodge of Kentucky, Brown declared that "there is no such

thing as 'pure white blood'" ("Color Question" 963). In the physical confrontation with ignorant racists, however, he relegated his medical performance to an extra-diegetic level of a letter. Narrating the ritual of medical practice as a performance allows Brown to claim the practitioner's prestige and gives him back his agency.

Also, Brown was aware of the anxieties surrounding the inter-mixture of bodily fluids by persons perceived to be of different races that find a most potent metaphor in blood. He inserts an episode from *The Liberator* into *Clotel* that at once lampoons these anxieties and yet illustrates the deeply serious attitudes toward the handling of blood. When a white New Orleans man named Mr. Buddington wants to marry a wealthy black woman, "he was obliged to swear that he had negro blood in his veins, and to do this he made an incision into his arm, and put some of her blood in the cut" ("Phlebotomy—Amalgamation!")[117] Brown's use of this article for one spells out the metaphorical implications of ideas concerning circulations of blood and capital, inheritance, and contracts. Of course the author and Brown's amusement results from the implosion of the metaphorical blood into the material blood: there now is indeed a bit of blood in Buddington's veins.

Brown's choice to play a conjurer therefore reflects his sensitivity to the increasing popularity of ideas about the supernatural, many of which influenced racist readings of black bodies—and black blood—as powerful, mystical, and threatening. Performances of racism and medicine both depend on perspective, on information, on a culturally literate audience—both are occult performances. Again we remember Gilman's

117 On Brown's use and re-use of textual material not written by him, see Geoffrey Sanborn.

explanation of obsessions with race as a mystery, a depth to be plumbed, and an occult question. Brown leverages the racist belief in an elusive, occult quality of blood against his attackers. He knows the lynch mob's reading of himself and his blood so well that he can exceed their expectations through an exaggerated performance. The excess insert his own occult medical knowledge that is invisible to the attackers.

However, as the century progresses, medicine begins to collapse metaphor and material, and blood begins to be both metaphor and material reality. The article also stresses the growing sensitivity to the quasi-medical concept of "negro blood" as more than a metaphor. Whereas eighteenth-century medicine acted on the assumption of a basic sameness in humans modified by geography, diet, and the like, by the 1840s blood becomes increasingly mysterious, occult. In the next chapter we will see that Brown insists on geography as the cause of different skin colors, directly attacking scientific racism, but now we turn to the occult role of blood in Dixon's texts.

Blood is the signal for a failure of the civilizing *tēlos* behind hygiene and medicine. We now turn to Edward H. Dixon, who celebrates this failure in his sensational novella despite being a practitioner himself. He does not see science as a response to the excess that results from the difference of reality and racist stereotype. Instead, Dixon insists on the occult nature of blood, with blood ultimately undoing the medical framing. His gothic narrative initially seems to fly in the face of medical practice, but in fact illustrates how blood can serve as a bridge between individual and society in both medical and gothic texts.

A life-long practitioner in New York City, Edward H. Dixon, member of a

prominent Huguenot family, was both critic and proponent of elite training.[118] As historian Martin Kaufman notes, Dixon studied at Rutgers Medical College, New York, and after graduating in 1829 and studying under John W. Francis practiced medicine all his life in New York. Today best known for manuals used in the anti-masturbation crusades and Victorian gynecology, he, like most practitioners, was a generalist (Frederick M. Hodges, "Sexual Medicine" 728-30). Though he attacked sectarianism of orthodox educational institutions, he declared himself neither Thomsonian eclectic nor homeopath. He was specialized in urology and something similar to occupational and environmental medicine.

From 1850-61 Dixon also self-published a quarterly, *The Scalpel*, to advocate his reforms and to explain medical topics to the public. In his medical journal he wrote tell-all stories that decried silly elitism and feuding factions in New York medical education between the 1830s and 50s, also attacked the AMA, quacks, social circles, and *The Lancet*'s editors, whom he calls "deliberate and voluntary JACKASSES" ("Review" 214).

These texts from the 1840s through the 1860s are obviously medical, but I want to push back against this category in what follows, and so begin not with them, but with a fictional text Dixon wrote: *The Terrible Mysteries of the Ku-Klux Klan* (1868). This dark, gothic text about Reconstruction politics, Klan activity, and occult rites of initiation in Tennessee wallows in the imagined blood of freedmen and children, rendering the

118 Little biographical data is available for Dixon, and so I follow Martin Kaufman in trusting the information given in the *New York Times* obituary of Dixon ("DEATH").

supposedly rational substance occult, quasi-magical, and opaque.[119] In this text, occult and material blood collide and collapse into a oneness that undercuts and exceeds linguistic representation itself and dissolves reality into a bloody cauldron of orgiastic violence.Dixon sees blood as both part of the human body and an occult substance that defies this understanding. In the end we will see that in the last third of the nineteenth century, this seeming antithetical pair entered into the synthesis of occult blood, which I argue is the basis for scientific racism.

Dixon's novella focuses on the sensational aspect of Klan occult ideology and self-presentation, develops it, and presents it as both satire and political statement. While cited in texts about the Klan, almost no scholarship appears about this text as a work of literature.[120] One of the first texts written about the KKK, *Mysteries* has largely escaped scholarly attention with the notable exception of Matthew R. Davis, who rightly stresses its focus on blood as opposed to Louisa May Alcott's "My Contraband," which avoids just these questions of blood in favor of abstract virtues. It is obvious that *Mysteries* stresses the connection between race, blood, and the supernatural. Whereas Brown's narrative presents a triumph of reason over superstition and of medicine over violence, Dixon's tale presents its gothic excess in the implied triumph of the secret order over the powers of mere clinical medicine.

I propose that if read in conjunction with Dixon's medical writings, this text

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119 Catalog records for other editions in library databases also indicate the subtitle *A Full Expose of the Forms, Objects, and "Dens" of the Secret Order: With a Complete Description of Their Initiation*, but this could not be verified by the copy consulted.

120 In his standard work on the Klan, Wyn C. Wade dismisses *Mysteries* as a "cheap thriller" (52). Carl H. Moneyhon seems to read it as an attempt to furnish "interested parties" with instructions on how to furnish a Klan chapter (249). Jan Cohn never mentions the narrative framing (575 n. 5).

presents the gothic excess of nineteenth-century U.S. medical theories about blood. Dixon's disturbing, racist orgy of blood is not distinct from his medical theory. It is a coherent and logical expansion of the way he uses blood as an occult substance in his antebellum medical theories to post-Emancipation socio-political discussions of race. The text lends an occult dimension to blood that only seems to belies medical reason abandon the puzzle of the patient's story of blood in favor of the mystery of blood. The turn from clinical observation to gothic excess had, however, already taken place.

The narrator-physician, "'Scalpel, M.D.'"—named after Dixon's periodical—is in charge of a male patient in an unnamed hospital. With a redacted last name, this "Thomas — " wanders a town somewhere in Tennessee, where the police picks him up naked, raving, and with marks carved into his body, prior to the opening of the narrative. The rest of the text consists of Thomas' supposed verbatim confession that describes his visit to the Tennessee mountains and his conversion to the brotherhood of the KKK. Dixon never closes this frame, but leaves the last words to the horrified, dying Thomas, who is about to give away the Klan's greatest secret and is convinced that the Klan's secret powers are killing him.

So Thomas becomes the protagonist and tells of his desire for initiation into the mysterious brotherhood of the KKK, of ghastly rites, and of both, his confessions to the Klan and his desire to disclose their final secret. The tale begins as a ghost story, with the voices of his dead brothers calling on the Civil War veteran Thomas to forgive his former Confederate enemy and to join the Klan (*Mysteries* 7-24). After much trepidation and a series of supernatural signs, Thomas finally overcomes many dangerous hurdles and enters a secret Klan den (25-33). There, his initiation follows a long script of rituals,

calls, responses, readings, most of which involve human blood drained from the bodies of kidnapped African-American babies and from a black man chained to the ground (37,39, 46). As mechanical torture devices and swords blend images of industrial and sovereign violence, dipping, dripping, pouring, spraying, immersing, and finally drinking blood emerges as the most important ritual act necessary to join the Klan (35, 48, 49, 52, 53, 56). Dr. Scalpel's report of Thomas' narrative suddenly breaks off after disclosing that Thomas volunteered to assassinate Major General George Mede, then the governor of the Reconstruction Third Military District, just as Thomas tries to disclose the last secret he saw in the "Mirror of Fate" (55-6).

Blood to Dixon not self-identical and clinical, but a constitutively social and political dimension of the human body. This anchor of the political inside the body stands opposed to medical rationality. The bloody tale overwrites the physician's diagnosis with a pretended mystery that is really just a political fantasy—as Susan Gilman rightly remarks: "the move to the culture of the occult always takes phenomena not out of but into the realm of the social and political and, thus, deep into the realm of social intervention" (*Blood Talk* 31).

Compared to Brown's alternating amusement and annoyance at occult notions of blood and his sophisticated use of medicine, conjuring, and performance, Dixon seems aggressively earnest and stubbornly disdainful of his own profession. In *Mysteries*, medical reason, the tool meant to solve the puzzle of blood, is not so much defeated as entranced, enraptured, and transposed into racist theory. The novella's framed narrative initially addresses racist violence not as a social problem, but as a medical puzzle, only to give way to the supernatural and gothic occult blood.

While the diagnosis was a turn toward rational avoidance of blood, here it draws the narrator-physician into the diegesis. The invisible narrator becomes part of the racist narration. Frame narrator and amanuensis of the protagonist, the practitioner seems unable to solve the supernatural challenge of the bloody narrative and is finally taken up by it. While Scalpel initially stresses that Thomas "believed" to be led by agencies "not of this world . . . to join the fearful Ku-Klux Klan," Scalpel already questions his own diagnosis in the next sentence: "The supernatural parts of his narrative I do not pretend to explain; whether they were the results of overwrought nerves, or of other-world agencies I leave to the reader" (*Mysteries* 6).

In keeping with clinical principle, the physician observes his patient and reports that the supernatural dimension of his patient's words exist only in the patient's mind, only to then refuse to even attempt a scientific explanation for the phenomena Thomas tells of. Rather, "overwrought nerves" and "other-world agencies" stand on equal footing, as equally valid explanations for blood—which, in fact, they are, as the medical and the racist narrative both rely on occult blood. In the end, the narrative's gesture at radical empiricism and empowerment of the reader simply collapses into one side of the text, reminiscent of Hawthorne's solution for disappearing parts of history and land that we saw in the first chapter.

Now, we must use caution with this text, its tone, and its performances. Without further archival sources, there is no way to know for certain if Dixon's *Mysteries* is an opportunistic exploitation of the rumors surrounding the KKK in the late 1860s, a satire of gullible doctors and readers, or an expression of at least partially genuine political positions on Dixon's part. However, the text paired with Dixon's biography make for a

solid case that the text is at least largely serious. He blamed the demise of *The Scalpel*, his grandest project, on the public's preference for reconstructing the former Confederacy instead of medical education and practice (Kaufman 409). Dixon himself was part of the medical establishment and a life-long Republican, though he seems to have never politically active ("Death"). In this text, Thomas turns out to be a spy for William H. Seward, who aims to "dismember and destroy" the freedmen's Loyal Leagues to secure the Southern vote for Sen. Johnson in the 1868 presidential election (*Mysteries* 40). All this points to an earnest if sensational text and again illustrates that medical texts as well as sensational ones are intrinsically political.

To Dickinson and Whitman, the sight of blood is troubling, as we saw in chapters two and three, and Dixon likewise stresses the affective dimension of a sensory encounter with blood. But while Dickinson leverages this lack of speakability and Whitman seeks refuge in medicine, blood in Dixon's text stuns, suspends, and disables rational judgment. In *Mysteries*, blood and its vibrant red signal of the mystery, and the visceral, jolting sight of its color thus signal a daunting challenge.

Thomas initially sees the Klan announcing its mysterious presence in the color of blood. Several times, he sees this blood-red mystery in a Tennessee mountain village, written upon a wall in letters, "as if by magic, in blood-red lines—K—K—K!" (*Mysteries* 12). Again we see the effort to bridge the elusive affective dimension of blood by writing about writing with blood, about the textual absorption of blood. The letters of the words themselves convey a meaning beyond the letters themselves.

When a fireplace explosion knocks Thomas unconscious, he has a fearful vision of Klan figures, the iconography of racist violence. A "majestic figure" holds up "a

shining blade, from which trickled gouts of blood. One by one these ran down the white right arm, and dropped upon the pure white robes that clothed the noble form. One by one the red drops fell upon his breast, one over the other, till they slowly but accurately formed a huge K upon the snow-white vestment" (19-20).

The figure's sword draws blood not only serve to signal superiority, but specifically evoke the abject sovereign blood as the source of ultimate agency. Not medicine but the sovereign "society of blood" triumphs over the solved national crisis (Foucault, *History* 147). Already we see what becomes more explicit later. The blood supposedly comes from a killed monster—an allegory for a lynched freedman—but it forms the "K" as though the vanquished becomes the most important element of the victor's triumph, the white absorbing the red to express its victory.

With this vision, Dixon sets the tone for the rest of the text. Over-determined symbols overlap metaphorical and real blood in a hyperventilating racist ideology. In Thomas' description, the "monster" has bizarrely exaggerated locks of "bloody wool," "huge, bloodshot eyes," thick lips, teeth, and a "blood-red tongue"—overt references to nineteenth-century racist caricatures of freedmen in (*Mysteries* 20). Dixon also alludes to racialized sexual violence against white womanhood by adding an inversion of the racist sovereign's attributes: a "talon-like hand grasped a flaming torch, blood and clotted with long locks of woman's hair" (20). The scenes' pace accelerates and the blood drops form three red letters "K," at the moment the monster almost reaches a U.S. flag held by the figure. The figure, variously called the "Arch White Death" and "High Arch Death," stabs the monster, and Thomas' vision ends in chaotic cries for his dead brothers, hails for the High Arch Death (21-2).

In his introduction to the occult nation, the invisible white supremacist U.S. Thomas feels that hatred is honest and authentic than reality and reason. Occult blood bridges this divide between body and soul. The Arch White Death informs Thomas that the Klan is "sworn by bonds thou couldst not understand to keep our secret safe—yea, even by blood, if need be" (23). This conversation begins the refrain of "body, blood, and soul" that runs through the initiation trials (24).

Dixon's occult blood undoes the Christian mortification of the flesh and results in a continuum of body-soul-nation. The literal blood that Brown insists on and that physiology examines remains part of the body. During his trials, blood pulls Thomas into this collective when his body is too weak and his soul too afraid: "The secret! the [*sic*] dread mystery! I must get it, or die, body and soul!" (26). Blood, the third element of the racist trinity is missing during the trials (28, 29). It only reappears once Thomas braves the last test and enters the den.

To Dixon's Klansmen blood is both literal and metaphorical, both real and abstract. Blood to the KKK is only valuable because the individual renounces to whom it belongs their own ethics, their own common sense for the sense of a community. Much like a magical force Dixon describes a *material* blood with *supernatural* power.[121] instead of an individual gift, the powers of a magical creature, or the abstract biblical principle of life, this blood is anti-individualistic. Independent from individual motivation, it unites a nation that exceeds the individual, empowering them only in their place as part of the collective race.

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121 One think of the dragon's blood that toughens Siegfried's body in the German *Hildebrandslied* or the corrosive blood of Grendel's mother in *Beowulf*

However, this is no fairy tale. We need to remember that Dixon writes about blood as both author and physician. For example, a welcoming drink of brandy that refreshes the freezing, bruised, and exhausted Thomas in the 1870s still counted among medicinal fluids as well as recreational intoxicant: "a brandy-flask was in [*sic*] my lips, and the strong fluid had sent the blood coursing afresh through my veins, and given me new life" (30). The awkward syntax here reflects Dixon's overall careless writing style, but this is nevertheless a practitioner writing about the refreshing and sometimes life-saving powers of alcoholic medicine. Also, he is an author speaking about a spiritual and physical re-birth after a literal leap of fail across an abyss. The blood that flows through his veins now is stronger than the one he had before, and its pull is stronger than before.

We will see in a moment how language dissolves into racialized blood, but also the narrative setting shifts from the hospital to the bloody "Den of the Red Death" (30-1). Setting and language stand out in the progressively disturbing finale of Thomas' initiation. His entrance into the Den is his entrance into the brotherhood of the Klan, a society of gothic eroticism. The clan is largely a group of men, and thus he gothic counterpart to white fraternities of doctors Dixon knew, that creates elaborate scenes of torture in a desire for certainty, for purity, and a true identity.

As the narrative moves along, blood becomes more markedly the unifying symbol of Dixon's national imaginary. Thomas only advances to the Den after swearing once more, and now to body, blood, and soul (30, 31). Inside the occult space, blood red dominates the décor in draperies, carpets, and several of the more important ritual figures' masks and robes. The rituals progress through disturbing, violent acts around some central objects, including the bleeding, recently-severed head of a black man,

automaton-like skeletons that hold and torture infants, over-sized swords, and many variations of the red K. Masked figures read from occult writings that Thomas has to explicate. In these recitals, Dixon explains that Ku, Klux, and Klan are allegorical embodiments of the Union, the Confederacy, and what Thomas explicates as "the holy company of the true men of north and south who work in silence and in secret" (45).

Shouted, written, sung, and spoken declarations of belonging and mutual desire climax in a bloody orgy of consuming the loathed other. After the long ritual of inquiry, discovery, and numerous oaths of allegiance, deed follows word. A henchman kills one of the babies and Thomas writes his name into a blood-red ledger with the bloody tip of his sword. Dixon transposes metaphorical blood into literal blood, which in turn serves to write bloody words with a phallic sword. In an even more obvious phallic image than that of the sword, Thomas must kiss the severed head and, near-fainting feels his lips "pressed to the bloated, frothy tongue protruding from the head" (49). The images here turn overtly to a gothic sexuality, to a violent acting-out of interracial oral sex between men and murder of biological offspring.

Unspoken and perhaps unspeakable desires make it clear that the "Den of the Red Death" is a space where the members of the Klan reverse a threat to white manhood, where homosocial manhood turns into an occult desire for blood. The Den, with its mysterious inside and especially the ensuing murders of the other babies and the drinking of their blood speaks to gender anxieties. It might well be read as a metaphor for the mysterious female reproductive organs—the same organs that Dixon's real brotherhood, that of white, male physicians, aimed to penetrated with scalpels and books instead of swords and ledgers. When at the end of the text a series of future assassins volunteer to

kill targets, one person of indeterminate sex volunteers to abort unborn mixed-race children (55).

Thomas himself volunteering act to kill Major General Mede as a punishment for his role in Reconstruction. However, at this point the content of narrative recedes behind its form. Dixon calls attention to the role of language during the ritual, and especially towards the end of these final scenes. As the initiation progresses, more and more of the spoken text changes into gibberish. While Thomas' previous test, to explicate the simple allegory of the Ku, Klux, and Klan seems like a gothic school rote recital, the chants of the brotherhood grow increasingly incomprehensible, with an occult language substituted for standard U.S. English. Of course this is a somewhat tacky effect Dixon employs to amplify the mysterious quality of the scene by literalizing the intelligibility of the nonsensical ideology. However, the Klan's occult language serves a specific purpose: it estranges the violence and cannibalism, and thus lifts the violence—and the blood—from existing frameworks of reference.

Religion, ethics, culture, even medicine all fail and no longer apply to the words used here and to represent occult blood. As if the bloody orgy of violence has changed the nature of language and given the brotherhood an occult language of their own, chants and ritual phrases grow increasingly incomprehensible, into a language beyond language. With blood freed from its cultural ballast of associations, the unhinged fantasy can approach its climax. The chants begin with "No meat we eat but raw freedman—/Bloody black me for the Ku-Klux Klan—/…/ Quivering flesh, black blood in the pan; Hungry and fierce is the Ku-Klux Klan" (50). Ingestion and consumptive incorporation of the loathed other stands at the center of the Klan's identity. Language breaks down as the

syntax floats, turning "bloody" into a simultaneous adjective and adverb, part of an occult chant.

The affirmation of racist thought in racist action lies in the constant conjunction of racial other and the break-down of civilized order in the violent shedding of blood. The victim, then, is the offending party because their blood violates the order. It is the source of the pollution, the strategic abject that confirms the formation of the self. It is unclear whether Dixon hints at a gothic dialectic between reason and absence of reason or at pagan rites and ancient war customs. The language is occult, mysterious, without clear referent. Yet the racist content still remains at the center of his language. A gothic call-and-response exchange ends in the even more unsettling verse: "Live kisses Dead and love kisses Hate—Hell in life and glory in blood—red blood of black. *Tarooka—Bull-ika!*" (51). The living and loving Quick embrace the hateful Dead and a hell-on-earth, a suffering for a glorious greater cause, the cause of blood, of the white blood avenged and the black blood shed.

The orthographic and semantic estrangement and disorientation leads to the initiation's climax: the drinking of blood that fuses bodily fluid, racist abstraction, and linguistic representation. *Mimesis* and *poiesis* fuse in the swallowing of blood. The final murder is the execution of a chained black man who reminds Thomas of the monster in his vision. Henchman stabs the victim to cries of "*Black blood of sin and red blood of Klan, mingle, mingle. Black blood of black sin — Run-ika ! — Run-ika Ku Klux!*" and mixes the blood of the last victims in a skull-vessel (52).

Drawing on fantasies of ancient human sacrifice, Dixon's bloody alchemy mixes portions of different kinds of blood. The murder victim's blood and the blood of the Klan

blend with their abstract properties into something incomprehensible, the nonsensical suffix "-*ika*" serving to mark the language needed to represent and describe this action as outside the realm of representational language. No vampiric act, this highly stylized, ritualistic potion-drinking overwhelms the senses and dissolves the entire setting into a cauldron of blood.

Thomas submerges his bare right arm, is anointed with the bloody locks of some henchmen, and must finally drink the mixture: "I placed the fearful mixture to my lips. It tasted strong, but not unpleasant. I swallowed one mouthful! It seemed to warm my very heart. It tingled in my throat, and warmed my stomach. I closed my eyes, and drained the cup" (54). The sense of taste helps Thomas overcome his fear because Dixon's occult blood is something more primal than social instincts, something both supernatural and natural that overcomes the hesitant convert.

Thomas' reaction echoes the medicinal use of brandy mentioned earlier. The blood does far more than alcohol, though, warming his "very heart"—again a conflation of anatomical body part and abstract principle. Only once his eyes are closed can he drink the entire blood mixture and with it supposedly the supernatural qualities that it binds—a medicine for the spirit, drained from the bodies of victims, which binds the converted body and soul. The dark, occult experience moves beyond words, taking place in a pure realm of sensorial experience without any more visual marks to help the readers' orientation.

Dixon describes here is an overdetermined literalization of what bell hooks in reference to ancient cannibalistic rituals calls "eating the other," which she links to white primitivist fantasies (376-7). Of course Dixon's text precedes the contemporary consumer

culture hooks describes, but the Klan's ritual of ingesting black blood does signal the white desire for a naturalized racial division. The potion of blood restores a natural order predicated on the subjugation of non-white blood. We see how close such a reading would bring us to Whitman's sense of absorbing the blood in order to restore the nation, even though the intended goal is the opposite of Whitman's unity. However, the mixing of the blood potion and the emphasis that this ritual exceeds all established moral and ethical order also points in the opposite direction (*Mysteries* 49). Drinking the blood is not a *return* to an old order, but the explosion of the status quo with the goal to establish a new supernatural future of white supremacy—we might say it is more akin to National Socialist distortions of Nietzsche than to the colonial nostalgia of contemporary Hollywood films.

This chapter illustrates medicine's implication in the social and political legacy of slavery in the nineteenth century and insofar has added to an already established canon of texts. My argument is especially reminiscent of Franny Nudelman's second chapter "The Blood of Black Men: Rethinking Racial Science" in her book *John Brown's Body: Slavery, Violence, and the Culture of War*. Based on the development of dissection practices and their legal regulations, Nudelman points out that, whereas "domestic death rituals gave enduring form to the particular identity of the dead individual, the scientific establishment, in concert with the law, worked to erase the signs of social identity that politicized the production of anatomical knowledge" (47-8).

My research obviously confirms this insight, but also modifies Nudelman's point. The focus of medicine by the last third of the nineteenth century was no longer on anatomy, but on physiology, not on the corpse, but on bodily fluids, and especially blood.

Dixon himself participated in grave robbing while in medical school, but he is not interested in the body, but very much in the aggregate processes of social functions together with bodily functions (Dixon *Back-Bone* 126-7). It is true that grave robbers denied their African-American victims the compensatory closure of final burial and incorporation of the body politick in mourning rituals. However, white medical practice did not target black bodies inasmuch as it targeted all bodies, certainly separating black bodies out as a specific category, but one alongside those of women, of disabled persons, and of Native Americans. As I will show in the next chapter, scientific racism did not simply fetishize the black *body*. Medical constructions of race inscribed fixed identities into the physiological processes of living bodies and their *blood* and thereby provided politics with the means to reconsider who could count as human in the eyes of the law.

More recently, Matthew R. Davis builds on Nudelman's analysis in his comparative study of Louisa May Alcott's and Edward H. Dixon's constructions of the post-bellum family. He argues that Dixon's violent Klan rituals effect the erasure of individual identity in a similar way as the dissections that Nudelman details (153). Yet he insists that the medical violence is different from the violence of racism. He sees an "equalizing effect" in medical violence and argues that it abstracts violence and bloodshed "as shared experience," whereas the bloody rituals in Dixon's dens "reinscribes racial hierarchy, visiting violence only upon African Americans in the service of uniting and equalizing Klan initiates as white brothers" (153-4).

I argue that such violence must not be divorced from medical practice, nor social identities from medical theory. The white family comes into being through the occult fetish of the black blood, the ingestion of the other. In other words, white motherhood can

only give birth to the nation after black blood has become a clinical category. As medicine writes fiction, laws write the nation state, and those laws no longer lie in the carcass, but in the blood.

Nudelman and Davis tacitly assume a division between science and culture or medicine and politics, but this division is itself a product of discussions only beginning in this period. In other words, we must no more think of Brown as an author than of Dixon as physician, but always of both as both, practitioner and author. Medicine and literature are both cultural practices, and we need to take seriously the implications of medical practice if we want to read certain texts without distortion. *Mysteries* presents an unbridled fantasy of violent racism, of torture and murder, political intrigue and Reconstruction politics. Ultimately it relies on blood to construct a world in which race makes material sense. From legible marker for outsiders to a thing beyond words that covers the convert inside and out, blood is Dixon's answer to rational challenges and intellectual opposition, to the division between body and language, and the threat that shedding blood poses to the white supremacist nation Dixon imagines. Blood is the nation and the nation is blood.

Of course it would distort the evidence to focus only on his creative writing and not examine his journal articles and medical writings. I now want to turn to Dixon's medical writings to demonstrate that this extension of blood as the essence of bodies, social identities, and the nation is no result of post-bellum racism, but a mere conceptual extension of these antebellum medical theories.

