UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

How Do We Know What Freedom Is?: South-South Cooperation, Chinese-Angolan Relations and the Grammar of Antiblackness

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Global Studies

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September 2022

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September 2022

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ABSTRACT

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Through a close reading of Vijay Prashad's (2007) T*he Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* and Yousuf Al-Bulushi's (2020) intellectual geography of Cedric J. Robinson's (1987) work, with particular attention given to *Black Marxism; The Making of the Black Radical Tradition,* this thesis attempts to reconcile their conjectures with those theories that posit an antiblack field of representation, I aim to make clear the ways in which the *universal* that is constructed at the expense of the *particular* is a bonafide marker of none other than antiblackness and it derivatives. More specifically, this thesis works to evince how this constructed *universal* (that is, antiblackness) neatly and unproblematically makes cogent the very concepts of both North-South Cooperation and its supposed divergent South-South Cooperation. Though the scope of this thesis is narrowed to considerations of international relations –in particular those Sino-Angolan relations– I understand the core of my analytical conjectures on the field of modern representation and on the persistence of antiblackness to have wide salience across the entire host of disciplines engaged in questions of hierarchy, oppression, and liberation.

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Introduction

Consider the 'Rise of the West.' A peculiar string of historical associations that reach as far back as the Roman Empire to draw a through line between hegemonic epochs such as Pax-Britannica, the Cold War period (defined by its competing First and Second Worlds), and the advent of US global hegemony to serve as an explanation (justification) for the shape of modern geopolitical hierarchy. Works such as Scottish historian, Niall Ferguson's *Civilization: The West and The Rest* where he delineates the "...six killer applications… that allowed the minority of mankind originating on the western edge of Eurasia to dominate the world for the better part of 500 years."[1] make clear that this historical narrative is wholly defined by a concentration of western authority. Assumptions of, if not explicitly US primacy, then general Western hegemony have been axiomatic to dominant understandings of international relations since its inception. Despite this now nearly 500-year tradition, even Ferguson's romanticized retelling of Western primacy admits a shift in the geopolitical waters. Though Ferguson's framework only goes as far as to posit that the non-Western co-optation of these 'killer applications' has marked the decline of Western predominance,[2] other scholars are going as far as to echo announcements of the 'Rise of the Rest.'[3] Though not an exactly precise term, 'The Rest', tends to map closely with other similarly nebulous terms such as the 'developing world', the 'Third World', and the 'global south' that commonly refer to the non-western and/or formally colonized places of the globe. This 'rise' is most evidently observed in the growing dialogue around the proliferating agreements amongst global south nations. Identified by geopoliticians and economists as South-South

[1] Ferguson (2011) pg. 12— (1) Competition, (2) Science, (3) Property Rights, (4) Medicine, (5) The Consumer Society, (6) The Work Ethic
[2] ibid pg. 297
[3] Sultan (2016) pg. 75

Cooperation (SSC), many are tracking the rapid uptick since the 2000's[4] in the presence and salience of cooperative initiatives happening in the 'global south'. Identified by international aid and development organizations as a potent catalyst for new trading alliances and innovative economic development strategies for 'emerging nations,' SSC as a concept has even been assigned a day of recognition (September 12) by the UN– South-South Cooperation Day.[5] Surely there are many emerging alliances that have been featured in the dialogue, not least of which are amalgamations such as MIIST (Mexico, Indonesia, India, South Korea, Turkey), MENA (Middle East and North Africa), and LAC (Latin America and the Caribbean). However, none are quite comparable to the waves caused by BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) understood as "...a quintessential example of SSC at its finest…"[6] and representing some of the world's largest and fastest growing economies. The cumulative economic power and regional influence of the BRICS alliance has caused powerful political and economic leaders to announce a pivotal geopolitical shift away from the developed 'West' and towards the proverbial 'Rest.'[7] Though this is not to say that 'the Rest' are rising uniformly. Indeed China and its well documented 'Rise' (Foreign Affairs, 2002; Ross et al., 2008; Pumphrey et al., 2002; Pan et al., 2022; Ross et al., 2017) has been a linchpin in the increased profile of SSC. In tandem with being the economic and organizational backbone of BRICS– one of the largest iterations of SSC[8]– China's proliferation of its global bilateral agreements– and thus its global influence– since the early 2000s have caused many scholars to question China's appellation as a 'developing nation' or