Explaining the pedagogical structure of an early series of articles in *The Scalpel* meant to inform the public on the basics of physiology, Dixon points out that it is best to

start with blood because "blood, its vessels, and the heart [are] already better known to the reader, from every-day conversation and association" ("The Structure and Functions" 130). In his simultaneous battle against the Jacksonian abolitions of medical licensing regulations and the obfuscation of literally vital knowledge by self-serving elites, Dixon begins with blood as a familiar presence and a clinical observation, only to circle back to a social theory of blood in the end. As we will see, medicine itself is true and its clinical observations a-social, but to Dixon the same social mechanisms that damage our physical blood also distort medical knowledge.

First, I want to point out that Dixon's interest in blood is not extraordinary, but rather representative of nineteenth-century orthodox medicine. His physiological theory focuses on oxygenation processes, a typical interest of the time, derived from Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier's discovery that blood absorbs oxygen, one that builds on the modified posthumous insights of Joseph Priestley.[122] Dixon basically asserts that blood is the conduit of all processes in the body and delivers oxygen and nutrients from arterial blood, the "oxygen, required for that change in the tissue, which, doubtless, accompanies every action of the body" ("Nerve Power" 260). That is, blood underlies all physiological processes, from cellular to mental activity, and thus is the matrix for all life and human activity and thus for all social processes.

However, blood is more than a bodily fluid. In an 1849 article entitled "Pathology of a Lady of Fashion," Dixon defines blood as the essential category for national health—

122 For more on the scientific history of oxygenation theories, see Sternbach and Varon. For more on Priestly, see Schofield.

and the health of white female body.[123] Despite all his medical observations, Dixon frames his cure not medically, but politically. The physician alone can detect the lingering, detrimental influence of social ills long before the politician can detect them, and cure them by individual reform according to a universal system of hygienic reform much like that of Calvin Cutter we saw in chapter two. Ladies who "lead a fashionable life" have an over-developed sensibility and excitability in all parts of the body, which together with a reduced self-control creates imbalance in the system (232).

The fashionable woman is a national concern beyond a simple doctor's visit. Every single function that is not part of bare life, Dixon stresses, "may depart from its normal condition to an unknown extent, multiplying and complicating the derangements of the whole, by the derangements of each, until reduction and restoration to order are improbably, if not impossible" (232). He points out that medical cures, "like the ordinances of a municipality in the case of a country in a state of revolution," are far "too local and inefficient for the occasion" and instead calls for the "revision and renewal" of the "whole condition and constitution" (232).

I argue that we see the rhetorical moves in medicine that allow for the conceptual connection between physiology, society, and nation state. The physiological laws are at work in the constitution of a fashionable lady, just like the legal laws are at work in the nation's constitution. As Kyla Wazana Tompkins points out, the constitution of the public sphere is inseparable from the intimate constitution of the private citizen (57). The digestive problems Dixon observes in such fashionable ladies do not signal an infection

123 Originally published in *The Scalpel* and written by "J.H.S.," Dixon includes this article in the pieces in his 1855 *Scenes from the Practice of a New York Surgeon*, for which he claims sole authorship.

of the body, but an improper, way of life that violates natural laws that only the physician knows.

In his article about the unhealthy, fashionable white woman, Dixon explains a medical-reformerist commonplace regarding whalebone corsets. Because the corset gives the lungs too little room to move, it hinders their function, which is to

> convert the blood returned from the veins, and the newly assimilated food from the lacteals, into arterial blood. This is done by exposing small portions of blood at a time in very minute and exceedingly attenuated vessels, spread over large surfaces in the lungs, to the action of the atmosphere. A portion of the combustible materials of the blood chemically combines with the combusting portion of the atmosphere, and sets free a large amount of caloric, which combines with the blood, and gives it the property which is called vitality. (*Scenes* 231)

"Vitality" results from chemical reactions, but as cellular biology is as of yet unknown, the scientific observation does not lead to an admission of ignorance, but a rhetorical device, "vitality," that once again invests blood with occult powers, not theological or political, but medical. The social error that is fashion violates natural laws. While Dixon's physiology is not as far removed from our contemporary thinking as is Galenic humoralism, we see that the body is a static set of processes, bound by laws that demand obeisance.

Vitality is the compensation for proper hygiene and treatment of the body, and blood is the carrier for this occult vital force. Despite its importance in oxidization blood is not itself the vital force, but merely the mode of transmission. Yet in de-emphasizing blood as agent, Dixon at the same time makes it the all-important mechanism that envelops the mysteries of physiological processes. As we just saw in *Mysteries*, blood is not the active force, but the occult medium. Only through blood can the practitioner heal

the patient and can the Klan protect the white nation.

I want to briefly outline the generic conventions of the medical narrative that allow for this exploitation of the blood's semantic slipperiness and the seamless shift between metaphorical and material blood. We saw that Nathaniel Hawthorne's national imaginary expels material and even metaphorical blood from the liberal-progressive domestic space in an attempt to erase the history of sovereign power. But in comparison to a coherent, tightly-composed prose text like Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The House of the Seven Gables*, collections of case narratives like those in Dixon's periodical *The Scalpel* or his 1855 edited volume of excerpts in *Scenes* seem entirely evidence-based. But the texts follow a refined rhetorical move in which he writes about blood to jump from the particular case to the larger physiological discussion.

Dixon's texts diagnose blood against the backdrop of this domestic space so markedly void of blood by making blood the ultimate vehicle in the body and society. Blood and changes in its quality and quantity, especially with regard to social aspects and political questions all become the concern of medicine. Blood in this way often signals a shift in topic from descriptive narrative to theoretical address to his audience. Long before blood counts or the means to use blood in clinical practice, narratives of clinical medicine clings to blood as both a salient category of inquiry and narrative tool. Blood bridges the gap between theory and clinical observation and justifies abstraction of individuality into individual, biological bodies.

The medical conception of blood is relative to its genre. Dixon's medical writings display a typical blend of clinical observation and sweeping theory in what historians of medicine call the case narrative. Medical case narratives circulated among Michael

Sappol calls a "network of medical storytellers," reaching a far wider audience than our contemporary, highly specialized medical journals ("Knowlton" 41). Case narratives are usually episodic collections of prose narratives, with essayistic transitions that span topics from descriptive narrative to theoretical address and that find an audience of colleagues, patients, and the public. As we will see, blood anchors social theory in the body, but blood also anchors narrative in the text. While their clinical data suggests objectivity and quantitative validity, the physician's heroic struggle in practice gives case narratives pathos. Only in this mix can the case narrative gain social significance through its insistence on the social function, its argument of the political centrality of the practitioner.

Steven M. Stowe sees case narratives as the main medical genre of the nineteenth century ("Work" 41). He describes their common plot: a doctor-narrator attempts to right a problem or wrong and to restore the loss incurred while making socially sweeping arguments and observations based on specific local detail (50).

In medical narratives, writing practitioners like Dixon move seamlessly from specific body to medical theory and socio-political metaphor by way of blood. As Michael Sappol explains, the occasion of a case narrative usually is the observation of a patient's symptoms, which contribute to the body of medical knowledge (Stowe, "Work" 60-8, Sappol "Knowlton" 468-73). It also creates social cohesion by establishing a basis of exchange between practitioners which in turn validates and advertises medical practice as a valuable social practice. However, beyond observation and advertisement, Dixon's case narratives also construct a theory that explain the observations, but that also abstract the symptom from its socio-political context. This abstract theory then allows him to

reinterpret the symptom as a confirmation of his own theory. In these narratives, blood is thus informational, advertising, and theoretical at the same time, which is only possible because of the semantic slipperiness of blood.

By the time he wrote *Mysteries*, Dixon was comfortable rendering blood occult in order to use its affective force. But the roots of this sweeping generalization of a supposed truth that lay in blood is already apparent in his case narratives were he employs this same strategy to diagnose the body politic. The blood of "sedentary people, such as sewing men and women, book-keepers, schoolmasters, and students" is diseased because they are "almost habitually poor breathers," their lung capacity decreases, leading to low levels of oxygen in the blood ("Nerve" 262). The blood of humans changes with society, but it is the physician who can evaluate the physiological properties and determine if it is healthy.

Medical and social theories overlap in the blood of Dixon's medical writings in a way that makes all aspects of reality a proper medical question. In this too he agrees with Calvin Cutter's hygienic laws we saw in chapter two. Even the modes of production are grounds for medical commentary. Dixon decries that profits are "literally wrung from the heart's-blood of the poor sewing-girls" ("Art. CLI" 142). This is not simply bracketing medical theory in favor of an urban gothic cliché similar to Karl Marx' later famous image of vampiric capital in *Das Kapital*.[124] Dixon does not stress the overall system, but that the working conditions under which extraction of surplus value from the capitalist production process impoverishes the bodily fluid of laboring women, which leads to their

124 "Das Kapital ist verstorbene Arbeit, die sich nur vampyrmäßig belebt durch Einsaugung lebendiger Arbeit, und um so mehr lebt, je mehr sie davon einsaugt" (*Kapital* 241).

decline in health. Social context creates the conditions that modify the blood, that make us healthy or sick.

Not only race, but also gender becomes the practitioner's concern in Dixon's social theory. While he later omits it, Dixon's article on the "Lady of Fashion" originally contains a paragraph that alludes to "abortionism" done for "securing the pleasures of fashion" and that ties together the projection of future superior Caucasian blood to the current weakness of decadent, debased blood (230). This seems an early indicator of his proto-eugenic call for forced abortions in *Mysteries* that we saw earlier.

As Carolyn Sorisio has pointed out in her seminal discussion of U.S. body discourses, *Fleshing out America* (2002), Dixon denies the "Caucasian" woman—the body of a so-called normal woman is the body of a white woman—the right to tamper with her energy and health because her sacred duty to nature and God is to bear children. The pregnant woman must give up her rights to the *in utero* rights of the future citizen, the present blood for the future: "Any activity—social, political, or intellectual—that detracted from this duty was regarded as not only unnatural, but also as endangering future generations" (31). What women's rights he understood, Dixon projected onto Native American bodies: "Not that we advise them to wear their dresses like an Indian squaw or Otaheitean" ("Damp Feet" 344).

Beyond the threat to the nation state and the individual patient, the blood of white women is the universal key with which the physician can unlock the mysteries of the social collective. Of course, many nineteenth-century physicians formed their social

arguments around observations of female bodies.[125] White womanhood seemed the central route to the seemingly most pressing answers of the nation. By the 1840s, anti-abortion movements arose in the intersection of racism, nationalism, and new medical therapies.

We see the vast sway of the practitioner who becomes the executor for the hygienic laws we saw in Calvin Cutter. Society interferes with female anatomy, threatening national purity, and the passive female body needs the help of the active practitioner. In Dixon, what may seem like a list of arbitrary complaints turns out to be one collection of symptoms having to do with blood. Any clothing that restricts circulation will "diminish the vitality of the blood, impair digestion, and produce red hands, headache, want of expression in the eye, dullness of perception, and displacements of the uterus" ("Toilette" 345). Blood is the central mechanism and metaphor for healthy women.

Reminiscent of Dixon's "Den of the Red Death" in *Mysteries*, we recognize its roots in his medical theories about the uterus, which is also mysterious and full of blood. The ritualistic, forced flow of blood from the dehumanized black body in the "Den" and the restoration of blood flow from the ovarian space both indicate health and the promise of biological reproduction for the white body. Dixon insists that the regular effusion of blood is a sign of reproductive health and that the stagnation and inflammatory congestion of blood-bearing tissues leads to the growth of cancerous masses. It becomes clear that human sacrifice and medical intervention are both immersions in blood. To

125 For more on the history on women and medicine in the nineteenth century, see Smith-Rosenberg and Rosenberg, Jane E. Schultz, Laura Briggs, Sharla M. Fett (111-41), Smith-Rosenberg (*Conduct* 182-244).

Dixon, both are radical but necessary therapeutic techniques. Ovarian cancer, he explains, is an analogous pathological process to tuberculosis: in both, blood clots small blood vessels, and albumen collects ("Cancer" 18-9).[126]

The physical blood of a healthy, white woman able to bear children is especially important to Dixon because it is also the metaphorical blood of the nation. To him, "the greatest evil that can befall a woman" is "the deprivation of offspring" ("Cancer" 18). He falls in line with a conservative strain of nineteenth-century practitioners when he approvingly quotes seventeenth-century medical authority Van Helmont's dictum "*propter solum uterum mulier est id quod est*"—putting the uterus at the center of the essentialized female existence even though by the middle of the century the ovaries had become the focus of most Victorian gynecologists (18).[127] We will see in chapter seven that the uterus also becomes the central legal place in the construction of racialized identities under chattel slavery and beyond.

Dixon switches metaphors from the body as particle of the political whole to the body as a market place—both of which rely on blood as the assumed mechanism of transmission. In the body of the fashionable lady, the act of novel reading leads to "the evils of repletion and inaction," which then lead to the over-supply to energy and the resulting disturbances to society at large: "for, as in political economy, so also in physiological economy, the supply will be regulated by the demand" (*Scenes* 57).

Medical practice, hygiene, and scientific racism do not clash but draw on the same basic ideas about blood. Dixon's social diagnosis of the fashionable lady's blood as

126 At the time, "serum," "plasma," and "albumen," or egg white, were used almost interchangeably by physicians who had not developed a full blood anatomy.
127 For more on this shift, see Moscucci.

sterile, unhealthy, aimless, leisurely, and intemperate is not just a gendered, but also a racialized diagnosis. We will again see this diagnosis appear as applied to enslaved African Americans by scientific racist Samuel A. Cartwright, M.D. of New Orleans, who uses this same theory of oxygenation to argue that enslaved persons are innately and immutably inferiority. Dixon specifically references Cartwright's vivisection experiments on alligators in the 1840s but expands his medical racism from enslaved bodies to all bodies ("Nerve Power" 262).

The connection between blood, digestion, and race is immediate. Because, so Dixon, the stomach continues to supply nervous fluid that the brain and muscles do not use up, in turn slowing down digestion, which in turn decreases appetite, rendering too little energy and fresh blood, and "degenerated sensation" (57). Dixon's theory aligns neatly with popular racism before the 1850s, a time when the rendering of blood as a racialized, occult substance was only beginning. Historian of medicine Charles Rosenberg explains that, because diet and digestion were important to popular medicine, practitioners saw digestive illnesses like cholera as originating in lazy and intemperate enslaved persons and immigrants and passed on in familial lineages of inheritance (*Cholera Years* 55).

However, we must differentiate among the many obsessions to avoid simple amplification of known tropes. Dixon may be a proto-eugenicist, but his place in medical history makes him stop short of later, more painfully simplistic theories of inheritance. Cancer, he maintains, may appear in familiar lineages, but it is not passed down "by a taint in the parent's blood" ("Cancer" 20). Rather, family histories of cancer result from a "similarity of structure" that follows the "same unknown law which causes the

resemblance of the countenance and other external physical peculiarities" because resemblance of the body's surface should be the same for the body's insides (20). The inside reflects the outside, and both are subject to the same blood laws.

In the end, this law still is one of blood: ovarian cancer originates in "poverty of the blood, and consequent weakness of the solids" (21). Acting according to the laws of blood, the fraternity of physicians exists at once within and outside the confines of established social mores—much like the Klan, but diametrically opposed to Brown's conjurer. Nineteenth-century physicians were rarely able to combat ovarian cancerous growths, and Dixon admits as much. His therapy consists of restorative tonics to change the patient's disposition and thus prevent or arrest the development of the cancer. But Dixon freely used gynecological surgery, claiming a prerogative, an exceptional, a-moral status for medical practice—the exact opposite of the social ethics Brown develops.

The occult disease is invisible and thus questions the validity of all medical reasoning. When mystery meets medicine, blood becomes a puzzling, opaque concept, invested with desires for certainty, epistemic stability, and closure-through-knowledge. To carry out this surgery and inflict pain, the physician has to undergo a "sacrifice of moral feeling," and although any "well-bred gentleman and true physician" will sympathize with the patient and seek relief for her, "she is not to forget, that all men who claim the title [of surgeon], are neither men of science nor gentlemen" (22).

Blood bridges the observed local and specific with the national and universal because Dixon exploits the semantic shift from material to metaphor. His frequent reliance on emotional appeal and use of affect, for example, contradict his claim to objectivity and rationality, but blood allows Dixon to access a register of emotional

appeal that exceeds the medical observation. Dixon's narrative of a C-section is therefore not just an operation, but a tragic struggle that gives occasion to paragraphs of quotations from *Macbeth* and a warning that husbands must trust their wives to the hands of capable surgeons if they are not to follow the fate of Macduff's mother ("Successful Case of Extraction" 35-6). While quantity validates the generalization, qualification makes this conclusion accessible, drives the plot of medical narratives, and gives them pathos.

In Dixon's antebellum medical writing, then, there is never "just" blood, but there is a bodily fluid that can be quantified, which allows him to draw conclusions about the conditions of the patient's body, its social environment, and the state of the body politick at large. In the next chapter we will see that Dixon's focus on blood as an occult essence for race aligns neatly with theories of scientific racism that see blood as the container for human phylogeny and for eternity. But here we already see how medical practice defines, blood in excess of meaning, as an occult, mysterious blood. This over-determined concept makes possible logical leaps and bounds in medical theory that are unsupported by the observations.

Biology and law, medicine and politics, and society and the nation overlap in blood. The property of Anglo-Saxon bodies, as we saw in Hawthorne, is the blood-free domestic space, while the property of the racialized, classed, and gendered body is bloodshed, stagnation, and neglect. Both Dixon's creative and medical writings define and render blood as concrete and abstract, material and theoretical, clinically observed liquid and occult idea.

In one issue of *The Scalpel*, Dixon may refer to blood in the sense of a common distinction of a group of people (women, the indolent rich), of a Christian allusion ("the

God of nature" *Scenes* 232), of a patient's symptoms (coughing blood, blood oxygenation), and in the sense of medical theories like William Harvey's discovery of blood circulation. Its semantic slipperiness allows Dixon to use it as a universal bridge across the divide between signifier and signified, a final answer to all social, political, medical, and cultural questions—and if not the answer, then at least the all-explaining mechanism that makes social theory possible.

But is this usage of blood perhaps a marker of science, of a complex model? Today, we might describe such a complex process as a "black box," in which the input and output characteristics are known, but not the exact nature of the transfer process in between. Even this concept of a black box in the contemporary sense would never allow for the constant, subtle, and decidedly literary semantic shifts Dixon uses to side-step logical problems, though. In the case of Dixon's use of blood, the all-explaining mechanisms that makes possible his therapeutics, theories, and calls for reform relies on this lack of explanation, which he substitutes through improvisation. Even though he does not know just *how* the blood is oxygenated, he declares that this process is the key to the entire problem of diseased bodies and proceeds from there to perform therapies.

We now see a new angle to my argument about the continuing reinterpretation and reinvention of what blood means. The gradual expulsion of blood from the domestic core that aimed to end the sovereign legacy of blood gave rise to medical discourses that focus on blood as the most important vehicle to convey social significance from the inside to the outside of the body and back, from patient to society and back, and from theory to therapy and back. The physician's claim to knowledge, the appeal to Truth about blood does not contradict the same claim made by a racist group like the KKK.

The difference between Brown and Dixon lies in the former's insistence on blood as real and as part of the human physiology, and the latter's investment of blood with occult qualities, invisible mysteries that render blood more, not less opaque. Both claim blood in the way we saw Whitman, but Dickinson's warning still stands: medical taxonomy is insufficient to address the affective disruption and psychological shock that accompany blood.

In medical writing and practice, occult knowledge arises from education and practice—theory and performance. The mystery in Ludwig von Reizenstein's *Geheimnisse* in chapter one makes visible the uncanny nature of the nation, the invisible blood of history on which the nation stands. To understand this mystery, the reader has to follow the occult knowledge of Uriah Hiram. The sensational as well as the medical text insists that there is a deeper meaning behind blood and claim the right to decipher blood, to be able to decode its meaning. The mutual exclusivity of blood in clinical medicine and sensational gothic blood leads to distinct, contemporary blood discourses—although one should be careful not to exaggerate such distinctions. Each way of reading and writing blood functions through the vocal rejection of the thereby recognized other discourse.

The medical text is no attempt at removing the bloody tale from its political implications, but itself implies a social intervention and a social theory enacted through medical therapy. While Whitman hopes for medicine to absorb the blood of the Civil War, we see Dixon's political and social metaphor of blood absorbs medicine instead. Brown's depictions of medical practice confirm this, but do away with the sleight-of-hand. To him, medical practice is always social, basically a local, mutual exchange

between physician and patient. Blood in its *a priori* social dimension overlays the relation established in the exchange and stabilizes the social pathology Brown sees as the true cause.

So were all practitioners immune to occult superstitions regarding blood? Did medical education create a counter-occult in its elitist education? These broad questions indicate the wide-ranging consequences of this occult discussion (pun intended). We find strange rituals involving superstition and the supernatural among physicians. Indeed, the very foundation for the scientific racism I discuss in the next chapter rests on the assumption that blood *must* have an essence, an elusive force or mysterious quality of some kind. Never mind that research had indicated since the 1840s that blood is probably just another tissue.[128] Also, as mentioned above, one ought not to confuse medicine and science our contemporary usage with the practices and theories of the second half of the nineteenth century.

In the end, then, we do see the difference between Brown and Dixon thrown into stark relief. William Wells Brown's twinned professional careers of practitioner and author demonstrate that medicine is no matter of elite education, but of the performance of medical practice. Brown grew up in the blood-stained reality of chattel slavery. He continually self-educated, and devoted his life to both, political activism and medical practice. In his writings, blood is not the bridge between the individual and the social. Indeed, his writings avoid blood in a medical setting, stressing the civilized, professional,

128 Jan Swammerdam's observation of red blood cells in 1659 and Antoni van Leeuwenhoek's 1695 drawings of red blood cells was followed by the birth of hematology in the second half of the nineteenth century, with Alfred Donné's discovery of platelets in 1842, Gabriel Andral's and William Addison's observations of leukocytes, and Paul Ehrlich's 1879 experiments with dyes that finally made possible blood counts and the observation of blood component morphology.

progressive side of his practice. He was aware of the same theories Dixon relates and, as we shall see in the next chapter, engaged them in his historical writings, but always refuted occult notions of blood.

Brown knew that medicine itself could not hold any promise, but was merely a term for the transactional performance between patient and practitioner, a civil agreement that establishes a complex social relation between the parties. Therefore, he has little use for blood and instead focuses on the practitioner's performance, on what medicine is and what it does, not on the diagnostics of the body through blood, which he knew would not help his therapy. In the next chapter we will turn to Brown's efforts in responding to the social institutionalization of racist medicine: scientific racism.

Brown first shows that medical practice as such is a socially-inflected performance, a set of actions determined not by an abstract, ideal rule of medical knowledge, but grounded in considerations of the performer' relation to the audience, i.e. to political questions, to racist prejudice and the dissemblance of therapy. Brown's texts contain blood, but his disdain for superstitions and fight against racism at once mock white conceptions of what medicine itself is and does and superstitious belief in an occult blood.

Dixon's novella about the Ku Klux Klan illustrates irrational white fantasies of occult blood in sensational scenes of blood as a gothic, occult substance, as the essence of race and as something to be ingested, written with, smeared, and poured out. Dixon's medical texts, finally, seem to contradict this occultism with objectivity, but I show that even medical narratives belie their purported rationalism. These narratives claim blood as the concern for orthodox physicians, but through it far exceed medical diagnosis and

therapy, ending in normative theories of a good society, not a healthy body.

A central argument this chapter is that considerations of blood are never a-political, and this is true for medical considerations as well. Since our understanding of what we mean by "medicine" has changed greatly, we need to qualify this term. For one, it is not synonymous with the scientific method, which itself is not a-historical or inevitable, and not the only way to answer certain questions. As Lorraine Daston explains, nineteenth-century medical practice was caught, among other changes, in the shift from skilled practice to clinical measurement because a utopian, vision of a democratic, universal communication, of a way to represent the truth about material reality that by-passed the failures of language and the inscrutability of individual skill ("Objectivity" 611-12). Brown's writings about his practice make it obvious that for a black physician, self-effacement in the brotherhood of physicians was never an option, though he insisted on his membership. We will see below that Dixon's self-effacement becomes a gothic self-abandonment in the larger universality of race that submerges scientific theory into occult blood.

The rise of clinical objectivity may well arise against its material backdrop: human enslavement, constant violence projected onto black bodies, and the ultimate conception of the "black blood." It would take another book-length study to address this in full, but violence changes once we call it medicine. In medicine, citizens can both condone violence as scientifically necessary and disavow any continuity with the legacy of sovereignty. After the Civil War, arose new royal courts, schools of medicine where politics met practice, the realism of Thomas Eakins' famous Agnew Clinic was not appreciated—medicine no longer saw itself as culturally implicated and only

professionally concerned with blood and sex (Werbel 32-6). Even though it clearly was, the display was the problem, the visibility of that which the practitioner is doing, the naming of the act, and once more the threat this short-circuiting posed to the psychic discipline that, following Elias, we are to expect not just from the patient, but also from the practitioner.

Medicine is not an autonomous, objective science, but as an effort of embodied politics, as social practice, and, as I argue in this chapter, as a social performance. Especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, orthodox allopathy became increasingly political in its persecution of other forms of practice. As sociologist Owen Whooley describes, the formation of the AMA as a professional lobbying organization for orthodox allopathy in 1848 again changed the landscape by slowly displacing especially homeopathy. Alternative therapies ceased to be competitive after the AMA succeeded in gradually reintroducing medical licenses by way of teaching institutions and the state licensing boards around the end of the century (504).

Far from an objective lens to look at the blood of violence neutrally, medical practice draws on and in turn enriches some of the most sensational ideas about blood, giving rise to a violence all own. Medical praxis is both political and ideological work that individual practitioners do to claim medical narratives as objective, above politics, as disinterested and thus invested in blood as a marker of quantity and diagnostic tool, not a cultural concept invested with superstitions or qualitative meanings. This chapter juxtaposes an African American and an Anglo physician not to reify these categories as meaningful distinctions, but to demonstrate the degree to which the role of blood in their medical writings and practice depended on their social environment.

Dr. William Wells Brown found such occult blood that Dixon proposes, simply risible because he did not base his praxis on racist theory, but social interaction. He knew not only the medical theories about blood, but had also lived among and suffered under humans who aimed to make him less than human by virtue of his blood and by shedding his blood. Both are keenly aware of blood as a keyword, that they must either avoid or exploit blood so as to strengthen their arguments. Between the two, medical practice turns out to belie the seemingly objective nature of anatomical taxonomy.

The national imaginary is not just political and pedagogical, and it does not just result from poets evaluating medicine, but also in the practice of medicine and the recursive theory derived from that practice. In a constant hermeneutic circle, blood washes back and forth, from practice to theory and back, from the implementation of anatomic and then physiological theory to therapeutics and observations, and back to another form of socially-inflected theory.

Chapter Five — Blood in Time: Racist Science, Biblical Time, and the Inscription of Identities in Samuel A. Cartwright's "Report" and William Wells Brown's *The Rising Son*

> "In bourgeois society, therefore, the past dominates the present"
> – Karl Marx
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> "It is the red, vital blood, sent to the brain, that liberates their mind when under the white man's control"
> – Samuel A. Cartwright, M.D.
>
> "Climate, and climate alone, is the sole cause."
> – William Wells Brown, M.D.

The first chapter addressed the question "whose blood?" in the antebellum context. This question changes, however, once free black authors and black practitioners ask the question as formal U.S. citizens. As I established in the previous chapter, blood is a central component in the construction of medical practice as a social practice. Practitioners and the theory they wrote fortified gendered social spheres of patient and doctor, but also and especially definitions, articulations, and social implementations of race. Medical practice can thus confirm and propagate distinct national imaginaries. We now turn from medical practice to the relation between these overtly quantitative, scientific theories that equate blood and race and their cultural resonance.[129]

129 It is hard to define the discursive structures of nineteenth-century race theory along neat lines. Michael Banton points out the problem of terminology in discussing scientific approaches to race. Etymology and history show that the term "racism" is a somewhat anachronistic description, even in the sense of "a belief in the existence of distinct human races," for what contemporaries would have described as "racial taxonomy" and studies of a "type" or "character" (ix). This is also the argument in Cathy Boeckmann's *A Question of Character*, which carries the equation rather too far and broadly conceives of "character" as a master trope. I use the term "racist theory" and related compounds to stress continuity in change and the socio-political dimension of these narratives. My term stresses the professional and epistemological underpinnings of these texts as "theories," while their nature is "racist," which allows for the more neutral sense of the turn of the twentieth century as "somebody who believes in the existence of races and researches them," but also for the horrific fruits these early roots bore.

This chapter focuses on the example of Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright (1793-1863) and the ways that William Wells Brown's *The Rising Son* engages such theories.[130] I begin by returning to William Wells Brown's *The Rising Son* (1873), which I already mentioned in the previous chapter, and argue that Brown's text is not just an encyclopedic counter-history, as scholars like Ezra Greenspan commonly read it, but also a carefully arranged attack on polygenists and their scientific racism. I then move on to illustrate the nature of the polygenist argument—that there are several, distinct, immutable human races. I illustrate Brown's argument that humans have one, divinely-created blood and that geography and individual agency cause changes in skin colors.

I then focus on one specific racist scientific theory, Samuel A. Cartwright's influential antebellum construction of so-called black blood as the physiological justification of chattel slavery. I argue that Cartwright's combination of biblical texts and quantitative measurements renders blood occult in much the same way that I explained in the last chapter regarding the texts of Dr. Edward H. Dixon. Cartwright's mysterious, opaque "black blood" goes further than Dixon, however. Beyond determining the individual's physique, Cartwright's concept of so-called black blood injects the eternal temporal dimension of biblical history into the blood of living beings, robbing them of agency and individuality and anchoring immutable identities in their bodies.

We ought not to assume that antebellum racist theories disappeared with

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130 Several excellent studies of the inter-woven histories of human experiment as part of slavery, the medical plantation, and the development of Western medicine make the point, most notably Harriet A. Washington's survey *Medical Apartheit*. Elise Juzda points out the convergence and ultimate lack of communication between the U.S. Army and craniologists. The Army Medical Museum of the 1860s was exactly the kind of institution Walt Whitman favored in his later days, and it seamlessly merged into the kind of laboratory research institution Walter Reed imagined.

Emancipation. As we will see in the last chapter, the formal, legal status of freedom itself does not cancel out the legacy of chattel slavery. On the contrary, the rise of such scientific racism during and after Reconstruction was in part a political reaction to Emancipation. Over the course of the century, medical arguments like Cartwright's gained far broader cultural, social, and political traction than a specialized group of practitioners might have afforded. As Colin Dayan remarks:

> Emancipation, far from erasing the ancestral strain, gave it new life and importance. The concept of blackness ensured racial subordination and thus effected the continuation of enslavement in other guises. The turn to blood was crucial to this strategy. Blood provided a pseudo-rational system for the distribution of a mythical essence: blood=race. Once the connection was made, color could be referred to, but now it meant blood. Like the word *blood*, *color* is fictitious, but the law engineered the stigma that ordained deprivation. (*Dog* 52-3)

Emancipation did not erase slavery but only changed the legal requirements of human bondage while continuing the socio-political emphasis on blood lineage and blood-as-race. The political effort to end slavery only considered formal categories of enslavement and race, neat definitions that soon lost what little power they might have had. Once concepts of race completed the gradual shift from ideas of ownership and property to the equation of blood and race, ideas of slavery and about enslaved persons also changed.

We will return to this point in the last chapter, but it is worth pointing out that the equation of blood and race also made impossible a complete break with the old order. Especially Thomas Jefferson had worked hard to establish a national imaginary as a vision of the nation as existing in the present; instead of the future or past, Jefferson's republic stressed what Holly Jackson has called a "radical vision of discontinuity" (28). Jefferson's national imaginary shored up temporality against the specter of familial

inheritance, safeguarding the present from the tyranny of the past. The equation of race and blood, however, drapes the mode of transmission in and occult mystery.

In the first chapter I argued that to see blood as the sign for a mystery as opposed to a secret stresses a supernatural, divine will in the sense of *mystikos* (*μυστικός*). This force renders history opaque instead of allowing individuals to know, understand, and work through it. This chapter now turns to the very human force of racist theory, which manipulates the temporal dimension of blood itself. Scientific racism removed the biological time of nature from blood and replaced it with the theological eternity of divine creation. This eternity that Dayan calls "ordained" entered the very natural bodily fluid by way of medical narrative. Blood-as-race was no longer relative to geography, but gained an immutable, eternal dimension. As we saw in the last chapter, blood is both, imaginary and real, and the equation between blood and race depended on medicine. I assert that medical theories combine the abstract, eternal temporal perspective of texts from the Hebrew bible with medical narratives to create this permanent conjunction of race and blood.

Cartwright linked these abstractions to quantitative evidence drawn from medical experiments. He performed Enlightenment-style, "gentlemanly" vivisection on alligators in the late 1840s and early 1850s, studying the tortured, dying animals alongside such luminaries as Dr. Bennett Dowler, whose research Dixon also republishes in *The Scalpel* (Stowe, *Doctoring* 237ff).[131] As mentioned above, Dixon directly references Cartwright's experiments on alligators. These "prove the lungs to be the true motor of the blood," an

131 Dixon discusses the vivisections in *The Scalpel* 1.6 (1850): 316-23.

idea Dixon sees as already established and the experiments thus superfluous: "it seems to us quite unnecessary to prove what no one, since the time Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, has denied—the lungs, of course furnish the power of the heart's action, by oxygenating its blood" (*Scenes* 47).

Disagreements among experts aside, however, Dixon would probably have found little to criticize in Cartwright's experiments. Brown found quite a lot. Though he never mentions Cartwright or any other specific racist scientist by name, his *The Rising Son* is not just an African-American counter-history, nor, as Greenspan insists, an encyclopedic "reference work" (*Life* 461).

The Rising Son is rarely read, and to illustrate why I pair what looks like a history book with medical texts, I begin with a brief excursion on the text's structure to. Brown declares his project to be "a history of the African race" (iv). Other histories—and, we might infer, analogous to Whitman's "History"—he understands as Anglo history in which the present is the inevitable result of the past. It is this inevitability or destiny that *Son* attacks. Brown aims to undo Anglo history by positing an alternative history, an archeology of past greatness, and a celebration of the overcoming of obstacles. More than that, he confronts the broad span of arguments that scientific racism delivers.

Divided into fifty chapters, *Son* proceeds with associative rather than clearly-marked connections between them. While this puzzling order does resemble an encyclopedic structure, Brown consciously avoids a coherent history and questions the concept of coherence. Drawing on ancient and contemporary sources, including ethnography and travel literature, Brown affirms the civil structure and order of African society as proof that Africans are capable of creating and maintaining an advanced

civilization. Beginning with the origins of African civilizations in Ethiopia, Egypt, and Carthage that Brown finds in ancient history and narratives. He establishes credibitlity by anchoring his text in the Western canon of ancient and classic literature. Brown devotes the next two chapters describe the causes of skin color and of the difference in features. I will focus on these chapters and say more about them below, but we can summarize that Brown provides a re-reading of skin color as geo-spatially determined.

Brown describes civil and religious ceremonies to argue that paganism is not the dominant force in Africa and that both Christianity and Islam are beneficial to African civilization and beneficial to temperance. Brown defends Islam as a step toward what he sees as the Christian truth and compatible with the gospel (92, 90-1). *Son* covers the continent from Ethiopia to Liberia and discusses the slave trade as well as the progress of African societies toward civilization.[132] To Brown, white colonizers and slave-traders destroy the African glory depicted in the first six chapters and even make that history invisible. The opening traces the origins of African Americans, from biblical and ancient history. But the text also goes into great lengths to follow the slave trade to Haiti, to discuss its history as well as circum-Caribbean history and South American history at large. After that, Brown shifts to a more clearly chronological history of the arrival of Africans in the British colonies and their roles in great battles and other mile-stones of U.S. national history. *Son* ends with a boiled-down version of the biographical sketches of representative men and women in Brown's *The Black Man: His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements* (1863).

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132 Chapter VII uses Abyssinia as a term, which, however, is regarded as derogatory by Ethiopians today (Jalata). I will follow Brown's usage in discussing the text, but here wanted to make clear the distinction.

I argue that Brown does not merely take a stance on historiography, but that this is a direct response to and argument against racist scientists like Cartwright who deny this ability to anyone of African descent. He points out that African individuals who converted to Christianity prove the possibility of improvement of individuals descended from the African continent, which racist scientists also deny. The leap from the early chapters to the causes of color and Abyssinia is not chronological in a documentary sense but in the sense of history as the relation to the present, which is not just a refutation of existing histories, but, as we will see below, a response to scientific racism.

Son is a history book and an encyclopedia, but it is also a very serious, direct engagement with scientific racism and a defense of human blood as being one, not many. *Son* is a text by a physician arguing the impossibility of different bloods, a response to race theories like those of Cartwright, or those of practitioner Josiah Clarke Nott, and Swiss-American biologist Louis Agassiz. In it, Brown re-works blood-as-race into blood-as-human, and thus paves the way for the race pride of Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins and especially of later, professionally-trained authors like Charles Waddell Chesnutt and W. E. B. DuBois.[133]

Brown's overall argument in *Son* is that slavery destroyed ancient high cultures, the very cultures that are the cradle of all Western civilization. Brown stresses this point several times: "But Meroe was the queenly city of Ethiopia, into which all Africa poured its caravans laden with ivory, frankincense, and gold. So it is that we trace the light of Ethiopian civilization first into Egypt, thence into Greece, and Home, whence, gathering

133 Especially Thomas J. Otten mentions this frequently ("Hidden Self").

new splendor on its way, it hath been diffusing itself all the world over" (*Son* 44). Later, DuBois and Hopkins among others would flesh out a more complete pan-Africanist world view, but Brown should be counted among Dr. Martin Robinson Delaney and others as an early precursor of black nationalism.

I argued in the first chapter that Hawthorne's historical glosses allow him skip the inconvenient and disappear bloodshed and bloody histories, and Brown demonstrates that this is also possible in what we would today call anthropology. In contrast to later, academy-trained authors like DuBois, Brown owes nothing to formal methodology or discipline. Rather, he writes history *as* an argument, with a structure that tells the story as much as the content. For example, when Brown shifts to Abyssinia in , which seems sudden if we read *Son* as a history text, makes clear the true cause of African inferiority: the bloody history of the slave trade, especially as conducted by the British. Brown does not provide a meta-commentary or historiography in the sense of national histories, but re-traces lived experience in the steps that led to the present struggles of African Americans.

Beyond unearthing lived history, Brown in this way also responds to naturalist and theological racism by harking back to earlier theories of race in the insistence of skin color as the result of local, external variables, and on a monogenetic world view. Brown quickly moves to address "the color of the Ethiopians, that distinguishes their descendants of the present time in such a marked manner from the rest of the human race" (*Son* 44). Brown's focus on skin color is thus not merely a question of anti-racism, but should be read in the context of contemporary scientific racism, especially the arguments between monogenism and polygenism.

The history of scientific racism is bountiful and well-known. Stephen Jay Gould has published numerous texts that in great detail disprove and historicize polygenist and monogenist views, especially the craniometric theory of Dr. Samuel Gordon Morton (1799-1851), the natural history theories of Agassiz, and the further development of these racist theories in equally flawed theories on women and children. Also, the statistical and rhetorical efforts of this loosely associated group of practitioners and scientists paved the way for the construction of "normalcy," the intelligence quotient, and the bell curve as the measure of populations, with especially devastating results for the community of disabled persons, as Lennard J. Davis points out ("Bell Curve" 5).

Broadly speaking, around the 1860s polygenism, a theory that different humans existed who were created differently, replaced monogenism, which insisted on different sub-races of one human family created in one act of God.[134] In his classic study, *The Mismeasure of Man*, Gould sums up that both theories argued over the same quantified, anthropological evidence, but that monogenism insisted on the original descent of all humans from Adam and Eve, while polygenists considered other acts of creation (71-2). Polygenists, and among them Samuel A. Cartwright, also argued that African-American

134 Until the end of the eighteenth century, the doctrine of a divinely created order of existence, the Great Chain of Being, was generally upheld, in which a fixed spot was assigned to individual creatures by a benign God. Carolus Linnaeus challenged this view in his *Systema Naturae* (1753) as did Johann Friedrich Blumenbach in his *Über die Natürlichen Verschiedenheiten beim Menschengeschlechte* (1795). Both texts loomed large until the late nineteenth century. They both allowed for change and evolution and Linnaeus speculating on multiple origins for distinct human subspecies, while Blumenbach saw distinct races within the continuum of the human species. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Thomas R. Malthus developed the concept of population control, competition for resources, and individual failure as the cause for poverty in his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1789).

enslaved persons shared no common ancestry with ancient civilizations.[135] As Mike Hawkins explains, this evidence—that black Egyptians were only slaves and the pharaohs white, that whites had bigger brains than all other races, that Native Americans were lower than whites but higher than blacks—was then related to a hypothesized, mythical past (81-107).[136] The origins of these arguments go back before the Civil War, but continue into Reconstruction, where polygenism in its many guises wins out, though social Darwinists finally replace it under Francis Galton and Herbert Spencer.

A prominent voice in the South whose work was still well-received in the North, Dr. Samuel Adolphus Cartwright in his perhaps most influential text gives an especially clear instance to illustrate how medical theories developed pseudo-philosophies of lasting import.[137] In 1849, the Medical Association of Louisiana appointed a commission to investigate the bodies and diseases of slaves, and to deliver a report. In 1851, Cartwright, a Louisiana practitioner and head of the commission, published the first version of his "Report on the Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race" for the committee in the *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal.*[138] Initially convinced that

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135 The same is obviously true for other groups identified and targeted as non-white. Frequently ignored are the vast energies invested into classifying Asian individuals during this same period, as explained in an over-due summary by Michael Keevak. On Egyptomania, see Trafton.

136 See also Gondermann's similar argument regarding the racist theories of Herbert Spencer.

137 The most important article on Cartwright remains James Denny Guillory's contribution from 1968, which is best read together with Katherine Bankole's thorough historical study of the intersection of slavery and medicine. There was no norm of medical theory in the 1850s in our current sense, but Cartwright is certainly important in the network of racist theory. He connects orthodox professional medicine, nationalism, and the inscription of blood. Yet there were also opponents of his theories. Cartwright had frequent arguments, especially with Daniel Warren Bricknell, who rejected most of Cartwright's central theories (Warren A. Sawyer).

138 The publication history of the "Report" is rather complicated and has not been examined hitherto. Cartwright, a medical practitioner whom Guillory points out as prolific, popular, and decorated by Harvard and Baltimore (210), seems an obvious choice as head of the research group. The report was commissioned at the 1849 state convention of the MAL and the original article was published in 1851 in the *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal*. The original "Report" is then re-printed in the 1853 volume II of a

abolitionism was a conspiracy of British interests to break up the U.S. and its strength in global commodities production, Cartwright turned to disprove its claims and to strengthen the authority of Southern medics on all matters concerning slave medicine. This was the beginning of constant revisions and re-publications of the article and related documents.

The "Report" aimed to give a summary of health problems of enslaved African Americans and noteworthy aspects of their anatomy and physiology. Though this already points to the assumption that race is embodied difference, Cartwright took the matter much further by developing a theory of immutable, divinely-ordained inferiority that laid the ground for later racist naturalists. He finally even declared that he had conclusively distinguished a separate human race, which he called "Prognathus."

To Cartwright, intellectual inferiority is the result of physiological inferiority, the result of an immutable difference, the essence of the enslaved person. He melds clinical diagnosis of universally applicable physiology with biblical history via the quantifiable evidence found in spirometric measurements of blood oxygen levels. Spirometric technology came to the U.S. during the Civil War. The U.S. Sanitary Commission had

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compliation called *The Industrial Resources, Etc., of the Southern and Western States: Embracing a View of Their Commerce, Agriculture, Manufactures, Internal Improvements, Slave and Free Labor, Slavery Institutions, Products, Etc., of the South ; Together with Historical and Statistical Sketches of the Different States and Cities of the Union Statistics of the United States Commerce and Manufactures, from the Earliest Periods, Compared with Other Leading Powers -- the Results of the Different Census Returns Since 1790, and Returns of the Census of 1850, on Population, Agriculture and General Industry, Etc*., pp. 315-29. This book was published by James D. B. De Bow at the Charleston office of *De Bow's Review*. This re-printing also adds a section called "Conclusion." In the following, I will cite this expanded 1853 version published by De Bow, and indicate it as the "Report." Various reprints exist, most recently in Caplan et al. However, this source unfortunately publishes the text without exact source and with no critical material whatsoever, even though the collection is aimed at medical audiences, not historians or other scholars familiar with the material. I recommend the recent reprint in Evelynn M. Hammonds' useful collection, which at least has an introduction to the topic and further reading.

imported the technology for spirometry from Great Britain for statistics that were part of a large-scale survey of the physical characteristics of soldiers in the Union Army, as Lundy Braun explains (130-48). After 1864 these measurements increasingly focused on black Union soldiers. Dozens of tabulations in the USSC's publications demonstrated linear hierarchy, counting racial difference in rows of numbers and aggregates—an approach we will revisit in the last chapter (149-51).

Lundy Braun places spirometry in a clear socio-political context, but does not address Cartwright's measurements. Examining enslaved persons, his measurements supposedly prove drastic differences between the oxygen intake of black and white bodies, which to him are fixed, permanent, and the cause of the black enslaved person's inferiority:

> The great development of the nervous system, and the profuse distribution of nervous matter to the stomach, liver and genital organs, would make the Ethiopian race entirely unmanageable, if it were not that this excessive nervous development is associated with a deficiency of red blood in the pulmonary and arterial systems, from a defective atmospherization or arterialization of the blood in the lungs—constituting the best type of what is called the lymphatic temperament, in which lymph, phlegm, mucus, and other humors predominate over the red blood. It is this defective hematosis, or atmospherization of the blood, conjoined with a deficiency of cerebral matter in the cranium, and an excess of nervous matter distributed to the organs of sensation and assimilation, that is the true cause of that debasement of mind which has rendered the people of Africa unable to take care of themselves. ("Report" 315-6)

The black body is not just mysterious and other, but structurally divided in its own anatomy. Cartwright finds an over-developed nervous and digestive system that according to medical theory should lead to a powerful, unruly, energetic body. Persons with African ancestry can never realize their potential for power, however, because their pulmonary-circular system is defective. The lungs are too small and the blood circulates

imperfectly. Intellect, self-control, character, civilization all depend on perfect blood, but the so-called black blood is sluggish, insufficiently oxygenated, and the brain matter therefore damaged. Though this anatomy might lead to a stronger body, it can never serve a higher goal because brain and body are sluggish.

Cartwright's observation of overdeveloped black nerves and digestion invests racist stereotypes of African Americans as lascivious and gluttonous with scientific prestige, but it depends on older cultural notions. The uncivilized human is so because of a body, a body made so by God. This abject other is the extreme antipode to the ideal white, civilized male—we see the same binary that Dixon relies on. Leaking, odorous, dis-colored (i.e., no clear or white) body fluids would signal illness in the white body, but in the black enslaved person are a sign of strength and health; the black body in its state of *health* is semi-rational, indolent, childlike, porous, and grotesquely inferior to white bodies. The idea of a black civilized body, of black blood under a white skin thus becomes an utter paradox. The entire process of enlightenment is inaccessible for those with black blood. Therefore, hopes for change or improvement through uplift reform like Brown and later Hopkins advocate are a medical impossibility.

The divinely-sanctioned (more on that below) natural state of black bodies is inability or even disability: a phlegmatic temperament and small brains together with over-sized stomachs and genitals, lead to a debased mind, which dooms the entire continent of Africa. Paradoxically, this blood seems to fulfill its general physiological purposes just as well as white blood—Cartwright mentions no inferiority in the transport of nutrients or the like.

Nevertheless he maintains that this imperfectly oxygenated blood is the "the true

cause of their indolence and apathy" and the reason "why they have chosen, through countless ages, idleness, misery and barbarism, to industry and frugality" ("Report" 316). Socially unacceptable behavior that lessened the monetary gains of enslavers thus result not from slavery, but physiology.

Cartwright illustrates his medical theory that draws on physiological evidence in vague gestures to supposedly African history. The black disabled body is the reason "why social industry, or associated labor, so essential to all progress in civilization and improvement, has never made any progress among them," Carwright claims (316). He combines in his medical observations notions of social hierarchies of modes of production, labor organization, and progress, all of which indicate a relative status of so-called civilization on a linear hierarchy. He argues that neither arts nor sciences have "taken root on any proportion of African soil inhabited by them," a negative he tries to prove by the supposed absence of letters, "even hieroglyphics," buildings, roads, "or monuments of any kind" (316). Cartwright gestures to vague archeological findings as to prove his blood theory true, which in turn proves "that they have [never] been awakened from their apathy and sleepy indolence, to physical or mental exertion" (316).

With the stroke of the pen, Cartwright turns racist, anecdotal prejudice against enslaved persons into valid observation and finds a cause in their bodies—the similarity to Dixon's medical narratives is obvious. However, while Dixon blames "society" for the deprived morals of fashionable ladies, Cartwright insists that enslaved individuals choose to live in what appears the opposite to the liberal-progressive, hygienic nation. The passivity of enslaved individuals is not sign of a once-proud kingdom, now defeated, as Brown insists, but that of a deficient body. Progress, civilization, and personal agency are

all alien to the enslaved person because they *decide* against it, an incomprehensible decision that only makes sense if this choice is already *made for* the person by virtue of their anatomy, a deeper, underlying inferiority.

To Cartwright, insufficiently oxygenated blood simply does not allow for mental activity equal to that of whites (315-6). Finding the truth of the enslaved person through their blood is thus not a mere question of oxygen levels or of determining the black body's humoral temperament. Cartwright's racist theory constitutes a complete world view, in which the present debasement is affirmation of a history of "misery and barbarism" that he can measure in the blood—the meaning of all history quantified ("Report" 316).

How can Brown's focus on skin pigmentation and the ancestry of African Americans counter this evidence about blood? How do blood and color meet? We recall the equation of blood and color that Colin Dayan pointed out at the beginning of this chapter: "Blood provided a pseudo-rational system for the distribution of a mythical essence: blood=race. Once the connection was made, color could be referred to, but now it meant blood" (*Dog* 53). We see why Brown insists on discussing the origin of skin pigmentation. He draws away from blood in his history because to include blood as part of race dooms the individual to a racial inheritance.

By defending the Ethiopian roots of African Americans also because he stresses Homer's and Herodotus' usage of the Greek *Αἰθιοπία* in describing Africa, a term that stresses sun exposure: "these people, in and around Meroe, took their color from the climate," Brown rejects polygenism and stresses geographic variations among one human race (*Son* 46). He stresses the monogenetic theory: "Ethiopians are not constitutionally

different from the rest of the human family, and therefore, we must insist upon unity, although we see and admit the variety" (78). The monogenic creation allows for the possibility that all humans can change in relation to their environment, and Brown sums up his position on this process in one clear statement: "Climate, and climate alone, is the cause of their color" (78).

Cartwright claims in the "Report" that black inferiority and disease result from the enslaved person's physiology, especially noticeable in their "black blood"—a blood which he asserted to be darker than that of whites ("Report" 315). The darkness of the black body is by no means only a question of skin color. Blackness pervades the entire black body: the blood, muscles, membranes, and the brain (315). Cartwright de-humanizes enslaved persons in these constructions of otherness by way of occult othered body fluids, essentially different from white blood, sweat, and sebum.

Cartwright develops blackness into a hyperbolic obsession, creating an opaque, mysterious medical concept, occult blood which allows for the same rhetorical acrobatics we saw in Dixon. Political and social agency are forever foreclosed within black, as opposed to red blood: "It is the red, vital blood, sent to the brain, that liberates their mind when under the white man's control; and it is the want of a sufficiency of red, vital blood, that chains their mind to ignorance and barbarism when in freedom" (316). "Vitality" is a precondition for civilized life, and the black body will not allow for this unless driven to rapid breathing by whites. The "Report" constructs a mythical blackness by way of inscribing the enslaved person's anatomy with blackness visible in the blood, the blood vessels, and thus the entire being, past, present, and future. This blackness is the mark of a perfect "type," and fair skin the black thus is a sign of "feebleness or ill-health" (317).

Black blood is symptom and mechanism of racial inferiority, justifying a dichotomy with white blood.

This blackness not only floods the enslaved person's interior, but even seeps into the black body's vicinity, suggesting these bodies as porous, open, contagious, or contaminating. The "Report" does not discuss breaching of the skin, but asserts that the skin of black enslaved persons is "covered with an oily exudation that gives a dark color to white linen, and has a strong odor," which is another sign of health (31). We may infer here an ominous reference-through-contiguity to the blood shed on plantations, which would reinforce the same point as a sublimation of white guilt in which the enslaver Cartwright is justifying his own misdeeds by blaming them on the essentialized nature of the enslaved person.[139]

As we saw in the cases of Sam and Cato, and indeed in Brown's own biography, practicing medicine before Emancipation could well mean practicing on a plantation or other place of enslavement. Beginning with Petra Kuppers and Rachel Dudley, scholars have begun tracing the "medical plantation" as a nodal connection of scientific racism, legal regulation, and the social, political, and cultural implementation of large-scale medical control of enslaved populations on plantations and cultural disciplining of bodies ("Remembering Anarcha"). Many prominent practitioners benefited from an access to bodies to observe and to experiment on, which was much harder outside the setting of slavery. J. Marion Sims' experiments on enslaved women are infamous, and Terri Kapsalis reminds us of the close kinship between the performance of medical practice

139 Cartwright, like many of his colleagues, conducted gynecological examinations and we can only speculate on the horrors and pain inflicted on enslaved women and men that let him observe the "oily exudation" (31).

and that other nineteenth-century cultural giant, P.T. Barnum (*Performing Gynecology* 33). Finally, practitioners commonly based anatomical theory on dissections of decased enslaved persons and the poor because these corpses were most available, as Edward C. Halperin reminds us ("Cadavers").