[4] Besada, et al. (2019) pg. 1
[5] ibid
[6] ibid pg. 10
[7] Ibid pg. 58-- where they cite Goldman Sachs (2003) & Jim O'Neill (2001)
[8] Sultan (2016) pg. 75

a ‘country of the South.’[9] Despite their fraught inchoence when applied to China, these terms tend to be most consistently and unambiguously applied to the continent of Africa using metrics such as lack of administrative infrastructure(Alden & Alves, 2015; Carmody 2011), uneven capital accumulation (Bond & Ruiters 2017; Konijn et al. 2015), and/or political accountability (Kibble, 2006; Corkin, 2013) to explain the continent's seemingly perpetual state of relative obscurity and suppression. However, the increasing echoes of a turning geopolitical tide facilitated by Chinese hegemony have even forecasted Africa to shake its traditional type-cast on the global stage as economists contribute to the rumors of ‘Africa’s Rise.’[10] China’s undeniably distended portfolio with many African nations has drawn significant geopolitical attention for many reasons. Not least of which is China’s strategic wielding of its ill-fitting ‘developing nation’ status in order to distance itself from and outseat many of Africa’s more traditional Western trading partners that are consistently haunted by colonial legacies. Since as early as 2014 Chinese forigen direct investment (FDI) has exceeded that of the US on the African continent and has come packaged with Chinese rhetorical emphasis on ‘mutual benefit’ and ‘win-win’ solutions.[11] China’s insistence on the similarities between many African nations and China have made it possible for China, and spectating political-economists, to cast the large-scale purchase of African resources in exchange for large-scale infrastructure projects (aka infrastructure-for-resources) as merely a “... timely convergence of interests…”[12] Understood as the intersection between China’s accumulated wealth, booming construction industry, and lack of natural commodities on one

[9] Besada et al. (2019) pg. 161
[10] See "Africa rising; The hopeful continent." *The Economist* (2011) and Alves (2013) pg. 217
[11] See “DATA: CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AFRICA ,” China Africa Research Initiative (China Africa Research Initiative, 2022), http://www.sais-cari.org/chinese-investment-in-africa
[12] Alves (2013) pg. 207

hand and Africa's wealth of natural resources and lack of capital and infrastructure on the other, Sino-African relations represent a powerful node of the transformative qualities of SSC.[13] Through these resources-for-infrastructure loans– which we will return to– Sino-African relations have delivered considerable results in affecting the lacuna of 'hard infrastructure' across the continent. Erecting everything from roads, railroads, ports, airports, power grids and refineries that promise an 'unlocking' of Africa's wealth and reduction of its poverty, Sino-African relations cast light on the horizon for African development.[14] Moreover, China's championing of SSC has provided a much needed alternative development pathway for African nations. One of the most notable cases— and one that proves central to this thesis— is the case of Sino-Angolan relations. In the early 2000's on the heels of years of contiguous colonial, proxy, and civil war, Angola turned first to traditional western developed donners in an attempt to fundraise the necessary finances to kickstart its reconstruction. Any potential yields for Angola following this path came laced with daunting conditionalities that abided by International Monetary Fund (IMF) rules.[15] Between 2003 and 2007 China set the conditions to release Angola of these fetters and extended approximately $4.5 billion in oil backed loans for infrastructure projects listed in the country's public works budget that allowed Angola to kick-off national reconstruction. Within a decade significant headway had been made concerning the rehabilitation of Angola's roads, railroads, sanitation, housing and water and electricity supply lines.[16] Geopolitical shifts such as the case with China-Angola contextualized with both China's expanding global bilateral imprint and its contribution to forces such as BRICS are pushing