Elite slave doctors read the body not only for health and disease in the physiological sense, but as a sign of political stability, and, as we will see below, even of theological order. Black unruliness to Cartwright roots in the blood's insufficient oxygenation. Cartwright calls this construction of illness *Dysaesthesia Aetiopisn* (Ethiopian Dysesthesia) (323). Its symptoms are numbness and lack of sensitivity, but also skin lesions "discoverable to the medical observer" (323). Free blacks, devoid of the supposedly beneficial influence of whites, will retrograde to barbarism (326). The literal stigmata of freedom are "much more prevalent among free negroes living in clusters by themselves, than among slaves on our plantations," because the freedmen "have not got some white person to direct and take care of them," and have the "liberty to be idle, wallow in filth, and to indulge in improper food or drinks" (323).

Neither Brown nor Cartwright claims to divorce the examined bodies of enslaved African Americans from their social context. Deficiency and physical impairment depend on the frame of reference, and Cartwright's social transaction of the medical diagnosis once more plays to its audience: practitioners working with the enslaved. As David Roedinger and Elizabeth Esch point out, diagnosis and therapy on slave plantations were in practice always closely related to questions of effective handling and proper management of enslaved bodies (54-61). Gould rightly insists that not all polygenists were pro-slavery, but I argue that the institution of slavery and its close ties to medicine

are inextricable from the polygenist construction of race (*Mismeasure* 101-2). So I want to modify the clear distinction that Michael Banton draws between racists who waged social warfare and those who practiced paternalistic condescension, advocates for slavery who saw enslaved African Americans as animal-like and those who argued that inferiority only mandates special care (*Racial Theories* 45-6). As I argued concerning Dixon, the white physician might well practice in a paternalistic mode while harboring the most bizarre fantasies of racist violence. Additionally, Cartwright's theory de-humanizes the enslaved person to a point of cruelty only to advocate fatherly concern for them, only to again result in whipping.

The practitioner can see the true reason for enslaved persons' supposed inability to gain freedom and translates this experience into theory. Following "unaltered physiological laws" which prove the enslaved black person's entire make-up as radically different from that of whites, the former "can only have their intellectual faculties awakened in a sufficient degree to receive moral culture and to profit by religious or other instructions, when under the compulsory power of the white man" ("Report" 325). Cartwright claims to diagnose diseases that explain the results of slavery as symptoms of an inferior physique and the inappropriate handling of that inferior creature by misinformed whites, especially ignorant Northerners.

The "lesions of freedom" are no reason for expensive medical treatment, so Cartwright, but the "hebetude," the careless stupor into which enslaved persons fall under this disease, the simultaneous lack of physical and mental sensibility, which reduces the amount of profit a plantation can extract from enslaved bodies ("Report" 323). Being absolutely other, the literally in-sensible body is a "man like an automaton or senseless

machine" (323). The therapy Cartwright recommends is remarkable for its conflation of hygiene and racialized violence with economy. Building a therapy from his theory, the practitioner prescribes a regimen of rigorous washing and oiling up. His method of massaging in the oils are, however, just another excuse for racist violence. He recommends his readers to "slap the oil in with a broad leather strap" and to follow up with exhausting work, good food, plenty of fluids, a warm bed, and more hard labor "that will cause full and free respiration in its performance, as lifting or carrying heavy weights, or brisk walking" (324). It would be wrong to abuse enslaved persons maliciously, Cartwright opines, but they do need hard labor and whipping to keep the blood circulation up and not fall back to a daze.

The physician's control over the black body is total to the point where even the blood circulation is incapable of freedom. It is not only socially controlled, but ceases without the white man's medically-sanctioned whip. Practitioners can only ensure the orderly circulation of blood by violent intervention that poses as heroic therapy while obviously apologizing for the slave-driver's whip. Lacking hygiene, immodesty, unproductive ignorance all result from the black blood that is moving insufficiently and that needs physical intervention by a white professional, whose ability works "like enchantment" to dispel "the mist that clouded [the enslaved person's] intellect" (325). Medicine in accordance with racist theory is able to restore the person, to rescue an abject mind with a magic of racist violence that gives black blood its occult power.[140]

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140 Even though it should be clear, it is worth repeating that Cartwright's concept of what constitutes medicine is still nineteenth-century medical practice. For example, he alleges that blacks are hard to bleed, which not only points to the continued use of phlebotomy in the 1840s South and its continued relevance to the medical community as a group-marking, professional ritual, but also the racist imaginary (31). There is

Colin Dayan points out that the construction of racialized identities was integral to the divestment of personhood, and we will return to the legacy of this connection in the next chapter. The construction of the enslaved person's civil death depends on the power of taxonomy, which was the main instrument of racist theory. I argued in chapter two that taxonomy was important to transmit political blood metaphors after the Civil War, but taxonomy also stood at the intersection of medicine and law. Dayan notes that the legal doctrine of corrupt blood and inheritable criminality was a problem jurists like Blackwood already discussed in the eighteenth century and that in itself traces medieval legal concepts:

> The idea of tainted, tinged blood—that venerable if illogical mechanism for exclusion in the slave laws of the Caribbean and the American South—can be traced back to a metaphysics that turned metaphorical blood into biological destiny. … Corruption of blood in English law probably never had anything to do with ethnicity of biology, but everything to do with taking an attainted person's property to the exclusion of otherwise rightful heirs. (*Dog* 48)

The so-called taint of blood today is mostly associated with race, but it in fact has a far longer legacy; blood discourses linger. By rendering a person's blood corrupt, courts could decide on the status of their heirs, whether the holders of property—remembering Hawthorne's settlers—had to relegate any of that property, and which parts, and whether heirs had claims. We hear the echoes of these formal-legal terms in the discussions of race and blood. As we saw in chapter one, a central incentive to control blood discourses

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no reason to believe Cartwright that on "cording the arm of the stoutest negro, the veins will be found scarcely as large as a white boy's of ten years of age" (317). Overall, however, the sense of bio-power here is almost too obvious, as when Cartwright calls for an education of scientists to create "a new and wide field of usefulness, to reap immense benefits for the millions of both races inhabiting the south" by devoting medical schools to the study of black bodies "to make them more valuable to their owners, and governed with more ease and safety" (320).

was the central role ideas about blood played in notions of inheritance. But while even Hawthorne's understanding of blood still allows for the possibility of redemption and pardon, this becomes impossible in racist theory; there is no offense, no act to pardon, but only one final identity to determine.

I will return to the question of blood fractions at length in the next chapter, and of course any thorough investigation of the topic of blood and property would explode the purpose of this chapter; but we should also remember that the nation saw the birth of the application of the blood quantum laws to Native Americans in the 1887 Dawes General Allotment Act. This federal law atomized Native communities by turning communal lands into individual parcels and tribes into populations of individuals with specific blood-lines, as Nicole Tonkovich points out (184-90).

Scholars such as Circe Sturm, Ariela J. Gross, Ellen Samuels, and Joanne Barker also point out that the Allotment Rolls, the federal records of tribal membership in the Five Tribes that was based on blood quantum counts, cut both ways: not only did they record proof of Native descent that legitimated ownership, but they also separated "full-blood" Natives from those with some white ancestry. While the polygenist insistence on the eternal, immutable lack of civilization stood parent to these ideas, the federal agents also considered that a portion of so-called white blood conferred legal competence to the Native landholder and thus resulted in a title, whereas so-called pure Native blood together with English competence resulted in a trust patent.

So we may add that the legal history of blood is also insufficient to understand the roots of the equation of blood and race, because it in turn depends on inheritance of properties. In chapter one I explained that the inheritance of land property can become a

broader inheritance of abstract properties and qualities through blood. Cartwright's 1851 "Report" simultaneously applies race as a nationalist trope, but at the same time as a specifically Southern nationalist focus, and both with an economic motive, which Cartwright shifts to the beneficial results of the "civilized world" ("Report" 325).

Joseph Roach has pointed out that the "presence of black blood provides the signifier of commodification" (*Cities* 219). However, there *is* no visible black blood, even though S.A. Cartwright claimed the opposite. The fiction of the racist commodity thus echoes the highly abstract nature of the emergent financial markets, the trading in bonds, and that this explains the close alliance between the bourgeois mortgage melodrama and the tragic mulatto texts. Race and economy are not separate, but mutually reflect each other.

Cartwright far exceeds physiological diagnosis of blood oxygen and makes blood the occult center of a medical, social, political, and philosophical theory. In Cartwright's theory, the pursuit of happiness in the *Declaration of Independence* has no place in black bodies who can hope for nothing better than the "compulsory power" of the white slave driver. As we will see in the last chapter, the act of declaring independence from the sovereign "society of blood" came at the cost of placing black blood at the center of the new nation (Foucault, *History* 147).

Just as Brown's writings testify to his ever-growing awareness of a global black diaspora, Cartwright's theories illustrate political affinities between his nationalism and scientific racism. It almost appears as though his onslaught of observations about deficient lungs, so-called black blood, damaged brain, abnormal nerves and digestion only become fully relevant, however, once Cartwright calls on the past, on the

inaugurating document of U.S. civilization, the *Declaration of Independence* ("Report" 326). Only by way of a connection to the nation's past can Cartwright establish coherence and make a racialized cultural, social, and political order both possible and legally legible.

Political agency is impossible because physiology determines behavior and order. Thus, slavery itself is a beneficial social order for the enslaved person: "there is a radical, internal, or physical difference between the two races, so great in kind, as to make what is wholesome and beneficial for the white man, as liberty, republican or free institutions, &c., not only unsuitable to the negro race, but actually poisonous to its happiness" ("Report" 326). There is no other possible political or legal order for persons with black blood because they can only function within the system of enslavement, says Cartwright. Racist theory poses the differences which professional medicine observes, and which social and political institutions have to respect, enact, and protect.

The irony here lies in the heralding of the Anglo U.S. Revolution on the one hand and the decrying of the Haitian Revolution on the other. Brown spends fourteen chapters and a hundred pages detailing the social history of Haiti and explaining the different warring factions, but Cartwright wipes all detail off the table. He simply diagnoses the revolutionaries of Haiti as suffering from *Dysaesthesia Aethiopica*, an odd diagnosis considering that there was little sluggishness in the revolutionaries, and bemoans that they leave "ruins and dilapidation" wherever they go ("Report" 323). Scientific anatomy silences social history.

Again we remember Colin Dayan's comment at the beginning of this chapter: "Like the word *blood*, *color* is fictitious, but the law engineered the stigma that ordained

deprivation" (*Dog* 53). The legal framework for Emancipation seems almost willfully blind to the scientific racism that existed all around it. As we will see in the last chapter, blood-as-race and blood-as-law reflect each other. In 1859, after the U.S. Supreme Court delivered its ruling in Dred Scott v. Sandford, J.H. Van Evrie, a Northern white supremacist, published the Taney majority opinion in a pamphlet, with an attached article by Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright, describing his "Prognathous" race.

Cartwright's theory and those of his professional brethren lent themselves to the explanation of difference that denied political rights to those with abject "black blood."[141] It makes perfect sense for Van Everie to read the Dred Scott decision in the context of scientific racism. More than an aberration, scientific racism is a necessary discourse in understanding the sub-text to even the nation's laws. The "temporal and future welfare" of African Americans, Cartwright reports, depends on the acknowledgment of these supposed truths—the awareness that present deficiency results from a cursed past that worked through the black blood of enslaved persons ("Report" 216).

I want to turn now from the medical, economical, and political aspects of "black blood" to its theological-philosophical dimension. This conversation between medicine, natural history, and the bible give an idea of how deep the cultural and social roots of scientific racism truly ran. We should be weary of medical narratives of blood, but also of histories of racism that reduce scientific racism to medical technologies. Technologies used in scientific racism—craniometry, spirometry, daguerreotype plates, human experiments, dissection, vivisection—stood in constant conjunction with biblical

141 For the political nature of medical engagement in racist theory, see also Nancy Krieger ("Shades" 261-75).

exegesis, history, social policy, and political practice (Bieder 133, Sorisio 22).

Beyond the immediate political goals of upholding and justifying racialized enslavement through blood lies a troubled philosophy central to scientific racism, a structural insistence on time as controllable. The crossing of borders by way of blood remains a problem in racist theory, and grows into a threat; if the races are distinct and if their blood different, then what is the result of mixing, of circulating, of the dissolution of black-white distinctions after Emancipation? If Buffon's definition of different species were to be upheld—two related animal families that cannot have fertile offspring—then whence miscegenation (Gossett 35-46, Hudson 251)?[142] While racist hysteria about miscegenation after the 1864 presidential campaign focused on visual representations of mixed-race copulation and on fictitious images of abnormal offspring, the mechanism of admixture remained unclear. Can blood change? Do bodies change because of the merged blood?

Now I want to turn to the role of the Hebrew and Christian bible in the debate and the ways it allowed Cartwright and others the introduction of an eternal timeline in the discussion of blood and race. The enslaved person's physiology *causes* the defect, but *originates* in the past of scriptural prophecy. Far exceeding a simple medical narrative, Cartwright exploits Biblical history, ethnography, political rhetoric, and physiology, to construct "black blood," through which he injects race into every cell of the black body. To scientific racists, race *is* divine order.

This is not an anthropological discussion, but one concerning the merge of

142 Also compare Zammito's argument that the birth of contemporary racism is closely tied to idealist philosophy.

sovereign and bourgeois epistemological models. As Karl Marx points out, "in bourgeois society, … the past dominates the present" (*Manifesto* 24). While the vertical hierarchy and rules of inheritance borrow stem from sovereign systems, they are substituted with a new, horizontal application. I am not discussing hard, scientific evidence here. No scientific theory of race, no archaeological excavation, or skull collection could provide a chain of hard evidence from human origin to the present, hard proof of different moments of creation.

Because Cartwright had no evidence for his historical claims either, he and other racist scientists point to scriptural prophecy—the curse of Ham ("Report" 317-8). The Curse of Ham, or, to be more precise, the Curse of Canaan describes the incident after Noah's family survives the great flood that wiped out all other humans. Noah lies drunk and naked in his tent, when his son Ham "the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his to brothers outside" (Gen. 9.22). His brothers modestly cover up their father. Noah awakes, becomes aware of "what his youngest son had done to him," and speaks the curse: "'Cursed be Canaan;/lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers'" (Gen. 9.24-5). The transgression is certainly immodesty and neglect of filial duty. However, some argue that the connection between nakedness and Noah's reaction implies a sexual transgression, possibly homosexual incest.

Debates surrounding human evolution often resulted in arguments about Christian texts that confirmed the ruling religious doctrine and usually were the oldest historical documents available. Colin Kidd recently traced the variation of interpretations of race from the Bible, and points out that churches only abandoned the orthodox reading of monogenetic man once religious authorities lost a share of social power (121-67).

This sounds quite similar to what we saw Hawthorne do in the first chapter. The basic move of first abstracting blood from material reality and then reintroducing this abstraction so as to cover up reality is similar, but I want to stress that Hawthorne was no polygenist. As I explained in the first chapter, Hawthorne alludes to a vague notion of soft inheritance to point out congenital flaws and gifts in the individual. This means that even if it should take a long time, he proposes that flaws *can* disappear in democratic possessions which clear the blood of all vertical taints and reestablish equality. Applied to chattel slavery, even enslaved field workers, house servants, craftsmen, and engineers *might* be able to exit their inhumane conditions by transcending race through talent. Though their social mobility would be limited, it would exist—something Cartwright would never agree to, because to him the flaw is a matter of inherited physiology that would prevent any further development.

Yet, theologically, a question of sources arises: why would racist theorists focus on the Old Testament to make their case? In keeping with Christian doctrine and the writings of Paul, the Hebrew Bible serves primarily as a pre-figuring of the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, but not as material history. Polygenists were trying to have their cake and eat it too by reading the genesis of man as an allegory, but the curse of Ham as literal. Christian doctrine often emphasizes a community outside embodied, material borders, in the spirit of God that transcends the flawed reality before the kingdom of God. Those of faith in the spirit of Christ form a community far beyond human blood. Most importantly, the Bible knows of one Creation, so how could various creations have

occurred in various places?[143] As David N. Livingstone points out, polygenism bordered on heresy, while monogenism insisted on the truth of the biblical creation (182).

Based on the Curse of Ham passage, polygenetic theory divided the consequent population of the world up into descendants of Noah's sons. Cartwright and others replaced the vague geography of Genesis with precise geographic spaces assigned to the Noahmite tribes Shem, Ham, and Japheth. In the nineteenth century, most Europeans and white U.S. Americans would have read Shemite as "Asian," Hamite as "African," and Japhethite—via the Mediterranean—as "White." Thus, these theories first translated biblical narrative into spatial terms, then corresponded geographies to existing populations, and finally assigned phenotypes to these populations.

Polygenism could not draw on the Christian bible, however, because monogenetic texts insisted on the Christian tradition of one divine creation, and pointed to the authority of Acts. Acts, usually seen as written by Luke discusses the question of blood exhaustively as a confrontation between Jews and gentiles. The "unclean" gentiles, who do not live in accordance with Mosaic laws, are the focus of Christian missionaries. To gentiles, blood is not ritual pollutant. Therefore the question arises, whether non-Jews can be part of the Messianic covenant that Jesus Christ—himself a radical rabbi—promised. Acts first confirms that God made mankind "of one blood" and later indicates that Stephen's martyrdom repeated the sacrificial bloodshed of Christ (17, 20). God did not create differences in skin color or different kinds of blood. What seems fixed is only relative, subject to change. The unity of believers is united by blood in all its different

143 Bible scholarship has stressed that Genesis contains two creation stories ever since Jean Astruc's 1753 account, but this seems to have been irrelevant or unknown to the writers presented here.

surface appearances, any and all post-Babylonic differences end in the one blood of humanity and the one blood of Christ. Polygenetic thought denies the possibility of change and the unity of believers.

Despite all his evidence from observation and anatomy, Cartwright therefore had to enter an arena of philology and theology to assert the universal implications of his theories. After publishing it in May 1851, he kept debating his "Report" with critics and by November already wrote a second part to it in the *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal*. At this point Cartwright almost entirely leaves medicine behind, largely pursuing philological and theological arguments to defend his view that the Canaanites were black and what "Canaan" means. For example, he claims that "Gomer, Japheth's son, is the progenitor of that family of nations, called by Josephus, Gomerians, which included the Celts and the Goths, originally from Phoenicia and Galatia, who emigrated to Europe, and made settlements in Great Britain, France, Ireland, &c." (Cartwright "II." 370).

We already say Brown's mocking response to the question if there are distinct kinds of blood in the last chapter. The anecdote in *Clotel* concludes that a white man can insert one drop of his beloved's blood into his body and thereby change races. Brown points out that the entire concept of fixed races is laughable and that the body is mutable. Adélékè Adéèko has remarked on the "self-presence" that polygenism insists on (121). However, when he analyzes Brown's *Clotel*, he points out that polygenism stands in contrast to Christian monogenesis in the difference of the working standard as derivative from the almighty design assumed by Cartwright, as a deviation from the permanent standard of deductive Christian faith (123).

Brown agrees with Cartwright that biblical history may furnish evidence to account for the difference. However, to him the redemptive core of Christian theology provides the meaning for the Hebrew Bible history. The central tenet in Christianity is that God forgave original sin through the blood sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Paul therefore reads the *Tanakh* as pure metaphor, as the prediction of the Christ by ancient prophets, who nevertheless do not receive grace. So Christianity stresses unity and unification in the present, the un-doing of ancient curses through Christ, while the Hebrew sources stress eternal order, past transgression, and future punishment.

Brown therefore shifts from literal readings to secular, material history and rereads Jeremiah 13:23 as a confirmation of his reading of history:

> Can Ethiopians[a] change their skin
> or leopards their spots?
> Then also you can do good
> who are accustomed to do evil.

The prophet, or rather, his scribe, expresses metaphorically the stiff-necked sinfulness of the Israelites, and reveals their exile and capture as justified punishment. However, the standard reference to the "leopard's spots" as a sign of the fixedness of race and the divine plan for African Americans Brown counters by focusing not on the "Cushites" described in the Hebrew, but on the Ethiopians whom Brown's contemporaries identify as the Cushites. Ethiopians, Brown agrees with other writers, received their name as a descriptor for a sunburned person (*Son* 46). He thereby stresses that black identity is local and contingent on environment, external, not essential to the individual.

Blood to Brown has potential and is a way to human unity, while to Cartwright it chains the human body to its ancient sin. Cartwright argues that blood is the reason,

proven by medicine, for the enslaved person's savage abjection in nature. Brown counters such notions by focusing on the nobility of the Ethiopian and thus Canaanite blood-line as the source for all Western civilization while denying that any relation between blood and race exceeds temporary modifications of appearance due to historical migration and local climate. He does not categorically deny the possibility of "transplanted" individuals and their offspring remaining unchanged, but he points to the problem of bias interference in ethnography, as such cases "appear to have been much exaggerated" (78). Brown's theory insists on the high probability of "gradual modifications," which assimilate original characteristics to new situations. He points out the variety among Jews, whose descent "from one stock" nevertheless allows for such difference.

While Brown may well have come in contact with and integrated nineteenth-century European anti-Semitic tropes here, his argument also aims at the biblical evidence of polygenists, and serves to point out that the very people who, following polygenetic theory, should be remarkably uniform, indeed vary greatly in appearance, even among orthodox groups who do not inter-marry with gentiles. The "external conditions" determine complexion, and race, not an innate, divine plan (80). Brown stresses that personal agency is contingent, that "physical characteristics of the varieties of man, and their moral and social condition" stand in close connection (85). Yet he stresses this is due to choice, even if the decision is erroneous:

> The farther the human mind strays from the ever-living God as a spirit, the nearer it approximates to the beasts; and as the mental controls the physical, so ignorance and brutality are depicted upon the countenance. As the African by his fall has lost those qualities that adorn the visage of man, so the Anglo-Saxon, by his rise in the scale of humanity, has improved his features, enlarged his brain, and brightened in intellect. (85-6)

Slavery is not just a catastrophe of violence; it deprives individuals of their ability to fulfill their potential, to be fully human. There is a depraved African race, Brown admits, but its seeming depravity is actually a deprivation. Humans are not equal, and there are inferior and superior "features," or racial types. There is unity, but not sameness in humans. A group of African enslaved persons Brown observes in Havana have "features" that "represent the finest Anglo-Saxon and the most degraded African" (80).

Brown insists on the possibility of human advancement. The proximity to "God as a spirit" sounds distinctly Augustinian, but Brown does restore the dignity of choice, of agency to the present individual, which racist theory and its pre-determined time-line denies. The features that show African Americans to be inferior to whites are, however, not permanent, but the result of a deprivation that is the result of the slavery. Thus, the restoration of dignified living circumstances would return African Americans to their rightful place among the one human family, as the forefathers of all human civilization.

With characteristic wit, William Wells Brown declares that the "word of God by his servant Paul has settled forever the question of the equal origin of the human races, and it will stand good against all scientific research. 'God hath made of one blood all the nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth'" (*Son* 46). The King James Bible reads Paul's sermon to the gentiles thus: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). Interestingly, most modern revisions drop the term "blood" (*αι 'sματος* or *aímatos*) altogether.[144]

144 The Vulgate Latin version reads, "of one;" and the Arabic version of De Dieu reads, "of one man;" the

Brown shifts from the Hebrew Bible to the Acts of the Apostles because he insists on mobile bodies that derive their salvation from faith, not by obeying laws that regulate material pollutants like blood. To him, divine authority of the Christian Bible has settled scientific speculation about the Hebrew Bible. He marks the crucial shift in theological reasoning—from Genesis and Jeremiah to Paul—necessary to defend the human race against the quasi-heretical polygenists. Variety in unity is the key to understanding humans, which from the start rejects structural differences in human make-up. He therefore reads blood as one common humanity, as a single species, with differences in appearance.

Polygenism simultaneously condemns and justifies a so-called inferior racialized blood, not by virtue of individual failure, but because it is inferior even before a body is born. This blood has always been inferior, across all space and time. Its point of origin is spatially distant and thus in keeping with the political identity of the nation as described earlier. In racist theory, such an inferior, other blood could but originate in a "dark" continent, far away. This darkness functions as the absence of light, of enlightenment, and of the possibility of understanding, which leads to the occult blackness of blood.

More importantly, however, the so-called black blood originates in this ancient time, and without caring all too much about the reason for its inferiority. For example, Josiah Nott and George Gliddon (1809–57) in their 1854 *Types of Mankind* largely abandoned the biblical account of human genesis, and drew harsh criticism from religious audiences (Banton 44-5). A staunch Southern proponent of slavery, Reverend Fred

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Coptic, Ethiopic, Itala, Clement, and Bede, also all omit the word. "Blood" in this way becomes Adam, as "one" is now a personal pronoun (Clarke's *Commentary*, Gill's *Exposition*).

Augustus Ross (1796-1883) told his listeners that with Nott and Gliddon, they had "reached the blackness of infidelity,—blank atheism" (87).

The Curse of Ham decides the future of this occult black blood in nineteenth-century racist theory and renders individual freedom. Polygenism insists on racialized blood as eternally fixed to stabilize the notion of race and to embed it within the entirety of the human body. If the design is divine, then the question of abolition becomes not just legal, but theological. Beyond employing the professional prestige of medicine, mid-century racist theorists like Cartwright present the imaginary construction of a linear, progressive, temporal narrative. This timeline then forms the substrate for any individual's place in history, nature, and the nation.

Scientific racism fixes the present descendants of that blood line in an insurmountable inferiority that has already occurred. Time becomes the wall that separates different kinds of blood forever. Whereas neo-Lamarckian evolution considers the individual, the soma, and cultural evolution, the polygenetic theorists stressed a pre-determined order reflected in the bloodline.[145] This time-line forecloses circularity and arrests movement. Because they deny that the body is mutable and flexible, they pin an individual to the linear timeline like a butterfly to a piece of cardboard. In this linear

145 While Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection entirely side-steps the need for a divine plan, it also entirely focuses on Mendelian genes and disqualifies culture as essentially irrelevant to hereditary memory. This makes it unpopular with proponents of racial uplift, as no significant improvement in a race could be achieved. Darwin's theory is also unattractive to racist theories, however, because it rejects the stability racism insists on, and instead points to constant, uncontrolled variation within a species, spontaneous mutations, and a random appearance of favorable hereditary characteristics. Finally, the question of God's role in the Creation was discussed with some unease, as it widened the gap between God and nature as well as radically expanded the assumed time span of creation, making much of the cultural and historical argument explained above irrelevant. While Darwin seems to have in mind laws that could be ascribed to a divinity, the specific details of evolution are unbound by plans and could thus support no law of inherited slavery. For more on Darwin's reception in the U.S., see Ronald L. Numbers (24-75).

fixing or arrest of persons, they narrate a fixed, permanent, and fully-known identity based on blood.

Blood in these theories is material evidence within the body for a truth that transcends the present time and the individual body. The conjunction of racial identity and body fluid—even though the nineteenth century knows "black blood," there seems to be no black saliva, black vomit, not even black breast milk—unhinges individual identity and thus permanently bars citizenship, freedom, and the possibility to progress.

Temporally speaking, presence results from prior changes, implying and making probable future changes. As Brown notes, his "theory does not at all conflict with that of the common origin of man. Although the descendants of Cush were black, it does not follow that all the offspring of Ham were dark-skinned; but only those who settled in a climate that altered their color" (*Son* 46). Man has one common origin, but from that common origin branch out families that present varieties which result from spatial movement and the adaptation to local difference. In this, Brown confirms the long-standing explanations of geo-humoralism, the theory that the variation of climate will directly influence individual constitution, the relation of the humors. However, Brown stands more in the tradition of Lamarck, and as a medical practitioner did not subscribe to Galenic humoralism, as I explained in the last chapter.

We must read scientific racist theories with these Christian temporal dimensions in mind. If God's design renders physiological deficiencies as inevitable, then the social injustice perpetrated is in keeping with, a confirmation of, even an act of obedience to the will of God as found in the body and *through* blood. To polygenists, blood could never change, and its fixedness gave permanence and stability to the races supposedly found in

reality. The social meaning of blood, established by medicine, functioned through and justified its presence in a trans-historical world-view by racist theories: race, its past and future, and the national body coincided in an individual's blood. The blood that flows through a body thus flows from a past to a future, with no other channels to give it meaning.

As we have seen in the case of Dixon, the new professional spheres of practitioners and writers allowed for broader and deeper coordination of theory and praxis.[146] This closer alliance and exchange in turn made possible the coordination of blood discourses and social questions. Racist theories struggled with the problem blood always seems to carry with it, the simultaneity of unity, life, spirit, but also fragmentation into drops, death, and the fragility of the body.[147] Scientific racism therefore combines religion, science, and politics to build its theories. This new racist theory made possible a network of mutually informing social and political taxonomies, which in turn made possible new legal definitions of the significance of the body fluid blood, as Trina Jones and Keith Sealing detail (Jones 1503-11, Sealing 86-98).[148] Especially the fusion of scientific and religious narratives makes it possible for writers like Cartwright to invest

146 While nineteenth-century science had the means to fully grasp the significance of blood particles and blood counts, hematology remained largely confined to observational experiments until the 1930s (Wintrobe 26). Biologists reject the notion of human races in the evaluative, qualitative sense that the social theories of race understand it (Vora 191).

147 The conception of the fragmentation here is not the clinical separation into blood components, which physicians had known since Antoni van Leeuwenhoek, but which remained under-studied until the twentieth century (Wintrobe 19). Caroline Walker Bynum also stresses the history of distinguishing blood by pointing out the distinction between Latin *sanguis* and *curor*, which are both blood, but one being the living blood inside the body, the other the blood outside the body ("Blood" 702). I argue that this metaphoric problem remains in blood, regardless of period or of which discursive formation takes up blood.

148 Herbert H. Stroup's earlier text unpacks these connections while leaving the racist problematic as such unquestioned. For an excellent collection of contemporary essays that also explain the specific problems of different ethnic groups, see the essays in Morand and Carbado.

human blood with temporality. In the last chapter we will see the extent to which this fusion resulted in cultural and legal erasure of the black family as the foundation of the nation state.

These theories were not ivory tower debates that involved highly-specialized elites, but took place in the public sphere. Most if not all of the authors mentioned here knew of each other, many even met and carried on conversations. Books about human races sold well and their authors toured the lecture circuit.[149] Audiences did not see these theories as "pseudo-science," a term that served in the further elaboration of what counted as science and what did not, but which would not have had an objective meaning.[150] The racist theorists assembled here would most likely have described themselves as American "naturalists," a contemporary description whose inter-disciplinary, flexible, and even polymorphic application of professionalism describes professional writers and teachers, employed with overlapping fields of inquiry, with perhaps a focus, but no notion of mutual exclusivity.

To close, I want to point out that scientific racism is not just a domestic issue for the U.S., but rather one that places the nation state in a broader context. As we already saw in Reizenstein, the liberal-progressive national narrative writes the colonial history out of the domestic sphere. Yet in the eighteenth century, Anglo conceptions of blood were largely concerned with eighteenth-century conceptions of race related to notions of animal husbandry and of "geo-humoralism."

Mary Floyd-Wilson coined this term to describe the combination of Galenic

149 Molly Rogers mentions Agassiz as a prized speaker on the circuit (94). Ann Fabian mentions that the lecture circuit brought unparalleled popular exposure to the ideas of Gliddon (107).
150 The *OED* has 1796 as the first occurrence.

humoral theory with theories of adaptation to climate conditions, which renders skin colors changeable (5). This Early Modern idea sees human physiology in direct connection with local climate and as constantly changing. The other conception of blood and race in Anglo colonies applied the rule of animal husbandry to humans. In the U.S. context this famously appears in Thomas Jefferson's idea that the fourth crossing makes white, to which I will return in the next chapter. In the British West Indies, a person with no more than one-eighth of black ancestry was considered white and free (Dayan 52). In these theories, the body is part of a locale, and will adapt to it, respond to it, and can develop in or succumb to it—we see that an audience with this background would have been receptive to Brown's arguments.

The U.S. was never only Anglo, however, and so I want to take a moment to consider two other famous systems of classifying blood that were present in North America and the Caribbean. Spanish and French blood laws of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, respectively, were the only other legal-theological blood theories with an equally broad application, and though the U.S. came into contact with them, they did not deeply influence the Anglo conception of race. First of all, under sovereign rule, these theories were not applied horizontally, but vertically. It was not a matter of a medical definition of humanity, but of aristocracy. Even though it constructed a universal conception of blood purity, the Spanish *limpieza de sangre* (lit. "cleanliness of the blood") was therefore for the longest time irrelevant to the population at large unless an individual interacted with the colonial legal authorities (Martínez *Genealogical Fictions* 19). It came to play a wide-spread role only in the mutations of the formal rules of inheritance in the Mexican *castas* system, its creation of the *mestizo* category, and it

exerted great influence in the South as a complication to the blood discourses of New Orleans (200-65).[151]

King Louis XIV mainly aimed at controlling the slave trade when he established an early form of systematic, racist enslavement in the 1685 colonial *Code Noir*, and only created a partial to account which blood counts as human. His extensive, long-lived body of rules specifically focused on the encounter with Native Americans and the continuation of colonial exploitation of enslaved blacks and was not a general social theory that created a continuous hierarchy with qualitative gradations from best to worst kinds of blood, based on scientific theory.[152] Yet, whether a body was black or not was a question simply declared by the system of laws itself. The King was more interested in Catholic conversion and of freedom than medicine. As Guillaume Aubert comments, freedom was no matter of skin color or blood: "from a legal perspective, African ancestry did not necessarily imply the relegation to an inferior status" (464). This question did not lead to an attempt at a universal qualification of all races and their blood.

So we see that eighteenth-century racism saw blood as a question of experience and agricultural practice, while nineteenth-century racist theories abstracted it into a deductive, universal structure, and strove to reform practice to accord with it.[153] The

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151 For more on the *limpieza*, see Julia Frederick, and Martínez ("Black Blood").

152 For more on French ideas about blood purity in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, see Guillaume Aubert.

153 These distinctions are crucial to understand the changing definitions of what blood was and what it could be. Scholarship too often attempts to skip over the complicated and admittedly somewhat chaotic ideas that led to what the nineteenth century saw as race. Tukufu Zuberi's brilliant critique of racial statistics, for example, barely marks the radical changes between the seventeenth-century Great Chain of Being, which already ingrained hierarchical orders of human beings into civilized European imperialism, and the eighteenth-century roots of scientific racism (18-9). While this is apt for his purpose, the problem remains that such summary glosses and smoothes out the fissures in the monolith we too often take racism

metaphor of "black blood" fills the gap that opens between racist theory and its material evidence. This metaphor was no expression of observation or physiological analysis in the contemporary sense, but rather the combination of isolated phenomena related to an unconnected premise, made to sound reasonable by constant conjunction of those terms. This "blood" is simultaneously abstract as a social metaphor and manifest as an affective reality for the enslaved person, a nosological key for the patient, the metaphor of belonging for the citizen, and the object of research for the scientist. Blood is both, real *and* imaginary.

I argue that race as interrogated until the 1840s changed drastically and that both novels negotiate the legacy of this change through blood discourses. We could say scientific theories of blood until the nineteenth century focus on a primarily spatial, geographical difference, but that nineteenth-century texts increasingly stress temporal difference. The difference of the present from both future and past, the essentialist present as a reference point for a vanishing line that is a time line, i.e. not the displacement of individual life into other realms, allows for the fixation on a time-line constructed through race. Race displaces individual identity by referring it to a past that is divinely ordained, the future of which God has decided for them from the dawn of creation. The fixation-through-typification allows racist theory to erase individual identity of all meaningful content. Instead of positing the possibility of individual change, racist theory makes stations permanent, arrests the body in its relation to the past, and from there projects its future as certain, unalterable. Blood is simultaneously metaphor

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for, and thereby also become blind to the contemporary voices of dissent that tactically exploit precisely these nuances and fissures.

and material anchor for concepts, within the individual body and the social body.

Chapter Six — Mama's Baby, Daddy's Blood: Paternal Violence, the Uncanny Nation, and the Maternal Narrative in Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and Pauline E. Hopkins' *Of One Blood*

> "let h. and e. cohabit. their issue will be
> h/2 + e/2 = a/4 + A/4 + a/16 + A/16 + B/8 + C/4 = 5a/16 + 5A/16 + B/8 + C/4 wherein 5/16a. makes still a mulatto.
> let q. and e. cohabit. the half of the blood of each will be
> q/2 + e/2 = a/8 + A/8 + B/4 + a/16 + A/16 + B/8 + C/4 = 3a/16 + 3A/16 + ⅜ + C/4 wherein 3/16 of a is no longer mulatto."
> – Thomas Jefferson
>
> "The drop of black blood in her is superstitious" – Mark Twain
>
> "Yes, honey; all of one blood." – Pauline E. Hopkins

The previous chapters explained whose blood matters socially and politically in the development of U.S. nationalism during the second half of the nineteenth century—whose blood "counts" to authors. I also argued that medical texts, institutions, and practitioners disseminated and reinterpreted this narrative. In the last chapter, I established and that the rise of clinical medicine during this period in both theory and practice is inextricable from the rise of racist readings of blood as occult, readings that served to arrest and suspend individuals in the eternal past of their own blood without hope of change.

Now I want to revisit the topic with which I introduced this study, the status of mixed-race children under chattel slavery and of Jefferson's children. This chapter considers the cultural and social legacy of scientific racism as written about by two very different authors, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, also known as Mark Twain, and Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins. To explore this, we first need to keep in mind that the racist-scientific roots of Twain's fingerprinting and Hopkins' occult sciences play out against the past of

blood and the blood of the past. This chapter's three sections each begin with the same moment from Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1892-3). They focus on the tensions inherent in the new equation of blood and race, first on the history of paternal violence and blood quantum calculation, second on the role of the uncanny nation and spectral memory, and third on the possibility of reclaiming the past through a maternal narrative. I argue that blood in Twain's and Hopkins' texts never ceases to muddle boundaries, upset rules, transgress laws, be they legal or natural, and disrupt narratives, because blood has a history that stands in tension with the national imaginary of one-drop-laws.

My argument focuses on the question of how the changes in the understanding of blood we have seen thus far influence the ways these authors conceive of race as a question of biological offspring and parentage. More specifically, I find that Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and Hopkins' *Of One Blood* (1902-3) focus on the connection between motherhood and inheritance that bespeaks the Jim Crow logic of racial segregation based on the blood quantum and its erasure of histories of blood. Both novels consider how the blood quantum, much like Hawthorne's histories and maps, renders invisible the bloody horror of racism and violence only to justify it through the taxonomic language of racist science and domestic hygiene. Now we not only ask whose blood counts, but what it means to "count" blood, what the cultural legacy of this blood math is, and how alternative narratives consider blood.

Expanding on the long lines of scholarship on Twain and Hopkins, I suggest in what follows that a slight shift in focus offers further enrichment of the texts' discussions of the history of slavery, the role of the spectral, haunted nation, and the role of the enslaved mother. While both novels describe a status quo that condemns individuals to

enslavement, violence, and degradation, Hopkins helps us connect these bleak scenarios to Brown's efforts we saw in the last chapter and gives us hope of restoration, if not of the biological truthe, then of a cultural one.

In other words, we can see that the narrative of the individual also depends not only, as Cartwright insists, on their physical blood, but also on the *narrative of* their blood. In turn, this narrative depends on the possibility of narrating motherhood, mothering, even of giving voice to and accessing a maternal narrative of the past in the present. Individuals *have* bloodlines and even when the logic of enslavement censors the existing legacies of enslaved persons, they may in some fortunate cases still be visible, as Annette Gordon-Reed recently demonstrated in the case of Sally Hemings and the family she had with Thomas Jefferson—the relation on which Brown drew for parts of *Clotel*.

So what history of blood does Twain stress? *Pudd'nhead Wilson* imagines a Southern hamlet around 1850—I will return to the temporal setting below—where lawyer and collector of fingerprints David Wilson solves a case of identical-looking children switched at birth, and a murder involving Italian twins accused and exonerated of a murder (125). Roxana, enslaved by Percy Driscoll, has one black ancestor and thus counts as black despite her white skin and fair complexion. Her bloodline has more members of the FFVs—the First Families of Virginia—than enslaved ancestors, but she is legally and socially black. She secretly switches her son Chambers with Tom Driscoll, the Driscoll's son, to ensure the welfare of Chambers—now called Tom. Percy dies and sets Roxana free in his will.

His brother, Judge Driscoll takes in his nephew Tom as his own child. Fifteen years later, Tom is a gambler and coward, fraud, thief, and ultimately his uncle's

murderer during an attempted robbery. At the same time, the Italian twins Luigi and Angelo come to town after leaving a sideshow. They have an argument with Tom, who has Luigi arrested. When Judge Driscoll tries to save face through a duel, Tom instead smears the twins' reputation and calls the duel off. To pay gambling debts, he puts on disguises to rob houses and steals a beautiful knife from Luigi.

Tom also puts on blackface and tries to rob his uncle, but ends up stabbing him and escaping in drag. The twins are found with the knife and the body and Wilson defends them in the ensuing trial. Wilson compares fingerprints from his collection and proves Tom's real identity. The twins go free and leave the town. The real Tom lives the uneasy life of a rich social misfit. Roxana's son is re-defined as property, pardoned, and sold to a plantation further south by his creditors.

Twain's novel describes the overlap and conflicts between racist slavery and social custom, legal structure, and scientific racism. One scene in particular condenses the main threads of this chapter. After Wilson takes Roxana's fingerprints, he interprets her unease at his collection with a condescending comment about superstition, and accredits this superstition to the racial impurity of her blood: "The drop of black blood in her is superstitious; she thinks there's some deviltry, some witch-business about my glass mystery somewhere; she used to come here with an old horseshoe in her hand; it could have been an accident, but I doubt it" (*Wilson* 23). The arrogant dismissal of folk belief, the merging of race, science, and knowledge here expresses the gaze of the powerful white male, whose scientific insights bring with them an increased social and cultural qualification of differences between enslaved and enslaver.

I will return to Wilson's view of Roxana's "superstition" below but now want to

focus on the "drop of black blood in her." *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is famous for its seemingly uncontrolled, comedic treatment of mixed-race relations, enslavement, disability, property, and gender-bending. For the last half-century or so, a long line of scholars, notably Ann Wigger, Stanley Brodwin, Michael Rogin, Shawn Michelle Smith, Carolyn Porter, Sarah Chinn, and Ellen Samuels have all stressed Twain's fascination with this technology and that it is a central part of British social Darwinist theories of Francis Galton.[154]

Around the end of the nineteenth century, Galton's scientific racism gained renown for its emphasis on quantifiable, technological data collected through fingerprinting, photography that eventually superseded the naturalist-biblical arguments of Samuel Cartwright, Louis Agassiz, and Josiah C. Nott we saw in the last chapter.[155] Twain devoured Galton's work on fingerprints, but we should not assume that this is the same as defending Galtonian social Darwinism. Twain was infatuated with all technological progress and lost a lot of money over failed inventions. He definitely believed that fingerprints were a promising solution in the nation state's complicated questions of identity and citizenship, but it seems a stretch to paint him as an ideological supporter of Galton's social racism. As Susan Gillman puts it, Twain ultimately shows his readers that fingerprints do not prove biological uniqueness but merely mirror whatever culturally-determined racial difference lies at the root of an individual's identity

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154 Recently, Ellen Samuels has called our attention to the theoretical doubling of racism and what David Hevey calls "enfreakery," the process of placing abnormal bodies "outside the realm of signification, as reflectors rather than producers of meaning" (Samuels *Fantasies* 102). Due to the late publication date, her argument unfortunately could not find its due impact on this study.

155 For more historical and biographical background on Galton, see Chris Renwick, and Nicholas W. Gillham.

("Race" 460).

Still, Twain's allusion of the "drop of black blood" in Roxana is clear. In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, the past seems barred and locked. Myra Jehlen makes the often-cited observation that the novel ends "in a stalemate between radical criticism and an implicit conservatism expressed in the refusal or the inability, when it comes to it, to imagine significant change" ("Ties" 54). Identity determines action, and blood determines identity. Identities exist forever, and while Galtonian indexes of fingerprints provide the scientific tools to put bring order to chaos, they do nothing to changing existing social arrangements. As we sill see below, scholars like Martin Japtok and Susan Gillman critique Pauline Hopkins' novel with similar arguments, especially regarding her advocacy of the progress of civilization. Japtok points out that Hopkins' *Of One Blood* subscribes to a "Darwinist logic [that] undermines any attempt at a sustained critique of imperialism and racism," and that in its rhetoric endangers Hopkins' very goal of progress and anti-racist engagement ("Darwinist Trap" 412).

I argue that the construction of so-called black blood and its arrest in time is the source for this internal tension. Both texts continue the argument over the Curse of Ham. As I argued in the last chapter, this biblical reference was central to scientific racist constructions of occult black blood. In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, once Tom learns that he is actually black, he flees society and spends more time alone, feeling "that the curse of Ham was upon him" (*Wilson* 49). Hopkins for her part draws on her own notes, and borrows heavily from Brown, when she has a Professor Stone accompany an Africa expedition and tell "the story of ancient Ethiopia," in which Ham's grandson Nimrod founds Babylonia (*Of One Blood* 531-2).

Both authors write against two blood discourses that merge into an increasingly heated rhetoric of racist aggression: eighteenth-century chattel slavery and nineteenth-century scientific racism. The overlap between the two theories of race provided fertile grounds for Jim Crow violence and the terrible increase of genocidal lynching attacks against minorities in the early decades of the twentieth century, as well as for eugenic programs, genocidal campaigns against Native Americans, and justifications for violence abroad, like in the Philippines.

After Emancipation, this violence functioned entirely in the context or popularly-accepted, racist theories of blood. After the Civil War, sovereign violence lay beneath the progressive-liberal, hygienic space of civilized domesticity, but it is no longer a visible part of its internal logic. While life ended in the final punishment of sovereign violence, the enslaved person's social death simultaneously executes and suspends the sentence. We remember Foucault's description of pre-bourgeois "society of blood" in Europe, a 'sanguine' society, "where power spoke through blood: the honor of war, the fear of famine, the triumph of death, the sovereign with his sword, executioners, and tortures; blood was a reality with a symbolic function" (*History* 124).

The past of blood is always with those who must live with a blood caught in the past, and so it is no longer death that triumphs, but oblivion and erasure. As Achille Mbembé points out, in the plantation system and its wide-spread adoption, an "unequal relationship is established along with the inequality of the power over life. This power over the life of another takes the form of commerce: a person's humanity is dissolved to the point where it becomes possible to say that the slave's life is possessed by the master" (22). In this way, the enslaver-father's violence is not identical with that between two

citizens because there is no violence, only a manipulation of "inventory," as Twain sardonically entitles Tom when he ends up in slavery (*Wilson* 121).

To acknowledge that a murder took place means to acknowledge that a human being was killed and therefore implies the victim's humanity. Enslaved persons in this sense could not be murdered, nor could they commit crimes that humans commit as Twain points out. Violence especially against enslaved black bodies fell into a grey zone usually associated with the most cruel and unusual bloodshed. However, we know this to be a lie that disavows the humanity of enslaved persons, a lie based on the theory of so-called black blood and all it entails.

We also know that the legal tradition that perpetuated enslavement of African Americans in the U.S. was *partus sequitur ventrem*. As I explain below, this U.S. law, with an incorrect nod to Roman slavery laws, abandoned English common law, according to which a child's citizenship status followed the father's. Instead, the child's legal status now followed that of the mother. Galtonian fingerprinting enters into exactly that point to present a narrative of clarity and order while really just advancing the most recent technological permutation of "black blood" theories.

The disorder in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* results from the conflict between this legacy and the arrival of new ideas about race. The older codex of the FFVs—the First Families of Virginia—functions through violence, shedding blood in adherence to the sovereign "society of blood." Roxana herself decries the cowardice of her son Tom, who prefers a trial to settle the row over Luigi kicking him over a duel prescribed by the code of Southern manliness: "It's de nigger in you, dat's what it is. Thirty-one parts o' you is white, en on'y one part nigger, en dat po' little one part is yo' *soul*" (*Wilson* 70, emphasis

in original).

Roxana fully internalizes the idea that biological reproduction fuses racial identity and moral essence in an individual's blood. Individual action, even non-volitional body reflexes like blushing, are caused by race, determined by the original stain that can not be gotten rid of. Below, I explain the difference between Wilson's and Roxana's views—and, in a way, between Twain's and Hopkins' views—lies exactly in the word that Wilson does not mention, but that Roxana stresses: "soul."

In the logic of slavery, the erasure of blood as a source of identity is the greatest threat. As Leslie Fiedler observes, "society is defined by the fathers, last defenders of the chivalric code and descendants of the cavaliers" (253). However, we know that this would presume a sovereign who is absent in the presence of the advanced plantation system. The narrator insists that Tom's blood is thirty-one parts FFVs, from his father, Colonel Cecil Burley Essex (*Wilson* 5, 47). This echoes Judge Driscoll's attitude. Without doing justice to the notoriously complicated textual history of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, I want to stress that several of Twain's emendations of the copy-texts even *reduced* the still substantial number of times the FFV members discuss blood in the text. For example, Twain's original description of Judge Driscoll's outburst upon hearing that Tom preferred a trial to a duel further emphasized the FFVs blood hyperbole: "He is of the best blood of the Old Dominion, and from that blood can spring no such misbegotten son" (Berger, "Emendations" 202).

So before turning to the horrors that blood quantum laws created in the lives of individuals, I want to examine the logic of this fractioning, this obsession with mathematics and blood. Wilson's and Roxana's numbers games seem ludicrous as a way

to cast this problem and threat, as does the narrator's characterization of Roxana's situation: "To all intents and purposes Roxy was as white as anybody, but the one-sixteenth of her which was black out-voted the other fifteen parts and made her a negro. She was a slave and salable as such. Her child was thirty-one parts white, and he, too, was a slave, and by a fiction of law and custom a negro" (*Wilson* 9). This famous condensation seems to put a finger in as many wounds as possible. Of course instead of giving her a vote, the "black" part in Roxana's heritage bans her from having a vote. The fiction is not just legal, but also customary, and the blurring and shifting of legal lines and customary habits adds to the semantic slipperiness of the concept of black blood applied here.

Beyond that, her son's resulting blood math is even more ludicrous than Roxana's own. Twain seizes on the blood quantity fiction of monogenetic racist theory and works its humor by way of exaggeration; whereas Harriet Beecher Stowe and William Wells Brown write of quadroons and Dion Boucicault of octoroons, Twain's obsessive numbers games make of Roxana a hexacaidecaroon and her triacontadiroon son. Aware of Greek slavery, apologists would refer to ancient customs as the model for nineteenth-century American slave markets, and Twain picks up and lampoons this attempt at investing the horrors of slavery with the assumed prestige of Ancient Greece (Roach, *Cities* 211). Speaking from the vantage of literature, Twain's joke works because U.S. readers were used to reading about figures like the "tragic mulatto," quadroons, even octoroons. Twain forces the absurd point of pseudo-intellectual racist categories derived from Greek and defies literary convention that sums any further admixture up into "octoroon."

These figures speak to the sexual violence perpetrated against the bodies of

enslaved women and to the patriarchal insistence on biological offspring as identical with political, social, and cultural lineage. As Hortense J. Spillers pointed out a quarter of a century ago,

> A semantic marker, already fully occupied by a content and an expectation, America's "tragic mulatto" exists for others—and a particular male other—in an attribution of the illicit that designates the violent mingling and commingling of bloodlines that a simplified cultural patrimony wishes to deny. But in that very denial, the most dramatic and visible of admissions is evident. ("Notes" 303)

The opposite of life is not death, and the opposite of inheritance is not loss. Because the enslaver-father will not admit to a sexual violence that does not exist, the offspring born of such violence is even more desirable. By limiting the concept of paternity to their white offspring and denying everyone else, he in fact stressed the presence of non-white children, whom he never acknowledged, save by the refusal of that acknowledgment.

Twain's joke about Roxana's fractioned identity rests on an assumption about the known, knowable, and traceable line of individual descent. The 1/16 is calculable, a number, a certainty, the result of a known family tree that leads to a stable, though absurd, present moment. So math and the history of racist, sexual violence it impolies and denies at the same time stands for the old "fiction of law and custom" (*Wilson* 9). Slavery and sexual violence against enslaved women form the backdrop for Twain's tragedy. Roxana's son is fathered by the white man Colonel Cecil Burleigh Essex, "de highest quality in dis whole town—Ole Virginny stok, Fust Famblies," as Roxana assures her son in a reproduction of racist and elitist concepts of ancestry in the Southern States (47).

Yet Roxana travels freely on the steam boat as a chamber maid and in bondage as a slave. Her spatial movement underlines the mobility of race, the "fiction of law and

custom" that makes her and her son black because she had of one black ancestor four generations back. *Pudd'nhead Wilson* novel obviously subscribes to racist notions of essential character; when one of the Italian Twins is insulted, his "southern blood leaped to the boiling-point in a moment," and he immediately retaliates for the humiliation with force (*Wilson* 61). Twain correctly locates this notion of different climates and different nationalities bore out a differentiation in the human race, in nostalgic 1850s he describes in his own fiction about laws and customs.