[13] Ibid pg. 214
[14] Ibid
[15] Ibid pg. 218
[16] Ibid

the bounds of what traditional international relations can tell us about the contemporary world. This is corroborated with proliferating scholarship making attempts to describe the 'new world order.'(Kupchan, 2012; Lagerkvist, 2015; Hosli, Madeleine & Joren, 2020). Consulting the promises of SSC and its principals, some scholars identify the potential for 'decisiveness' around peace building mechanisms as a defining quality of this 'new world order.'[17] Fixated on the potential for these new collaborations amongst the global south nations to serve as a site where "... the principles of justice and fair play…" [18] are central, these scholars envision this 'new world order' as a gateway to a more peaceful globe. Though these visions are romantic to say the least, scholarship has not failed to recognize the ways in which this has not yet been made manifest and many scholars have asserted their perception of the hindrances. With respect to the demonstrative case of Sino-African relations, the dialogue consistently highlights structural pitfalls in both the furnishing and reception of these innovative resources-for infrastructure loans that are central to much of the contemporary context of engagement. On one end scholars highlight the mechanics of the loans themselves as opportunistic/extractive (Burgos et al., 2012; Ofosu et al., 2021) or asymmetrical and in too great a benefit to China (Bbaala, 2015) as preventive factors to the peace of a 'new world order'. These observations often warn of things such as 'resource grabbing' in which China is able to extract its acquisition goals from African economies without leaving much behind for local growth in African economies. One such example brings attention back to the Chinese loans that supported Angola's national reconstruction which stipulated that Chinese companies had to account for 70% of the construction tender.[19]

[17] Sultan (2016) pg. 80
[18] Ibid
[19] Bbaala (2015) pg. 109

Such a dynamic in which Angolan labor is subordinated to Chinese influence simply does not spark the development necessary to create either technical jobs for local Angolan workers nor does it provide equitable benefit for local Angolan construction companies. On the other end African governments and a pattern of bad faith relations with the public are underscored as the culprit. Angola's former president– and second longest serving president in Africa– and his regular appearance at the top of lists denoting the 'world's most corrupt leaders' is an apt example of the type of conditionalities that are considered hindrances to the realization of a 'new world order.'[20] Elsewhere in the dialogue some scholars point to the persisting presence of the formidable traditional powers represented in international corporations such as the G7, NATO, the IMF, and the World Bank (Alves, 2013; Agarwal et al., 2019) and how it can undercut the effectiveness of SSC on the continent. Such is evident considering that The DRC experienced significant project delays in 2009 due to pressure from traditional donors to— in fear of changes to the DRC economy– renegotiate and downsize the size of the loan the DRC government had brokered from China.[21]

The propensity for SSC to lead to a 'new world order' and the shape of such a new world can be further contextualized in Cheru's (2016) analysis of SSC dialogue. Cheru's (2016) work identifies four broad orientations that serve as a useful guide in mapping the character of SSC dialogue. Namely, the "alarmists; the skeptics; the critics of 'new imperialism' and the 'cheerleaders.'"[22] The alarmist orientation is engendered by a realist school of thought that describes the rise of Southern actors– particularly China– as one of the greatest national security threats to the US and its allies. The skeptics as described by Cheru

[20] Cardoso (2015) pg. 2
[21] Alves (2013) pg. 215
[22] Cheru (2016)

are those actors invested in the global aid architecture that find their interests undercut by SSC's tendency to forgo the many conditionalities of traditional aid structures. The 'cheerleaders' then are descriptive of those that such as Cheru themself as well as McMillan et al. (2019) that consider these South-South patterns of connection as an opportunity for Africa to "chart an independent development path without the strong-arm tactics of Western aid agencies and creditor institutions."[23] Lastly, Cheru delineates those privy to a 'new imperialism.' This orientation speaks to those— such as Carmody (2011) or Kibble (2006)--- that are aware of the prevalence of resource extraction in Africa over, and often at the expense of, their democracies. This camp rejects both the old traditional forms of aid and development and critiques the new waves of SSC as often participating in a manner that reinforces conventional varieties of development.[24] In short, 'more of the same'. My analysis however contends that none of these orientations demonstrate an earnest centering of theories of antiblackness.