The novel's setting stands in conflict with the solution of fingerprinting, which stems from polygenetic interpretations of race contemporary to the 1890s. Twain ridicules Judge Driscoll's antiquated insistence on the purity of lineage throughout the novel. One of the Judge's outbursts sums up his idea of identity: "Do you mean to tell me that blood of my race has suffered a blow and crawled to a court of law about it," he yells at Chambers, whom he regards as the "base son of a noble father" (*Wilson* 60). As Barry Wood points out, Roxana's "diluted" blood "is the result of four cases of miscegenation in four successive generations"long preceding, I would add, the fifty years that Dawson's Landing exists ("Symmetry" 339). Sexual and physical violence against enslaved persons existed in the U.S. for generations, even, taking one generation as forty years, preceding the nation itself. The argument for the FFV's code is its temporal anteriority and "custom." In this sense, anteriority represents a qualitative higher state in an eroding world, but this appeal to devolution pales in the face of the much older tradition that is sexual violence against enslaved black bodies at the hands of the white enslaver-father, the lawless, evil desires that make a mockery of religion, codes of conduct, and the law (Wood 341-2).

Twain was fully aware of this implication and, it stands to reason, worked hard to hint at the truth but spare his readers a direct offense. He did not want to point out that what problem there may be results from whiteness, not blackness. He therefore, I argue, cut a direct indictment of not the black but the white blood from Tom's agonized brooding over his true identity. This self-censored passage adds a theory of blood to Tom's anger at Roxana's prior characterization of his supposedly black blood as cowardly: "Why was he a coward? It was the 'nigger' in him. The nigger blood? Yes, the nigger blood degraded from original courage to cowardice by decades and generations of insult and outrage inflicted in circumstances which forbade reprisals, and made mute and meek endurance the only refuge and defence [*sic*]" (Berger, "Lengthy" 211). Taken together with Roxana's internalization of blood math, we see that Twain not only ridiculed the principle itself, but ended his considerations with the insight that slavery degraded all, a point rather close to positions held by authors like William Wells Brown.

Returning to the blood math, however, we must be aware that it is insufficient to gesture to a supposed continuity of "one-drop" laws. Susan K. Gillman rightly points out that the opening of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* claims to move away from the "chronicle" to the plot, from history to the tale, but she muddles the categories of blood laws and what she calls "deceptive mathematics" ("Race, Science, and the Law" 449, 450). What Twain approaches retrospectively and what Hopkins approaches in her own time, is the reinvention of race in the mid-nineteenth century that I addressed in the introduction and detailed in chapters four and five, which made possible the racist scientific theories of Cartwright, Nott, and Morton in the first place. As we will see, the idea of race as inherited in blood that prevailed in the eighteenth century changed in the mid-nineteenth

century because, as I explained in the previous chapter, eternity entered blood-as-race, which put no end to "black blood."

Drawing on George M. Frederickson, Gillman claims that the rule of inheritance through the mother is unique and that the homogenization of all non-white children into the collective category "black" presents an exception to other systems of racist hierarchies, in which different degrees of genealogical inheritance determine different degrees of social status (450, Frederickson *Supremacy* 95). How can we account for this "anomaly" and for the exception? Who are the FFVs and where else could we look for sources of Twain's insistence on the odd fractioning of blood?

I find a far more complicated, less obvious legacy of this blood math, which bespeaks the form that the mothers' resistance takes in both Twain and, as I explain below, Hopkins. To understand fully Twain's "fiction of law and custom," I turn to another FFV—the Founding Father of Virginia, Thomas Jefferson. In a letter dated March 4, 1815, Thomas Jefferson replied to a question by Francis Calley Gray (1790-1856) as to what constitutes a mulatto. Though I will address the content, the form of Jefferson's reply alone justifies quoting it at length:

> L. Virga. 1792. Dec. 17 the case put in the first member of this paragraph of the law is exempli gratiâ. the latter contains the true Canon, which is that ¼ of negro blood, mixed with any portion of white, constitutes the mulatto. as the issue has one half of the blood of each parent, and the blood of each of these may be made up of a variety of fractional mixtures, the estimate of their compound, in some cases, may be1 intricate. it becomes a Mathematical problem of the same class with those on the mixtures of different liquors or different metals. as in these therefore, the Algebraical notation is the most convenient & intelligible. let us express the pure blood of the white in the capital letters of the printed alphabet, the pure blood of the negro in the small letters of the printed alphabet, and any given mixture of either, by way of abridgment in MS. letters.
> let the 1st crossing be of **a**, pure negro, with **A**. pure white. the Unit of

> blood of the issue being composed of the half of that of each parent, will be **a**/2 + **A**/2 call it, for abbreviation, h (half-blood)
> let the 2d crossing be of h. and **B**. the blood of the issue will be **h**/2 + **B**/2, or substituting for h/2 it's equivalent, it will be **a**/4 + **A**/4 + **B**/2. call it q (quarteroon) being ¼ negro blood
> let the 3d crossing be of q. and **C**. their offspring will be
> q/2 + **C**/2 = **a**/8 + **A**/8 + **B**/4 + **C**/2. call this e. (eighth) who having less than ¼ of a. or of pure negro blood, to wit ⅛ only, is no longer a mulatto. so that a 3d cross clears the blood.
> from these elements let us examine other compounds.
> for example, let **h**. and **q**. cohabit. their issue will be
> **h**/2 + **q**/2 = **a**/4 + **A**/4 + **a**/8 + **A**/8 + **B**/4 = ⅜ + ⅜ + **B**/4 wherein we find ⅜ of **a**. or of negro blood.
> let h. and e. cohabit. their issue will be
> h/2 + e/2 = **a**/4 + **A**/4 + **a**/16 + **A**/16 + **B**/8 + **C**/4 = 5**a**/16 + 5**A**/16 + **B**/8 + **C**/4 wherein 5/16**a**. makes still a mulatto.
> let q. and e. cohabit. the half of the blood of each will be
> q/2 + e/2 = **a**/8 + **A**/8 + **B**/4 + **a**/16 + **A**/16 + **B**/8 + **C**/4 = 3**a**/16 + 3**A**/16 + ⅜ + **C**/4 wherein 3/16 of a is no longer mulatto.
> and thus may every compound be noted & summed, the sum of the fractions composing the blood of the issue being always equal to Unit. it is understood in Natural history that a 4th cross of one race of animals with another gives an issue equivalent for all sensible purposes to the original blood. thus a Merino ram being crossed 1st with a country ewe, 2dly with this daughter, 3dly with this grandaughter, and 4thly with the great grandaughter, the last issue is deemed pure Merino, having in fact but 1/16 of the country blood. our Canon considers 2. crosses with the pure white, and a 3d with any degree of mixture, however small, as clearing the issue of the negro blood. but observe that this does not reestablish freedom, which depends on the condition of the mother, the principle of the civil law, *partus sequitur ventrem*, being adopted here. but if e. be emancipated, he becomes a free white man, and a citizen4 of the US. to all intents and purposes—so much for this trifle, by way of correction.
> It is understood in natural history that a fourth cross of one race of animals with another gives an issue equivalent for all sensible purposes to the original blood. Thus a Merino ram being crossed, first with a country ewe, second with his daughter, third with his granddaughter, and fourth with the great-granddaughter, the last issue is deemed pure Merino, having in fact but 1/16 of the country blood. Our canon considers two crosses with the pure white, and a third with any degree of mixture, however small, as clearing the issue of the negro blood. (*Papers* 310-12, spelling as in document)

The pain and horror expressed in this document exceed imagination. From the beginning,

"black blood" stands for persons, and "portion" for acts of sexual intercourse with living offspring. Though Jefferson could not have intended it, his phrase "let the 1st crossing be" echoes the divine creation in the gospel of John, but here it is an author who wills into being a legacy of up to six generations of incestuous sexual violence against women by way of "a Mathematical problem" (310). Human beings here are exactly synonymous to sheep, and this dehumanization is only exacerbated by the abstraction of blood into both the essence of race and a liquid like any other. The roots of one-drop rules are thus far more violent than the mere "deception" Gillman stresses.

Jefferson did not derive his system from another categorization of human races, but stayed true his Enlightenment roots, especially eighteenth-century laws of animal husbandry. As breeders like Jefferson and James Madison knew, Merino wool, prized for its whiteness, becomes white after the fourth crossing. Any further purification has no visible result, and therefore falls beyond the category of interest. This also applied to humans who were simply the highest creatures in the Great Chain of Being and in principle not entirely unlike animals like sheep. Though obvious, it is easy to miss the complex relations between sheep breeding, capitalism, and nationalism, which are also the roots of contemporary genetic modification and cloning debates, as Sarah Franklin points out.

Jefferson is careful to distinguish "half-blood" from "quarteroon" and "mulatto" because in this blood math whiteness is achievable. But because this blood math opens the vista of freedom, Jefferson quickly clarifies that the child may be white but not free. If emancipated, the person will be a free white, not a free black—surely a crucial difference. He adds that this "does not reestablish freedom, which depends on the

condition of the mother, the principle of the civil law, *partus sequitur ventrem*, being adopted here," almost as if he were reminding himself that the mother's inheritance determines the child.

This rule of *partus sequitur ventrem* ("the offspring follows the womb") is an adoption of Roman law by only some colonies and taken out of context in the stabilization of chattel slavery. English common law, which most colonies followed, originally presumed patrilineality, so the child of a free father would have been free. Without going too deep into eighteenth-century legal systems, it is worth noting that Blackstone, whom we encountered already via Colin Dayan's explanation, stresses a child born out of wedlock could not lose its freedom by being born to an unfree father. To Blackstone, its bastard status denies it all access to the father's inheritance, including the unfree status: "being *nullius filius* [nobody's son], he is therefore of kin to nobody, and has no ancestor from whom any inheritable blood can be derived" (qtd. in Hale 18). Here U.S. chattel slavery differs fundamentally from the English common law because it assumes that even though a mixed-race child be the son of the enslaver and the enslaved mother, this child is nobody's child *and* enslaved because the mother is.

As we see in Jefferson's neatly divided explanation, this is a secondary development that supplements the blood math, which allowed for "clearing" the blood, making it so-called white blood. By departing from the English common law, Virginia placed race over citizenship for the first time. This is the perspective of the law written by the father and enslaver of his children. It is the law of the nation state, not of the nation's people, as both Twain and Hopkins make clear. In Hawthorne's idealization of the *ius soli* as the foundation of national citizenship, we see the threat that a free black populace

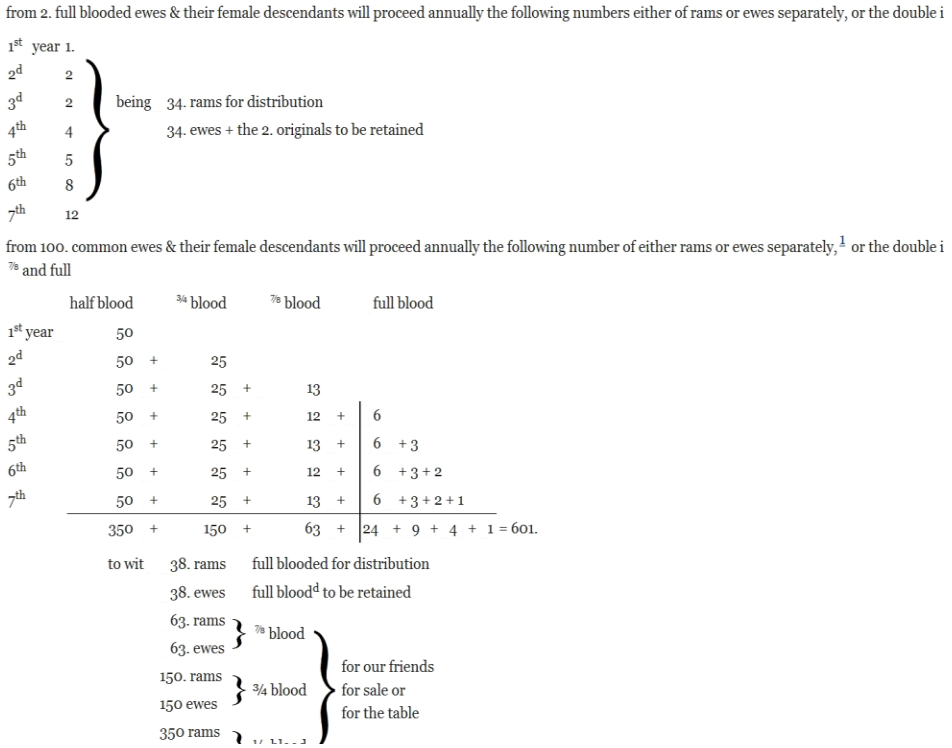
would have placed. Beyond white anxieties about the black body's revenge for injustice, limiting the movement of free blacks and ultimately making impossible the lives of free black persons was necessary if the free association of such persons could theoretically result in new towns, counties, even states.

Jefferson's letter makes clear that the first president of the nation in the new century was still greatly influenced by his eighteenth-century Enlightenment roots and training. He apparently strove to reconcile the nation's and Virginia's laws with the natural laws and self-evident truths he insisted on—the nation with those who could be seen as people. In this letter we see Jefferson split between his roles of yeoman farmer, lawyer, and elder statesman. The mention of Merino sheep recalls Jefferson's note to James Madison, 13 May, 1810, which contains an enclosure that visualizes his approach even better (Fig. 4). Jefferson condenses the mathematical calculations about animals' blood fractions in brackets, lists, and tables.

Jefferson's blood math gives us a clear view of the social processes that scientific racism built on. The past and the present come in contact only as numbers, ciphers of who is but must not be. In using the language of math and the vocabulary of sheep breeding, Jefferson demonstrates that the medical theory of the FFV code may lie in a pre-racist conception of blood. Yet the rhetorical roots of this code lies in the cruelest abstraction of so-called Enlightenment reason, where there is no sexual violence but "cohabitation," no atrocities against women, children, and men, but only "fractions" and the taxonomy of blood gradients.

Jefferson's letter and note provide the background for Twain's focus on fractions. Even though Twain pokes fun at the FFVs, there is nothing laughable about this blood

math. Jefferson in earnestness responded to Gray's question with a letter containing long lines of added fractions in which he substitutes letters for persons and punctuates each step in the calculation with "let … cohabit with …" Mathematical language hides sexual violence and abstracts the horrors of chattel slavery; each step in the calculation is yet another sexual assault of an enslaved woman by a white male, often their own relative.


from 2. full blooded ewes & their female descendants will proceed annually the following numbers either of rams or ewes separately, or the double i

1st year 1.
2d 2
3d 2
4th 4
5th 5
6th 8
7th 12
} being 34. rams for distribution
34. ewes + the 2. originals to be retained

from 100. common ewes & their female descendants will proceed annually the following number of either rams or ewes separately,[1] or the double i

7/8 and full

	half blood		3/4 blood		7/8 blood		full blood
1st year	50						
2d	50	+	25				
3d	50	+	25	+	13		
4th	50	+	25	+	12	+	6
5th	50	+	25	+	13	+	6 + 3
6th	50	+	25	+	12	+	6 + 3 + 2
7th	50	+	25	+	13	+	6 + 3 + 2 + 1
	350	+	150	+	63	+	24 + 9 + 4 + 1 = 601.

to wit 38. rams full blooded for distribution
38. ewes full blood[d] to be retained
63. rams } 7/8 blood
63. ewes }
150. rams } 3/4 blood
150 ewes }
350 rams
} for our friends for sale or for the table

Figure 4: "Enclosure: Thomas Jefferson's Notes on Breeding Merino Sheep, [ca. 13 May 1810]" (*Papers* 2.390).

We see the violence of the bracket, the sexually, chronologically, and socially straight account, visually and rhetorically, and the encyclopedic, summary frame within which he understood human existence. The father who is also the enslaver patterns his law on the presumed laws of nature, which are simply the laws of breeding animals. Objective language and Jefferson's vocabulary make possible his transcription of

unspeakable suffering into a few lines of "a Mathematical problem." Twain's allusion does not stop there, and we should be careful in assuming that Wilson's demonstration of the fingerprints at court only serves to clarify the well-trodden plot of exchanged twins when Wilson says that "We will call the children *A* and *B*," clearly echoing Galton's language, but also that of earlier racist theories (*Wilson* 116).

In "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book," Hortense J. Spillers discusses how social regimes govern the limits of parental representation in a logic of enslavement. The inspiration of this chapter's title, Spillers' article explains that racialized motherhood functions in a "historically ordained discourse" that must be re-figured by giving a space to African-American women as mothers, daughters, and bearers of heritage (228). Under conditions of enslavement, "1) motherhood as female bloodrite is outraged, is denied, at the very same time that it becomes the founding term of a human and social enactment; 2) a dual fatherhood is set in motion, comprised of the African father's banished name and body and the captor father's mocking presence" (228). The child is a mother's and father's *child*, no matter what Blackstone or Jefferson write. To claim the enslaved mother's blood inheritance as a legitimate transmission not of bondage, but of family and of the enslaved father's presence and inheritance means defying the enslaver-father's laws. There is no existing "free black blood" inside the legal order, however, nor in the enslaver's home.

The last calculation of Jefferson's blood math is 3/16, or freedom—possibly even implying the freedom of his own children with Sally Hemings. This a-personal, formal and formulaic abstraction of human suffering allows for an aloofness from individual narratives, especially if they are one's illegitimate children. As we will see below, both

Twain and Hopkins acknowledge the paternal account and the maternal narrative as the extreme cultural antipodes that develop around so-called black blood. The paternal account functions through shedding blood and erasing bloodlines, while the mother's narrative works through witnessing the violence and restoring lines beyond blood.

While we may find Jefferson's direct analogy between animal breeding and the quality of human bloodlines obviously false, this supposed common sense argument held fast into the twentieth century. As historian Phillip Thurthle points out, industrialists like Johns Hopkins, Leland Stanford, Ezra Cornell, and Andrew Carnegie insisted that selecting, training, and breeding horses for a trotter race was structurally the same process as selecting children, training them through rigorous discipline, in highly specialized institutions (68-9). From kindergarten to university, pedagogy became the handmaiden of breeding, instilling in them the knowledge that their personal choice of procreative partners would be a service to mankind at large. As we saw in chapter two, pedagogy itself served to train citizens in the understanding of what blood is.

Racist theory insists on constructing the individual as the past materialized, with its identity and thus its value already place in the divinely ordained hierarchy of races. As I argued in the last chapter, the individual in the theories of Cartwright remains in constant deferral, in a spot that is meaningful only by way of reference to the past, in which the past replaces the present. Brown counters such constructions by pointing out the bias in such Anglo theories and by insisting that individuals are limited by their social situation. He stresses that choice and agency are not biologically foreclosed.

In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, Twain sees uplift and reform as impossible if the human is deficient. This idea of human heredity of flaws itself is part of the nineteenth-century rise

of scientific racism. of As Foucault notes,

> many of the themes characteristic of the caste manners of the nobility reappeared in the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie, but in the guise of biological, medical, or eugenic precepts. The concern with genealogy became a preoccupation with heredity; but included in bourgeois marriages were not only economic imperatives and rules of social homogeneity, not only the promises of inheritance, but the menaces of heredity (*History* 125).

Heredity was not a new concept developed by Galton, nor is the blood math Jefferson's invention. Rather, we must read both as steps in a development of blood discourses and the renewed abjection of blood in the national imaginary. Racist theory complemented sovereign blood (Foucault, *Society* 241). Though Twain isn't a biological determinist, his prioritization of socialization does not leave any more room for individual freedom than did Jefferson's math. As soon as Tom sees himself caught in the Curse of Ham, the text's free indirect discourse puts the evaluation of his attitude right between Twain and his characters: "It was the 'nigger' in him asserting its humility, and he blushed and was abashed" (*Wilson* 49). Tom's confusion reflects the FFVs'.

In Pauline Hopkins' national imaginary, existing U.S. domesticity itself implies chaos. In a nation where the language of math served the enslaver-father, there was no objective space to withdraw from the legacy of slavery, from the horror that rendered the faith in the stable family unit as ludicrous as Twain's exaggerated blood math. Because nobody could legally recognize parental lineages, identities were in flux. An enslaver's black son socially and legally had no father. An enslaver had black children, but only white heirs. Slavery and the violation of enslaved women's bodies undercut any illusion of stable inheritance.

Published as a serial novel in the *Colored American Magazine* between

November 1902 and November 1903, the novel proceeds in a three-stage plot line during Reconstruction. I apologize for the confusing wealth of details in this summary; Hopkins has an affinity for convoluted, disorienting plots. Beginning with a sentimental narrative in Boston, the plot moves to an adventure travel narrative in the fictional city of Telassar in Meroe, Ethiopia—today's Cush, Sudan, on to the novel's gothic section in Maryland, and ends without conventional closure (Otten 247-51, Gillman, "Occult" 59).[156] Dr. Reuel Briggs is a poor black physician and researcher of mesmeric occult science who passes for white in Boston's upper class.[157] He rescues the light-skinned black singer Dianthe Lusk after an accident and marries her despite her amnesia, letting her pass as a white woman without her knowledge. His white friend Aubrey Livingston, a Southern rake, desires Dianthe despite his engagement to Molly Vance. He secretly blocks job offers to Reuel, forcing him to join an archaeological expedition in search of Meroe's ancient treasures.

The novel splits into two plot lines. Reuel's adventure narrative continues in Africa while the Gothic part opens with Aubrey taking in Dianthe to stay with him and his fiancée. Aubrey drowns Molly, entrances Dianthe, kidnaps her to his family's

156 On the discussion of Hopkins' serialized texts as novels, see Marla Harris (376). Similar to my point regarding Reizenstein's discontinuous use of the serial form above, Augusta Rohrbach reads Hopkins' serialized form itself as a rhizomatic, organic antigenealogy (495). Thomas J. Otten inquires into its relation to parapsychology and William James. The text's opposition comes out in Kimberly G. Herbert, who reads the text as Hopkins' failed attempt to speak her own African heritage and the past of slavery. Houston Baker dismisses Hopkins' African detail as a curiosity cabinet (26).

157 Hopkins references mostly the mesmerism of Afred Binet's *Le Magnetisme Animal* (1890). Otten established the view that the sentences Hopkins uses are not from mesmeric publications at all, though, but from William James' "The Hidden Self" in *Scribner's Magazine* (March 1890). Deborah Horvitz links other texts by Binet to James and Freud throughout her text and points out that the "unrealistic" elements of the text are motivated by the desire to uncover a hidden self covered by trauma (256). Her assumption seems to be that understanding the past was a long and painful process, but that was certainly less true for African American authors, many of whom were entirely conscious of their history, than for white readers. Hopkins' reference to early psychoanalysis indicates her focus on the psychic mechanisms in the individuals that make up the nation, not the nation state.

Maryland plantation, writes Reuel that she has drowned, and blackmails her into marrying him. Briggs learns of Aubrey's plot to kill him through second sight, but is rescued. Grieving for Dianthe, he stumbles into the hidden underground city of Telassar, the home of ancient Meroeans. A birthmark identifies him as their prophesied king and he becomes King Ergamenes. He marries Queen Candace, and learns of Livingston's crimes through magic.

Dianthe's old grandmother Aunt Hannah, formerly enslaved by the Livingstons, tells Dianthe that she had a daughter called Mira with Aubrey's grandfather: Mira and her master, Aubrey Livingston, Sr. (Mira's own half-brother), are in fact the parents of Reuel, Dianthe, and Aubrey, who are all "of one blood," with the same birthmark. Livingston kills the horrified Dianthe when she tries to poison him, and Reuel finds her dying upon his arrival. Hannah, Reuel, and his priest Ai give Aubrey a magic command and he drowns himself. The novel ends with the complete withdrawal of the surviving characters, as Reuel, Hannah, and his servants return to the Ethiopian kingdom where Reuel reigns as he meditates on growing global colonial expansion.

To Hopkins, violation of enslaved women stretches far beyond slavery. Following Emancipation, individuals still lived in uncertainty, possibly related "by blood" to other whites and blacks: former enslaved persons might be kin of blood of former enslavers and former enslavers might be siblings to those who sought to repress by socio-economic means and eugenic pseudo-science. However, many African Americans knew their white families very well even if they could not claim them legally or even informally, as Carol Allen reminds us (26). As Annette Gordon-Reed explains, the reconstruction of lineage might therefore occur not through the acknowledgment of blood lines, but through other

socio-cultural forms of testimony, like the act of naming a child and thereby keeping alive the names of ancestors black and white (*Hemingses* 618-9).

To un/name the child is exactly what Twain's Roxana attempts to do, wielding the greatest weapon against the father's name. As Carolyn Porter explains, however, this seeming agency only compounds the enslaver's erasure of bloodlines ("Roxana's Plot" 404). The identity of the body itself matters relatively little, and "the negative power implicit in the slave mother's position" finds no way in the material reality of slavery to change that (404). As we will see below, Hopkins proposes that the only alternative is the mother's attempt to reinscribe herself into the present as a witness and thus open an alternative to the blood society of slavery through er narrative.

To Claudia Tate, *Of One Blood* abandons the "ideal black family formation" because its mostly male voices utter expressions of racial equality just as the text proves such "ideal" formations impossible due to American history (19). I agree that Hopkins depicts American constructions of race as literally incestuous, circular, and irrational. The nation state's reliance on paternal lineage as the origin of identity leads to the impossible situation in which incest becomes the norm, in which racist violence will be reproduced by each generation. The enslaver-father's blood leads to blood-shed, to blood-sin, to a corrupt and unspeakable, hidden, invisible stain of shame and horror.

Simultaneous inbreeding and inter-mixture has rendered racial division absurd, but they are upheld just the same. As Cynthia D. Schrager notes, Hopkins' novel ends in a "vision of social chaos marked by incest, bigamy, murder, and suicide"—somewhat reminiscent of where Reizenstein started this study off (197). The white gaze turns African Americans into a racialized spectacle, like the traveling choirs in which Dianthe

performs as a representative black who can perform in accordance with civilized rules of behavior in the North and helpless, hapless victims to Aubrey's racist need to rape and kill in the South. As we saw in Brown's account, Hopkins' view on the South as an evil, gothic double of the nation state is justified—slavery may have passed, but conditions have not changed.

The novel rejects not only biological racism, but also the temporal narrative of the white racist, the narrative that *made* race: Livingston's lusting after Dianthe repeats and entrenches the cold-blooded rape of enslaved mothers by his Southern ancestors, and thus performs the role of the white racists. He, like them, claims the power to decide racial belonging. Dianthe's black brother, white through social construction, tells his white sister and wife-to-be, black through social construction, that she is black. Hopkins thus racially suspends Dianthe, ultimately rendering the very concept of race absurd.

Without addressing the long-running nature-nurture debate in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* scholarship in due detail, I want to point out that Twain's Tom is likewise white because he does "the white thing" instead of the right thing. He performs his whiteness in the most extreme form by selling his mother, a free woman, "down the river," thereby prioritizing formal legal right over moral code of conduct (*Wilson* 88, 95). In the end, Roxana's attempt at defeating the enslaver-father with his own weapons results in her own guilty conscience of having caused her son to also be sold "down the river."

In Hopkins' novel, the performance of whiteness falls to Aubrey, who asserts the white man's social power over a black woman in "exposing" her racial background in a series of performative utterances. He reenacts the racist power of his formerly slave-

holding patrilineage, yet ultimately assaults his own sister, adding incest to racism.[158] When he defines Dianthe's race, the extra-diegetic narrative voice describes her as a "white-faced girl," exposing the precariousness of whiteness, a color that simultaneously contains the terror of its unmaking and the sign of its subversion in passing (*Blood* 453).[159] Dianthe remembers her earlier, vague apprehension, a strange harmony in her trance-like song, and immediately submits to the "white" man's judgment (*Blood* 502).

The incest motif, implied in Twain and stressed in Hopkins, seems to offer a clarification of the complications surrounding blood and slavery. Recently, Shawn Salvant explores the history of the incest motif, though he does not mention the far longer legacy of scientific racism and blood. Salvant points out the catch of Acts 17, which we saw in the last chapter as the Christian source for the monogenetic assertion of "one blood": if all humans were really "of one blood," then not only are there no distinct races, but humans would always engage in universal incest (660). He correctly points out that this is another case of what I call the semantic slipperiness of blood. It incorrectly conflates blood as a legally-codified metaphor for group marking among families and lineage as a divine act of universal creation.

However, the nation state's laws of paternal bloodlines means that incest does not apply between father and child. To say that the enslaver-father or any of his children committed incest did would mean that there *were* parents and children and one blood

158 Deborah Horvitz reads Aubrey's sadistic lust convincingly in Freudian terms, but ignores Aubrey's black identity and simplifies him into a mere "representative of white, Western patriarchy" (253, 246).
159 Marla Harris points to the scholarly discussion whether Dianthe is "evidence for Hopkins' internalized racism" or built-in criticism of readers who believe in the notion of "a preconceived idea of a Negro" (379). I generally agree with Harris' and Kevin Gaines' argument that Hopkins constructed and used Dianthe consciously (1996, 221). As Doreski points out, Hopkins was fully aware of African-American "signifying power" and double-voicedness (90).

line. The *incestus* or un-chaste act, that which defiles the morally pure or holy *castus* does not exist because even Jefferson's "cohabit" belies the obvious truth: there was only one legal person present in the act of intercourse, while the other person was considered legal chattel. Since the slave had no bloodline to pollute or to pollute with, no impurity could result. We know that Emancipation did not restore the familial lineages of the freedmen. From the perspective of chattel slavery these subjects were not born to mothers but appeared out of thin air, with no parents and no history, no blood until the moment the Proclamation took its full effect. So in the first generation of young people living during the 1890s, incest would only apply to siblings who recognize each other as such, and that is why Dianthe Lusk has to die before she can consummate her marriage with Reuel Briggs.

Considering this legal fiction of black blood as the absence of personhood, I argue that not all sins are equal in Twain's Dawson's Landing and Hopkins' U.S. because social death disables sovereignty. Under slavery, murders may have an eerie lack of impact on anyone because the murder in the end was no murder if an enslaved person has committed it. The Judge died in the encounter with faulty "inventory," not in the struggle with a human being (*Wilson* 121). Expanding on Carolyn Porter's point about Roxana, we might say that the contractual purchase agreement displaces the death sentence and that the contract replaces the sword. Blood may be shed, but the risk of evoking sovereign violence disappears in the logic of racist slavery.

In the first chapter we saw that in Hawthorne's liberal-progressive national narrative, a map plots the imagined property onto land as a spectral claim that connects individuals to a familial bloodline as inheritable estate and sovereign claim to land won

by the sword. His series of fictions aims to establish the compromise of bracketing slavery in *The House of the Seven Gables*. Jefferson's letter makes clear that a family's wealth in land can be fictional as long as it is stabilized by enslaved persons belonging to that estate. By extension, the national imaginary can dispense with the sovereign if enslavement is upheld inside it.

So here we see that Hawthorne's maps and deeds perhaps hint at another abjection, equally horrific as that of Native genocide: the abjection of sovereign blood at the price of the slave's blood. To put it in the context of political philosophy, this seems to be a development past Thomas Hobbes' theory of the social contract, which is based on the notion that individuals surrender their natural right to shed blood to the sovereign, the Leviathan. If human enslavement was the only way to escape sovereign power, then enslavers and their accomplices purchased their freedom from Leviathan at the cost of human lives.

If we consider Jefferson's blood math the archetypal demonstration of racist blood discourses in the national imaginary of one of the nation's founders, then we understand that only the rule of slavery in its many iterations made it possible to keep at bay a sovereign "society of blood" (Foucault, *History* 147). But blood will have blood, says Shakespeare. Both Twain and Hopkins predict the same result from this simultaneous insistence on race, parentage, and property that Reizenstein saw. As French Creole-Caribbean writer Victor Séjour predicted his 1837 "Le Mulâtre": "in spite of it all, all too often [a young enslaved black male] goes to the tomb with bloodstained hands and a heart still thirsting for vengeance; for more than once he has seen his youthful dreams

destroyed" (149).[160] The uncanny nation gives rise to bloodshed.

In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, Tom's murder of Judge Driscoll condenses the slavery metaphor in an overt image when the robbery turns into a murder-robbery: some "of the notes escaped from his left hand and fell in the blood on the floor"—literal blood money (100). The Italian Twins have no blood on their hands, literally, and thus the ruptured body of Judge Driscoll points to the inward purity or pollution of the murderer, whose contact with blood is at once proof and taint. The scandal of violence in Twain, however, lies not merely in the violence enacted against the patriarch, but in the proximity of racial identity and bloodshed.

The contiguity of blood and violence exists no longer in the chivalric code of sovereign violence but in the racist scientific measurement of bloody fingerprints on the knife handle. This complex image deserves close attention. The knife is first used to open mail, an activity that partakes in communication networks, the nationalizing power of letters that Benedict Anderson stresses, the use of tools, in short, to perform civilized nationalism (*Communities* 204). The use of this knife as murder weapon on the other hand signals improvisation, the perversion of tools, and the suspension of the civilized order in the shedding of blood. As I established above, the fingerprints also relate to Galtonian investigations of hereditary criminality, to the earliest roots of what would grow into eugenics.

Of course Twain is on one level simply realistic by using blood as the medium for the prints. In the end, the fingerprints on the handle would be invisible without the

160 "malgré cela, bien souvent il descend dans la tombe les mains teintes de sang, et le cœur avide encore de vengeance; car plus d'une fois il a vu détruire ses rêves de jeune home."

victim's blood. Wilson's collection of prints consists of carefully produced prints on glass slides, a catalog, and quite literally tangible data. His catalog precedes the advent of modern forensics and its use of fine powders around the turn of the century. Beyond that, though, blood is the matrix in which prints make sense, because there is no other way to follow the familial relation to the culprit to establish a connection between two sets of prints. Individuals, both abolitionists and Darwinists would argue, are distinct members of one race and can be related to each other in this way. The polygenists, monogenetic racists, neo-Lamarckians, and the followers of Galtonian and Spencerian re-interpretations of Darwin would, however, insist on individuals as standing for related members of distinct races. The fingerprints expressed in blood and through blood mark unity in permanent difference.

With the rise of nineteenth-century racism came another way to look at the problem of violence and murder. As discussed in chapter one, sovereign violence itself disrupts the civilized order. However, with racist theory toward the end of the century, violence is no longer understood in the same way. The racial identity of the perpetrator re-establishes civilization by relegating the disruption of violence to an other, a racial other who exists outside civilization, not primarily because of his political location, but because of his identity that is eternally deferred, located in a distant past.

Into the confusion of the FFVs Twain inserts the promise that Galton's theory of fingerprints made, that individual bodies would become legible, identifiable, and quantifiable in populations. His defense of the Italian twins gives Wilson a chance to make clear the difference—to himself as much as to the public—between palmistry and fingerprinting, which, as Sarah Chinn notes, the novel sees as stages in an increasing

abstraction: person—body—hand—finger—fingerprint—charts in absence of the person (24-52). This defense, in turn, arises from the original transgression that makes possible this indexing: the shed blood of a white male. The blood on the handle is for one a material marker of violence and the substrate that binds weapon to murderer. It is also, more importantly, the visualization of the murderer's racial identity. Blood troubles the civilized order, but the racist inscription of blood stabilizes the order anew. The temporal existence of the individual, even the white individual, is suspended in an eternal truth about their identity, their life, their being-in-race.

Let us now return for a second time to the initial quote of Wilson dismissing Roxana's supposed superstition: "The drop of black blood in her is superstitious; she thinks there's some deviltry, some witch-business about my glass mystery somewhere; she used to come here with an old horseshoe in her hand; it could have been an accident, but I doubt it" (*Wilson* 23). We see not only arrogance, but hypocrisy in Wilson's derisive remark. In Wilson's eyes, any impurity in the white blood not only bars individuals from accessing knowledge, but declares them generally unfit to receive and process this same knowledge; this is not because the information is fraught with racist and elitist ideology, but because any drop of blood will hinder understanding. In hindsight one superstition really simply replaced another when a white, professional, racist theory aimed to displace black folk knowledge. Wilson's own "science" is far closer to superstition and is rooted in occult notions of the medical concepts it builds on.

Because Twain's readers can historicize the conditions for understanding blood in one or another context, the question arises under which conditions we can theorize blood in a particular way, and if this knowledge can be communicated independent of location.

Where can mothers speak the truth of blood? Racist science is "objective" and its theories make sense under the conditions of plantation slavery that I explained in the previous chapter as the basis for Cartwright's theories. But there is also the perspective of Roxana and Mira, of Tom and Reuel and Dianthe, which is stuck in a half-world, true but not real.

The confusion around blood theories therefore becomes especially clear, or rather unclear, in the novels' haunted spaces, where blood and violent racist theories of blood meet.[161] Once again, we must remember that pseudoscience in our sense of the word did not exist and that the occult sciences Reuel Briggs engages would have rubbed shoulders backstage with gothic melodrama, the psychology of William James, and the crania of Samuel Morton. Audiences in the nineteenth century saw lecturers like Nott and Gliddon on a lecture circuit together with medical shows and P.T. Barnum's displays of othered bodies. All these presentations of bodies formed part of the nineteenth-century national imaginary as Elizabeth Stephens and Michael M. Chemers point out. Gordon Fraser argues that Reuel Briggs' experiments with occult science attempt to find "a metaphysical blood substitute [that] reveals the secret metaphysical sympathy between all things" (668). But Aubrey Livingston destroys Briggs' career over his lust for Dianthe Lusk; once more, Hopkins asserts, the father's social order insists on blood and the impossibility of acting past blood and the paternal plantation.

Some of these haunts of truth exist in the novels' senttings. Audiences reading Twain were certainly familiar with the far more detailed and gruesome descriptions of

161 Stephen Dougherty observes a similar point with regard to Edgar Allan Poe's House of Usher: "If the House is indeed the embodiment of the dynasty, or the ancient 'Usher race,' what we witness in Poe's story is the eerie biologization of the House precisely insofar as the concept of race was biologized" (22).

torture and social death in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) that give Roxana's account from "down the river" added resonance (*Wilson* 91). Likewise, Hopkins' readers would have recognized her Telassar as in part a counter to the racist adventure novels about Africa popularized by Rider Haggard. Both novels function against the background of the cruel horrors of the Southern plantation system, evoked as present by Twain and that linger in the gothic Maryland estate of the Livingston family by Hopkins. In these spaces, social death and physical death may resemble each other. In this gothic setting, blood becomes more than inheritance and worse than death, a supernatural force, what Joseph Roach has called "the talisman of authentic identity" (*Cities* 193).

Virginia, Telassar, Maryland, Boston—Twain and Hopkins establish a number of spaces, all of which share an obsession with blood, an uncanny quality in which overlapping ideas about blood disorient and confuse more than clarify and grant stability. Between body and metaphor, between individual and group, between the Curse of Ham and St. Luke, between scientific racism and colonial regimes of blood laws, Christianity and Southern codes of honor: somewhere among experienced histories and museums, maps, and portraits, blood will out.

The narrative circulation of blood undoes the non-verbal acts of racist violence. The act of recalling blood insists on its circulation and repeats blood circulation in the narrative act, thereby resulting in material action. Twain's and Hopins' narratives challenge racism by answering questions and thus recalling the facts of blood, i.e. who is which part of what family, who killed whom, why did they kill, and where are the bodies buried? Whereas the erasure of a person's identity and their life abstracts them into medical narratives and ledgers, the family history restores individual dignity and agency

by filling in names and places. Whereas the blood shed at the hands of the enslaver-father violence is mute and therefore open to inscription, narrated blood undoes this one-sided imaginary by relating the unspoken, re-established frame of blood.

Susan Gillman makes the case that Twain intends his novel to be set in 1850, since this was the first time the U.S. census counted the category of "mulattoes" ("Science" 448). I don't see the need to locate Twain's narrative in one year but see the revolutionary changes of the 1840s and 50s as reflected in the changes visited upon the small towns of his childhood. Dawson's Landing is not the heartland, but a frontier of civilization. Twain imagines this space as a nostalgic aid, a "talisman" against the evils of the present. This evil is another iteration of the liberal-progressive nation itself, which leaves behind and condemns as barbaric each preceding episteme with each new technological incarnation of the same idea of black blood.

Twain constructs Dawson's Landing as a no-place, a racist utopia where competing theories of blood vie for supremacy. At the same time, the most crucial moments between Roxana and Tom also take place in a no-place, a haunted house. Twain simply inserts this mystery novel cliché into the text without much explanation, even mocking the idea that a fifty year-old town would have a haunted house (*Wilson* 44). He never tells what the haunt of this un-home is where Roxana and Tom have moments of pained, mutual recognition—in a less conflicted author we might think of Toni Morrison's Sethe and her Beloved—while Hopkins goes into great detail in her haunted house, as we will see below.

Twain's haunted house is the perfect space to negotiate an uncanny nation and its grey zones between the old and new laws of blood, the father and the mother, between

Jefferson's blood math and Galton's identity cards, the possibility of changing blood and the eternal immutability of race. Like an architectural abject, "the haunted house" stands even beyond Wilson's house, the one structure in a "stretch of vacant lots," behind which begins what John M. Brand constructs as "the lawlessness of the wilderness" (Wilson 44-5, 8, emphasis in original, Brand, "Incipient" 304). As we saw in Hawthorne, wilderness may be the screen for imperial projections of sovereign land claims, but Dawson's Landing needs to first overcome the FFV's moral code and embrace Manifest Destiny.

Hopkins seems to side-step the problem and use her fictional Telassar as a convenient solution to all problems. I don't read Telassar as materially possible, but a parable of political desire. Although Sawn Salvant reads Telassar as a literal, quasi-Egyptian state and high civilization that functions on fundamentally different socio-cultural assumptions than the U.S. and thus another space to build a new society, I see its fairy tale elements as overwhelming (671-2). Blood, there, is not a marker of race but the link between individual and community, the duration of existence in history. Telassar is not so much a space haunted by blood, but a nod to ancient Greece and pre-Egyptian Ethiopian cultures that also precede modern interpretations of blood-as-race and that saw even enslaved individuals as "of the same blood" as their owners, as historian A. J. Raymer explains (20). Blood here signifies an individual in a new society of free, equal individuals, who can freely "use" their blood to claim their identity as humans.

Hopkins stresses that in the U.S. the erased past of African American means that history is present but invisible and that individuals may never know an identity recognized in the nation state. Individuals must therefore rely on the mythical past of their ancestry, on race as a crutch that allows for the spiritual, maternal relation to the

past, and therefore to a meaningful present. This idea of developing society's past blood, of using the blood of the past to engage in a narrative of identities, which exists in both Twain and Hopkins, takes place not in the ideal space, but in the darkest haunts.

Before the Livingston Plantation and Telassar comes Hopkins' first haunted space, Hyde House. The framed ghost story of Hyde house uses the metaphor of a bloodstain that stubbornly remains on a shed to unite blood, temporality, and racial violence (*Blood* 458-9).[162] In this story, Molly Vance tells the tale of an "unfaithful husband, a wronged wife and a beautiful governess" (458). Long after John Hyde and the governess hired by him kill a guest for his money, the murderer's niece discovers the blood stains on the door of a woodshed on the property. Perpetrators and witness remain chained to the place until the niece makes a public confession, which she does to Reuel (461-2).

When individuals access the family history, they speak a truth of blood that restores the connection between past and present which Jefferson's blood math and medical theories erase. From the present bloody stain arises a knowable past. A staple of Gothic writing, the blood stain reminds of the haunting guilt of slavery and the guilt of the white nation. *Of One Blood* rejects both apology for violence and forgetting of bloodshed in an attempt to advance beyond the terrible cycle in which murderer, collaborator, and witness are chained to Abraham Lincoln's "house divided" through the bloodstain even beyond death.

The bloodshed of slavery binds former enslavers and formerly enslaved to the

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162 Claudia Tate (*Domestic* 205f) reads the entire novel as a ghost story like Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), but the framed narrative here stresses that the novel's polyphony contains this as only one genre.

past in their bodies as well as their minds; black and white, cursed murderers and cursing victims mutely repeat the past without forgiveness and without hope. Slavery is America's stain of sin in *Blood* and though it will never vanish it can be overcome in testimony. The witness in the ghost story is free after confessing, and Hopkins advocates literary and oral history as the conscious reflection through narrative to think through the importance and immanence of the past in the present. While the blood stain in the ghost story is a spectral reminder of the uncanny violence of slavery and the continuation after Emancipation, its power results from its narrative presence. Far from being relegated to history as a finished event of the past or as silent and gently mocked as Twain does, the blood stain returns in the ghost story, which questions the possibility of foreclosing the past. Narrative recalling of temporal deference brings the past into the present and resolves lingering, spectral, haunting violence by way of the maternal narrative, of course.

The narrative must stay in the blood-red twilight of the haunted house. The uncanny homes that offer a space for negotiating an impossible truth simultaneously inside and outside of the nation state confirm Reizenstein's view of an uncanny nation I established in chapter one. In the uncanny nation state, the existence of the ideal is predicated on the existence of an abject, a horror so deep that to inhabit this space, as Roxana and Tom do, or to bear witness to it, as Mira does, means crossing beyond the law, but stopping before the wilderness. The haunted house exists beyond the dichotomy I explained in the first chapter. It is neither Hawthorne's gabled house and its bloodless domesticity nor the battlefield of bloody sovereignty, but the proper home for the socially dead. In this place another narrative can be told, a bloodless narrative about blood. This

narrative has great liberating potential, as Hopkins stresses, but, as Twain insists, it cannot cross the threshold and be put into action.

Let us return one third and last time to Wilson's dismissal of Roxana's "superstition." We saw that Roxana expresses her skepticism not out of ignorance, but because she knows too well what blood means and how it works in the world of the father-enslaver. Jefferson's blood math that rules her and Tom is a unilateral declaration of invisibility; the mother attempts to explain, not to account, but to narrate the absence. As Spillers notes, in "this play of paradox, only the female stands in the flesh, both mother and mother-dispossessed" ("Mama's Baby" 228). Yet she stands among ruins, with nothing but the "negative power" inherent in her position. As Susan Gillman puts it regarding Of One Blood, "once we learn all the characters' mysterious and intertwined pasts under slavery, this knowledge offers no possibility of restoring the American social and moral order" ("Mulatto" 232).

I argue that Roxana does not only lay claim to the central dichotomies in the text, black and white, male and female, but that she embodies them, as Lina A. Morris points out, and that she inserts herself into the fissures of the enslaver-father's account (*Wilson* 90, Morris, "Gender" 391). After the murder, Tom also crosses racial and gendered boundaries, which creates a structural analogy between his murdering of the surrogate white father and Roxana's defeat of the plantation overseer; but the similarity ends when we consider the context of the new-found freedom won by violence. Tom's implication in whiteness is too deep; he reacts with violence, greed, and the erasure of his own identity. Only Roxana is left to attempt a restoration of the family and its narrative: "I's yo' mother" (*Wilson* 90).

What constitutes maternal resistance and agency in a nation patterned on chattel slavery? After all, Roxana fails in the end. Twain cannot imagine a way to see through blood and past blood: "her flash of happiness was only a flash, and went out again and left her spirit dark" (91). Roxana's narrative fails because she attempts to transport her narrative back to the blood, into the material world, from the haunted house to the master's house. As Spillers notes, the priest-like function of the knowing mother recovers black femininity at the cost of expanding the father's law beyond its legitimate precinct ("Notes" 318). Roxana attempts to both undermine that law from what Spillers calls "shadow" of the haunt and to speak the truth inside its order (316). She wants to make it matter, to be heard by ears that cannot hear her because to them she has no voice. She fails because she tries to leave her haunted house and transpose her narrative into the words of the enslaving father that does not allow for the knowledge she has.

In a most daring attempt, Roxana even attempts to rework the narrative of the national imaginary as a whole. Expanding upon one of the most famous projections of interracial political desire of the nineteenth-century national imaginary, Captain John Smith and Pocahontas, she inserts a third party into this holy family of U.S. nationalism: "My great-great-great-gran'father. . . was ole Cap'n John Smith, de highe' blood that Ole Virginny ever turned out; en his great-great-gran'mother or somers along back dah, was Pocahontas de Injun queen, en her husbun' was a nigger king outen Africa" (*Wilson* 75). Twain's use of eye-dialect renders Roxana's initiative silly, but her effort bespeaks her awareness of the genealogical possibilities of individuals if the past is not foreclosed.

Compare this to Hopkins' novel, where the mother's narrative appears in a powerful scene in which Mira inscribes her lost maternal narrative into the Livingston

family Bible (*Blood* 506). Susan Gillman describes Hopkins' mode as a foregrounding "of storytelling in the many interpolated narratives and flashbacks through which matrilineal histories . . . are reconstructed" (*Blood Talk* 38). Mira changes the text by underlining a passage and signing her name on the margin, literally writing herself into the text and editing her master's account that we would have seen, for example, in a Jefferson family bible, and adding her narrative.[163] Over space and time, she posthumously reclaims the maternal truth society denies her. Only after Dianthe sees her mother can she confront Livingston with the text, enforcing Mira's existence in the present and taking on her mother's life and history as part of her own to avoid repeating the incest prefigured by her. For individual lives to truly matter, their common culture is must become a common origin based on choice, limited only by the will for good in society, not blood quantum.

Despite their tragic outcome, Roxana's fictions nevertheless constitute an attempted narrative motherhood. Twain himself reflects on the image of the text as a child, when he claims that he extracted Roxana and the switched babies from a manuscript of *Those Extraordinary Twins* by what he famously calls a "literary Caesaerian operation" (*Wilson* 125). Twain himself claims to be Roxana's father, and insists that he cannot control her either. In his laboring over the stubborn material, Twain appears to have turned over the question of motherhood, of birthing, and of the violence that may accompany biological offspring, but also the gynecological violence that I already explained to be part of scientific racism in chapters four and five.

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163 See elaborations of this motif in Elizabeth Ammons (212), Jeannie A. Kassanoff (174-5).

Roxana herself successfully created a "fiction" by exchanging babies, but his fiction fails as soon as she explains it in the haunted house and then withers under Wilson's scientific gaze (20). Twain writes Roxana's narrative out of existence, rendering it an epistemological impossibility. The Romantic fairy-tale trope of switched babies, which found its reflection in other authors' works—one only think of Oscar Wilde—is abandoned and replaced by an social model in which the individual is the mere index of their lineage, a set of prints to go with the others of their "kind."[164]

The re-called, that is, the called-again and remembered maternal narrative destabilizes blood inheritance by way of re-construction, of simultaneously starting over and of making blood anew, of blood as potentiality, not as anchor. Hopkins counters the process of constant deferral of the present into past and future in her insistence identities are in contact with the past and formed by way of constant re-calling that past, of narrating the present in light of the past. After Dianthe Lusk accepts her social role, her subjectivity remains muted until Aunt Hannah reveals her secret and the white-skinned black girl is free to act, now in accordance with the maternal truth that speaks to those who want to know, be they called white or black. Her death is not just an author's assurance that no incest took place between her and Aubrey; she dies because her action cannot exit in the father-enslaver's world. "This world has ended as the character slips away from the earth into the non-historical eternity of the unchanging," Spillers notes about William Faulkner and Frances E. W. Harper ("Notes" 316).

To escape the time of blood into "the non-historical eternity of the unchanging,"

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164 For the psychology of the switched babies trope, see Rita V. Frankiel.

the eternally-deferred creation of black blood, Twain, Hopkins and other authors find a counter-eternity, which must remain tragic because it admits the full account of the blood math. A few decades after Hopkins, Virginia Woolf noted that the mind "can think back through its fathers or its mothers, as I have said that a woman writing thinks back through her mothers" (97). This applies doubly for Hopkins, who faces the troubling inheritance of both race and gender. Instead of denying the importance of inheritance, the novel builds a new understanding *of* inheritance, one grouped around the act of bearing witness to an ancestor, thus fracturing the normative linearity of biological descent in the act of re-telling, in the suspension of racist temporality in the moment.[165]

Susan K. Gillman critiques this narrative as "maternal messianism" and points out that the mothers still only serve to hail the coming of a male—a point I will return to below (*Blood Talk* 71). But Gillman's critique insists that Hopkins failed to let her characters cross the threshold out of the haunted house. If we categorize *Of One Blood* as "black radicalism made possible by popular Ethiopianism,' then Gillman's point would be valid (72). However, I don't agree that this is what Hopkins asserts because I think she is well aware of the limits of the maternal narrative as a blueprint for activism. The mothers in *Of One Blood* speak truth with ferocious insistence even beyond death. Aunt Hannah survives slavery and unites the family, Mira protects her children from beyond the grave, and they all are descendants of Ethiopian royalty which Queen Candace lives to continue.[166]

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165 Dora Ahmad sees continuity where I read disjunction and the reversal of generational patterns of descent ("Genres" 783).

166 Claudia Tate sees "silenced" black women where I see non-patrilineal modes of communication and inheritance (208).

Their maternal narratives undercuts all patriarchal family histories, from Hannah's revelations of the past to Mira's children, and Mira's transgression of natural laws, the novel's ultimate act of defiance. These mothers are not the wombs for golden children, but mothers-in-spirit, the source of an individual's connection to their cultural inheritance. As Ai explains: "We are a singular people, governed by a single monarch, all having the same name, Candace" (*Blood* 561). In order to escape racial collectivity (a collective, debased past and a predetermined inheritance), individuals must reclaim their subjectivity by bearing witness.

In this way, Hopkins poses the maternal narrative as a radical resistance outside the speakable and even thinkable realm of the enslaver-father's declarative accounts. Mira overcomes the social *aporia* and its cultural fictions of race, beyond a biologically reproductive future. There are, of course, clear limits to Hopkins' work, but the imagination of alternate modes of resistance is not one of them. *Of One Blood* is no feminist or queer manifesto, but it does suspend normative constructions of family and gender, depicts continuity beyond biological birth and death, and transmits power through a non-related line of women, who empower the queens of Meroe with the knowledge of the past. This narrative is not, however, a counter narrative to white, civilized nationalism, but rather an inclusive reiteration thereof, a way to achieve a social configuration that does not break with heteronormative domesticity, but only relocates it. The oedipal construction itself together with the insistence of the straight family tree we saw above evokes Sara Ahmed's argument that compulsive heterosexuality makes the queer object invisible ("Orientations" 556-60).

Kate McCollough observes a similar point regarding Hopkins' *Contending Forces*

(1900), but sees her as refiguring white bourgeois models of true womanhood to include the illegitimate mother and the black mother, seeing her adhering to this model (42). A few years later, however, *Of One Blood* retains a conscious distance from white domesticity. Aunt Hannah denies her role as passive victim of the past, instead claiming agency through her knowledge of the past, not by imitating the angel of the house: "Dese things jes' got to happen in slavery, but I isn't gwine to at de debbil's wurk wif both eyes open" (*Blood* 605). Hopkins creates a prospect beyond the bloody past and the current injustice of blood quantum through timeless inter-personal connections that offer spiritual renewal, not material conformity to the decaying nation.

Instead of planning a change in this corrupt, but supposedly higher civilization, the same that destroys Roxana, *Of One Blood* posits "a cyclical pattern, more along the model of a rising Phoenix than a linear line," finding history in mysticism and myth more than in politics, as Allen puts it (32). Hopkins re-considers the linearity of time and resolves the impasse between present identity and determining past. Instead of locating her solution within the parameters prescribed by the enslaver-father's racist script of blood, she empowers visible and invisible African-American mothers through their own voice of fiction, of re-telling their blood and thus "straightening out" the Jeffersonian account. To counter the irrational predestination resulting from Course of Ham's blood curse, she proposes an equally irrational narrative that at once contains African American culture and transcends the awful coincidence of racial suspension and overdetermined present U.S.

This way, the haunted houses continue the negotiation of how we understand blood by providing spaces with and beyond the blood of ancestors, a blood of humanity,

and a common origin. This society of multiple valencies is a recursive, dialogic culture of identity-forming individuals, whose efforts result in a constant re-negotiation of the present, and thus always of the future. Hopkins is not in control over what constitutes the individual truth and remains willing to face the reality of the total mixture of all races and thus the fictitious nature of race itself.

Against Roxana's attempt to lay the truth at the enslaver's doorstep, the maternal narrative offers ideas of egalitarian, non-capitalist, and post-ethnic identities, though identities they remain, which in itself limits the possibilities of change to their model. But within the Jim Crow reality, Jefferson's blood math and Cartwright's "black blood" both fail to erase this knowledge-as-culture and identity-as-wisdom, because they rely on theory-as-knowledge and race-as-identity.

Instead of bearing witness like Mira, Wilson is content to diagnose the present and receives accolades for it. There is no moral judgment in the restoration of the original birth order. Nobody ever considers the sexual violence against enslaved women at the hands of generations of Driscoll men a problem or crime because there is no rape, only Jeffersonian declarations of "cohabitation." Wilson simply restores the "correct" progeny and fixes the math. That this occurs at the cost of social cohesion is the comedic value of Twain's tragedy, which never really extends to the individual. Like most of his contemporary whites, Twain holds his characters locked in the history of their ancestry, whether beneficial or detrimental. Hopkins has her mothers open this lockbox and fill the erased spots on the ledgers, restoring dignity to the individual and their choice as part of their relation to the past, without a pre-determined path.

The social inheritance of slavery is not limited to violent enslaver-fathers and

haunted houses. The mother's act of re-telling connects past and present, bridges lineal gaps. Side-stepping the father's blood math, this narrative completes the complicated history of the blood-line, and restoring blood to its familial connection in the face of violent racist theories and absurd social rules, bearing witness to overcome, to end the practice, and to connect to a lost history that living persons can find *through* blood without having to abject blood.

Mira, Aunt Hannah, Reuel, and Dianthe rise from her pages as self-empowered individuals, siblings with different skin colors, personal histories, and personalities, but with the lotus birthmark on their breast. Susan Gillman points out that in this way "blood" becomes "a multivalent figure of speech capable of generating new meanings—including some drawn directly from, rather than countering, contemporary scientific discourses. Hopkins not only draws on existing meanings of 'blood,' she also invents some of her own" (Gillman, "Occult" 76). Mira's children retain a common, inherited trait, not as a figure of race or its inheritance, but as a sign of the individual's link to the human origins, the biological unity with all others beyond family, social class, and gender. Thus, the aristocratic, exclusive *fleur-de-lis* becomes a divine sign that enables Reuel to find his roots, the inclusive origin of all humans, and to rewrite his inheritance.

Recently, Gordon Fraser has attempted to divide scholarly responses to Hopkins' novel into two loose groups, those who read *Of One Blood* as a failed attempt at uplift and personal, coherent political engagement with activism, and those who emphasize disorder, revision, and internal incoherence. He sees scholarly attempts to find coherence in the topics Hopkins addresses, from incest to Ethiopianism as creating "a misleading coherence" that he deemphasizes in favor of an anxious hope for the future,

"contingency, provisionality, and unknowability" (365). Fraser usefully expands the existing work on Hopkins' treatment of William James' psychology, which understands trauma as transpersonal and thereby saw individual healing as socially transformative, and that the "shared consciousness" allows communication beyond physical constraints (375).

But Dianthe Lusk dies and Roxana's spirit goes dark (*Blood* 616, *Wilson* 91). Fraser reads this as a means of disincorporation of the traumatized self and perhaps a sort of spiritual fusion between Lusk and Queen Candace (*Blood* 377). But the fact remains that in the socio-political reality of the United States at the turn of the century, blood still rules existing individual lives. Because the enslaver-father had no conception, no language, no law to incorporate the existence of the children that must not be, their blood kept haunting them. Hopkins accepts this truth and focuses on the cultural renewal that comes from within the haunted boundary of the national imaginary built on the father's laws. Considering the critique of Hopkins' reproduction of racist biological tropes mentioned at the outset, we now see that her insistence on race and inability to transcend it goes far beyond an unconscious racism: it isn't that blood *has* to mean race, but that it *does*.

Family formations in the United States at the end of the century remain haunted by the same sovereign legacy. Holly Jackson in her study of the family as a threat to revolutionary and utopian ideals has recently pointed out that, the "anachronistic presence of dynastic patriarchs and ancestral estates as gothic tropes hint that the ghostly palimpsest of a blood-based society still haunts the nineteenth-century United States" (13). Here we see the crux that Hopkins and Twain address: blood was and is important

even though it should not be; this is because, as we remember from Foucault, sovereignty is "complemented" by biopower, not displaced (Foucault, *Society* 241). So the nostalgia for Twain's childhood days and for an invisible past of African greatness is no escape. Rather, both authors seize on blood to point out that our very temporal understanding of social institutions relies on notions of blood and inheritance as an epistemological question: between the blood on the mother and the father, which of them *can* be known?

Toward the close of the nineteenth century, U.S. professionals stake their claims in a battle for social recognition, and they often choose blood to negotiate their understanding of what it means to be human. Thus, to a racist theorist, blood is the biological anchor that always refers to a distant origin, which in turn determines the value of the living blood, without a possible individual agency. Such theory distances blood from the present; the significance of blood always lies in some mythical a point of origin (a curse, a debased past, a haunting, etc.). This lingering inferiority dooms all future generations and in turn stabilizes the claim to authority in those—white, civilized, male—whose blood is untainted. Opponents present blood as what ties humanity together in the present, what frees us from the lingering past and its curses, by affirming our commitment to each other and our identity, especially in the community with Christ. Blood to them is potential, a chance, a claim to greatness that in no way limits individual agency or freedom. These two positions would battle throughout the twentieth century, but their roots lay in the early conceptions of blood-as-race, and of race-in-time.

So if blood also connotes property, land, and the mapping out of the nation, then what does that mean for Hopkins' imagined refuge in Telassar? Is it haunted by blood or a space free from the Scramble for Africa as well as the domestic troubles? And is

Gillman right in pointing out that there is just another male waiting, another king? Why does Roxana insert an African king into the legacy? Why the return of the sovereign that we also saw at the end of Reizenstein we saw in chapter wone? Likewise, Martha Schoolman ponders Brown's reports on Europe and argues that he finds spatial connections between England, France, and Haiti, in which Toussaint L'Ouverture's revolution becomes the imaginary locus of a non-European sovereignty (25).

While I agree that the complexities of black cosmopolitan tourists opens different vistas, I do not see Brown as reinventing sovereignty: if the society is not one of blood, then it is definitely a different society from a monarchy or aristocratic empire, perhaps a better one. In Reizenstein's return of the Haitian emperor, we see a sardonic insistence on honesty, on blood as a fact of life and a sign for needed reform. He insists on facing the real history, not the nation state's supposed history that lives on the half-truths and the displaced suffering inherent in Hawthorne's—and as we see now, Jefferson's, Dixon's, and Cartwright's national imaginary. But once black blood or blood-as-race becomes a central part of the national imaginary, it is no longer a question of knowing the truth, but of surviving. Between Twain and Hopkins we see the full panorama of horrific and inhumane ways blood was used by enslavers to suspend enslaved persons in social death, to deny their status as human and make them the objects of blood math that turned violent sexual and physical abuse into fractions and tallies. The final, terrible sentencing of Tom, to become chattel and be "sold down the river" is the closest approximation of justice a slave society can know (*Wilson* 121).

The reappearance of the sovereign in Reizenstein and Hopkins is a significant gesture to the conditions of recuperation. The maternal narrative focuses on keeping the

spirit alive under conditions of slavery and later in slavery by another name, to borrow from Douglas A. Blackmon's title. The mother's narrative can speak not just blood, but that "*soul*" that Roxana sees in Tom and that neither Jeffersonian blood math nor Wilson's science can recognize (*Wilson* 9). Neither ledgers nor spirometry provide a third way out of the binary of sovereignty or enslavement, Hegel's old dialectic of master or slave that captivated those who counted as the great minds of the nineteenth century. And at least in one famous case, it appears that the oral history, the impossible truth of blood, triumphed over the father-enslaver's narrative, namely Sally Hemings' own story, whose truth is now accepted by more historians than ever as Ann duCille points out (449).[167]

However, as Homi K. Bhabha points out, the ideas of German nationalism found their way to English—and, by extension, U.S. audiences not just through Hegel, but largely through Johann Gottlieb Fichte, whose work expresses more than resolves the fundamental division of the nation and the state, the people and the political entity ("Unpacking" 11). Here the circle of my study closes, for the implications of Twain's and Hopkins' impossible mothers in their demi-world turn out not to be mere metaphors for race, but the obvious truth of the nation-state, brought to its most perverse and clearest self-expression in the haunted house. I began with a haunted house that served to buttress the national imaginary.. I we end with haunted houses that stand in the space between a

167 We can take it as a grain of salt that this triumph exists only because DNA testing holds sway today—another blood technology the social and cultural implications of which are still not entirely clear. Also, as duCille continues, the question arises why literary scholarship itself has proven unable to incorporate especially *Clotel*, that most playful of novels that speaks truths and half-truths throughout, that engages various audiences, and that as much as Hopkins or Twain knows of the ways that truths about blood are passed down beyond the master's hearing, like the songs Sam sings after his enslaver dies (453). Brown's serious engagement with the U.S. as a nation arisen from slavery and still tied to it long after Emancipation speaks to questions of authenticity and performance, to the real self and the real blood and the enslaver's account as much as Hopkins and Twain.

people and the nation state.

Bhabha explains that Fichtean nationalism claims to be natural in the modality of the Father, but is, in fact, only representation, indirectly perceived through signs that indicate the Father's absence (11). The mother, "marked by the shadow of the father," is immanent, materially present, alive (11). The haunted house and the mother's impossible blood are real, not the father-enslaver's blood math. Finding a way past the impossibility remains the great triumph of enslaved individuals. Their failure to enact this possibility is due to the blood of the nation, not the blood of the self.

Conclusion: Blood of One Nation

Hawthorne and Reizenstein, Dickinson, Whitman, Brown, Dixon, Cartwright, Twain and Hopkins—the authors I chose in this study struggle to come to terms with social and political changes by reinterpreting what "blood" means. "Blood of a Nation" began with the question of whose blood became important to authors trying to imagine the nation, and proceeded through the resulting questions. Which new ways of understanding blood appeared? How did medicalized notions of blood circulate across different texts? Did they contribute to overcoming the crisis of the Civil War? How did new meanings of blood and race relate to the practice and theory of medicine? What role did blood play in the relation between medical practice and race? How did the question of whose blood we look at change after Emancipation? How did scientific racism and the legacy of enslavement change the way authors wrote about blood toward the close of the century?

I want to reflect on my findings in light of one last question. Drawing on the authors in this study, was the rise of human subjugation based on blood inevitable? This is, of course, a far broader question than I can answer here, but I want to trace my study's key arguments and tie them together to explain why I think it was.

First of all, it might seem surprising that the Romantic notion of the nation is incapable of truly overcoming inherited divisions based on blood. Instead of integrating and harmonizing its population into one people of one nation, it generated new divides, not least along racialized and gendered blood. Many of the revolutionaries of 1848 dreamt of a union of individual, community, and nation state, not new struggles between

groups, the nation state and groups, and nation states.[168]

As I established in chapter one, the U.S. did not abolish aristocratic blood as much as it supplemented it with new associations. Supplementation nevertheless required differentiation, an effort to distinguish the new from the old. Even with his narrow focus on the white middle class, Nathaniel Hawthorne had to go to some lengths in order to make the bonds between nation and sovereign transparent enough so that they seem invisible. As he wrote in *The House of the Seven Gables*, the Pyncheon property retained its title by way of drawing a line and marking it out by custom "so immemorial, that it looks like nature" (19). The nation state's boundaries were meant to be natural, but Hawthorne points out that they must at least *look* natural, especially when they are not.

If a national imaginary can misremember the blood shed by the nation state and blame all past bloodshed on the sovereign's blade, then the nation is free to expand in the name of the people. This way, territory is no longer an imperial claim, but part of a natural development, a healthy, growing organism. Like a red line, the nation's bloody frontier advances horizontally, across the continent and beyond, leaving behind stories and pictures that only cover up, but never get rid of the king's bloody sword or aristocracy's vertical descent. Unless, that is, the nation itself erupts into a vast field of blood. The Civil War blood challenged this proposed reading of history as progressive and the nation as free from blood. The dissonance between bloodshed and nation state, bleeding bodies and the absence of the sovereign defied the naturalization of "immemorialized" blood.

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168 It is a commonplace to point to the absence of unified leadership to answer why the 1848 revolutions failed, as Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Dieter Langewiesche remark (2-15).

In chapter two I explained that Emily Dickinson's poem "The name – of it – is 'Autumn'" does not resolve this tension so much as it insists that the tension cannot be resolved by giving new words to the red bodily fluid on the battlefields. Be it a nature poem or an anatomy textbook, there is no answer to the horror of seeing blood that words could find—"it" remained elusive ("'Autumn'"). Neither Romantic trope nor medical vocabulary adequately addressed the affective disruption Dickinson indicates.

Attempts to erase blood that will not conform or be silent therefore make up a good share of this study. Blood will come out in the haunted house in spite of the editor's pen, the patriarch's laws, the enslaver's lists and tables, and the textbook's lessons that direct the memory away from the messy legacy of nation state and sovereignty. This blood Dickinson emphasizes against Hawthorne's glossed history and the textbook.

Taxonomy is only another way to straighten out the nation state's account, to disappear the blood into daguerreotypes and into Walt Whitman's "bloodless electrotype plates of History," to find a way to finally absorb that archaic quality of the nation (*Memoranda* 65). In chapter three I argued that Whitman insists that the absorptive process of medicine can acknowledge the mute reality of liquid blood without rendering it invisible, but also allow the nation to move past the bloodshed, to healing and a memory of the real blood shed in the War. The Civil War was a national tragedy on an unprecedented level, also because the national imaginary of a civilized, liberal-progressive, and hygienic nation seemed to collapse into its own atavistic archaisms. In the War returned the temporality this narrative disavows with gestures to the magistrate's sword long buried and forgotten, prioritizing the naturalness of the citizen's body and its blood.

As is clear in *The Youth's Companion* publication of Dickinson's poem, the editors' pens used taxonomy in support of this account, to make blood itself bloodless. Schooling and disciplining citizens in hygiene made possible the naturalization of social identities and of the nation state itself. In the end, even Whitman's *Aufhebung* did not absorb as he had hoped. His printed poems may have acknowledge the visceral shock that blood is in full, but "bloodless," nationalist History "immemorialized" the horror. As I explained in chapter three, Whitman looked back and saw the spaces of the Old Patent Building exist in a spectral doubling. His unease at the uncanny overlap of past and present echoes the parallel I explored in chapter one, between Freud's metaphor of Rome of the unconscious psyche and Reizenstein's New Orleans, with its spectral history that is always present, the rivers of blood barely covered by dust (*Memoranda* 44; Freud, *Unbehagen* 13-4; Reizenstein, *Geheimnisse* 90).

As Hawthorne knows, only the "conscientious nostrils" of those affected will pick up the smell of grass and blood, these boundaries drawn by swords as well as by the editor's pen (*House* 18). I assert that the bloody lines between the nation state and the nation's people mark historical eternity in an eternal return of History. Yet these bloody boundaries of the nation were always there, lingering in the background, tabulated and inscribed in maps and ledgers, documents and letters that made blood the anti-memorial center of the nation. Whenever texts drew boundaries in blood, they had to wipe away, abstract, and erase from the books the blood of those who suffered, whose stories nevertheless returned, and who nevertheless spoke the truth of blood.

When Hawthorne drew up his imaginary deeds and maps, he tried to transpose not just territory into the nation state, but also tried to inscribe gendered reproduction and the

parental family tree into the blood of families who came and went with the ebb and flow of the nation's bloody tides. But of course the cold calculations of Jefferson's blood math I explore in chapter six never missed an entry. They never allowed for anonymity or equality, nor allowed familial love. Reizenstein's call for a working-through of the factual bloodshed in the nation rings true as a way to restore the names to the numbers in Jefferson's account. Secret dens must open and the *Geheimnis* become obsolete in the knowledge of the nation as historically bound to blood and bounded by blood—the truth of blood.

This truth of blood speaks to a contingent, dynastic, pre-democratic, and vertical structure at the heart of the nation state. That is why Dixon's Klansmen and Cartwright's theories must insist and amplify occult opacity of blood in their dens and on the medical plantation. The more mysterious and less transparent, less true blood is, the more easily authors can justify injustice by exploiting blood. Dixon's uncanny nation in the fullest expression ingests black blood in a violent, vampiric effort to erase the other through incorporation—the dark, occult double of Whitman's absorption. Cartwright's theory declares that blood has always been thus and will always be so.

In the nation state, the moment of greatest mysterious oneness is the moment when the nation falls apart into two kinds of blood in the face of the occult, the blood of the nation and all blood that is not of the nation, a moment of great instability and incoherence. In his reflections on "Unpacking My Library," Homi K. Bhabha pondered nationalist anxieties about the "question of return, of the posteriority of the nation itself," that is, the incoherence of the claim of nationalism as natural and true, and as yet historically contingent, bound to specific factors, and not natural at all (12).

To Bhabha, it is as though

> the *Aufhebung* that sublates the nation's anteriority—its dynastic predemocratic verticality—and that raises the national idea to the level of historicity, does not merely return as the repressed, but turns demonically from *Aufhebung* into an archaic, articulatory temporality of the nation's enunciation and performativity, its everyday enactment. (12)

Of course the incorporation of the preceding political order, sovereign power, in the nation state will lead to aristocratic artifacts like the Pyncheons. They are part of the nation and its history, remnants of an overcome order. But Bhabha points out that sovereign power goes beyond that and in recurring moments casts doubt on the idea of the nation itself as an artifice, a performed structure. That is why Hawthorne's Romance can construct a legacy of settled accounts, benevolent ghosts, and a history of free white laborers who build houses on contractually transferred land. The in two senses "masterful" antebellum narrator claims near-omniscience and uses it to fashion a half-true Romance even as it decries these very powers.

Yet the textbook and the immemorialization lesson learned, or, as Bhabha calls it, "the nation's pedagogical claim to a naturalistic beginning with the unchosen things of territory, gender and parentage—*amor patriae*" do not suffice, collapse in outbursts of atavistic violence (12). This violence temporarily displaces, according to Bhabha, the supposed natural unison, and grips on to "the 'chosen' fixated objects of a projective paranoia that reveal, through their alien 'outsiderness,' the fragile, indeterminate boundaries of the national imaginary of the 'People-As-One'"—and, we might add, their blood (12). So we see that anti-memorial blood marks the boundaries of the national imaginary, and that physical blood marks their rupture. The nation is in fact framed by the love of the nation-people and a hatred for "the marginalized or peripheralized non-

people" who threateningly indicate that the nation itself is posterior, a product, something that came into being at someone else's cost (12).

I argue that this truth of bloodshed to make the nation state must remain hidden from sight because national imaginaries can offer a fix for the division between the nation state and individuals inside it only by rendering blood occult. Making blood into an opaque mystery was the only way to see blood as compatible with the nation state. Only by making blood be both liquid and abstract could eruptions of violence against enslaved persons, against foreigners, immigrants, Native Americans, and against fellow citizens also become natural like the nation and no longer signal a fall back into the sovereign "society of blood" (Foucault, *History* 147). Jefferson's blood math polices the boundaries of the nation state just like Hawthorne's maps and Dixon's supernatural Klansmen.

While the specific form of chattel slavery was a consequence of material forces, I see a perpetual subjugation of selected groups as inevitable in this logic. It was only by way of this bargain could Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence* stand without bespeaking the obvious non-coincidence of the nation state and the people. Only occult blood, that metaphorical "talisman," kept at bay the difference between individual blood and the metaphorical blood of the nation (Roach, *Cities* 193). This blood turns out to be anything but natural, anything but "unchosen," and therefore we should with Brown remain suspicious of any attempt at blood *poiesis*, the construction and fetishization of blood in the name of the "People-As-One" (Bhabha 12). To make the nation, Jefferson had to calculate exactly who and what is part of the nation, the census of the nation's blood, drawing a boundary around a permanently othered, abject blood.

Writing about blood means facing that blood itself is a flaunted cliché. The only

way to avoid this is never to write about blood ahistorically. What does it mean for a national narrative focused on blood to construct a holism, a singular, unified blood? Alternatively, what happens to the national ethos when we move texts by non-dominant groups to the fore, by women, ethnic minorities, racial others, or by socio-politically queer bodies? Does our understanding of the national imaginary change when we focus not on wholeness but on factions, on multiplicity, disjuncture, and the components of the whole, rather than the whole as communicated through a nationalist ethos and—I would argue—its aesthetics of control?

Like a red wave, blood washes up on each generation's cultural assumptions and social structures. The story of blood obviously does not end in 1900. In many ways, the laboratory revolution in medicine at the turn of the century only exacerbated occult readings of blood instead of demystifying it. Reading for blood helps us understand that the lab itself may be a kind of haunted house, a space where a truth about blood can be spoken, a truth that violates predominant tenets about the blood of the nation, the idea of blood as associated with and cited in support of hegemonic power. Wave after wave crashes down and with each wave blood gathers new associations and loses other ones. In 1900, when Karl Landsteiner discovered the human blood types, he found healthy human blood serum "not only acts agglutinating on animal blood cells but frequently also on human ones that stem from other individuals" ("Kenntnis" 361 n. 1). The lab and the haunted house exist across an ocean but at the same time, but the hematologist exists at the same moment as the polygenists.

At the risk of sounding cliché, the story of blood will obviously never be over. Beyond the texts I frequently cite, this study always relates to other classic studies of

blood in the background here, though they bear less directly on the texts at hand. Still, I should mention *The Curse* (1977); that central text on menstruation by Janice Delaney Mary Jane Lupton and Emily Toth, Douglas Starr's *Blood* (1998); which first breached the topic of blood and commerce, Uli Linke's study of Nazism and blood ideology *Blood of a Nation* (1999), Holly Tucker's exploration of seventeenth-century transfusion experiments *Blood Work* (2011), *Blood and Belief* (2007) a theological-political history of blood by David Biale, the personal account and history of blood by Bill Hayes called *Five Quarts* (2005), and *Thicker than Water* (2005), a masterful anthropological summary of all things blood and ritual by Melissa Meyer.

This study of blood provides a flexible and mobile lens through which to read the nation, across time, place, and other conceptual boundaries both synchronically and diachronically and facilitates relations between different theories and methods. Our understanding of the nation is a matter of physiology, psychology, and of cultural and personal interactions as much as of political and social processes. Our bodies function by way of blood, and blood is present in engorgement and blushing.

On the most basic, almost pre-conscious level individuals encounter blood with an affective response, with surprise and shock and a visceral reaction to sight, smell, touch, and taste. But associations with blood also feed on our memories of personal interactions, stories about blood, on ritual and religion, on education and dogma. Technologies to shed blood and to manipulate it, to access it and to contain it in the body constantly evolve. To study blood means to be at home in medical humanities as well as literature, in political science, as well as in psychoanalysis, without ever claiming completion or mastery, but to operate under hypothetical connections that uncover fissures and contradictions, and open

new directions of inquiry.

Because blood is always literally and metaphorically fluid and slippery, transgressive, and instable it gives a fresh look on the old text and invites connections with the new in all these texts. With each decade, new challenges meet old fears and ways of conceiving of blood: blood transfusion, blood quantum laws, eugenics, Tuskeegee, Hepatitis C contamination during the Korean War, HIV/AIDS, menstrual hygiene, the transfusion rules of Jehova's Witnesses, blood type diets, globalization of industrialized tissue economies.

Blood is uncontrollable, its meaning beyond individual attempts at redefinition. The attempts to define it nevertheless lead to remarkable, sometimes long-lasting shifts in what societies think blood means, like those between Galen and William Harvey, Bram Stoker and Anne Rice, Caravaggio and Hermann Nitsch, Karl Landsteiner and Ryoichi Naito, William Shakespeare and Tony Kushner, Benjamin Rush and Michele Ferrari—names and stories about what blood, is, and can be.[169]

This conversation lies at the heart of my study and exceeds it by far. It is clear that the exchange between different disciplines, sub-fields, methods, and archives around blood indicates how one topic that bridges periods, regions, genres, authors, and theories. Without forgetting about the usefulness of these categories in beginning research, we can less narrowly conceive of genre, period, and author. A study of blood necessarily makes for strange bedfellows because it must draw on a wide array of historical sources, works of art, studies in the social sciences, religious studies, and medicine. Though narrowly

169 Galen, William Harvey Bram Stoker, Anne Rice, Caravaggio, Hermann Nitsch, Karl Landsteiner, Ryoichi Naito, William Shakespeare, Tony Kushner, Benjamin Rush, Michele Ferrari.

focused in period and national focus, this study should indicate the many conversations the study of blood sets in motion.

By moving blood to the center of my work, I have to consider religious studies as well as the history of medicine, psychoanalysis, as well as nursing practices in hospitals, political theory as well as poetics. The result is a fascinating, ever-expanding network of new connections and insights. The blood of a nation is the blood of each body and the relation between this body and the blood around them, from nosebleed to nationalist chauvinism. Warding off orientalist fantasies of mastership, the deep study of blood can fruitfully intervene in existing scholarship and produce new fields of inquiry while always conscious of its inexhaustibility.

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