In context of the presented dialogue this thesis posits that the romantic vision of a 'new world order' structured around peace and equality that by an uninhibited 'Rise of the Rest' by way of South-South cooperation suggests, is not fundamentally impeded by any of the above factors. Rather, this thesis aims to make clear that such factors are merely symptoms of the latent forces of antiblackness embedded in the very principles of SSC. To be precise, I suggest that SSC– and all that it suggests– cast antiblack hierarchy and conflict as inevitable, even as it simultaneously denounces them. The roots of this antiblackness that I argue comes to define SSC are shared with its predecessor, North South Cooperation (NSC)

[23] ibid
[24] Besada et al (2019) pg. 6

that has set the stage of global hierarchy and it is there that we can begin to grasp this dynamic.

North-South Cooperation

North South Cooperation has been the subject of a wide range of scholarly debates since its analytical conception in the Post-WWII period. Up until the 1970's NSC was principally designed as an economic development framework rooted in Modernization and Development Theory. Heavily concerned with manifesting Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth,[25] which emphasizes the development of trade and public infrastructure as a way to bring about economic and technological modernization, North South Cooperation principally sought to examine how poverty alleviation might be achieved through metrics of imperial state intervention and neoliberal financing. Modernization theory, most fundamentally encapsulated by American sociologist and political scientist Martin Seymour Lipset's famous 1959 quote, is formed essentially around the idea that "The more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy." [26] Essentially rendering democracy a dependent variable of the production of the economy, Modernization theory positioned North-South relations to be at its base a tool of economic adjustment. Debates amongst political and economic scholars on the grounds of Modernization theory were essentially around the nuances about how and to what degree economic markers– most commonly GDP– and democracy were able to co-facilitate one another. While some scholars such as Benhabib et al. (2013) posit a direct causal relationship between levels democratic practices

[25]Referencing Rostow (1959): "the traditional society; the preconditions for take-off; the take-off; the drive to maturity; the age of high mass consumption. Beyond the age of high mass consumption lie the problems which are beginning to arise in a few societies, and which may arise generally when diminishing relative marginal utility sets in for real income itself."
[26] Lipset (1959) pg. 75

and GDP per capita, others such as Balaev (2015) argue that it's necessary to delay measures of democracy in order to observe the effects of GDP. Both operate with the understanding that economic growth through some mechanism would produce democratic values and institutions which would then lead to equality.

Such ideas of North-South Cooperation were later critiqued by dependency school theorists such as Paul Braun (1957), S. Bodenheimer (1970), Ivan Roxborough (1979), and Dos Santos (1970). Centering instead on the inherently unequal design of the global economic system, such theorists argued that the global 'cores' (the most developed nations) interests and self-perpetuation necessitated global 'peripheries' (those less developed nations) that capitulate to the latter's policies and priorities. Specifically Ghosh (2019) cites Dos Santos (1970) to define 'dependency' as arising because "....some countries can expand through self-impulsion while' others, being in a dependent position, can only expand as a reflection of the dominant countries, which may have positive or negative effects on their immediate development..."[27] Differing from Modernization theory insofar as its focus on relative dependency between nations, rather than simply the structure of their economies, Dependency theory retained its fixation with the use of economic indicators to track patterns of development. Thinkers in the 1970's began to recognize that this privileged emphasis on economic makers was to the detriment of makers tracking social welfare. In response, the 1970s saw a greater amount of attention from policy makers given to social indicators of development such as education and health. This shift is observable in the 8 objectives outlined in the UN Millennium Development Goals set in 2000.[28] Such changes brought on

[27] Ghosh (2019) pg. 2

[28] 1.) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2.) Achieve universal primary education; 3.) Promote gender equality and empower women; 4.)Reduce child mortality; 5.) Improve maternal health; 6.) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7.) Ensure environmental sustainability; and 8.) Develop a global partnership for

new waves of mainstream criticism that castigated the shift away from purely economic to purely social indicators as a cause for Africa's underdevelopment. Economist such as Robert Calderisi (2006)[29] assert that the focus on social indicators rather than on things like job creation constitute in large why the continent has failed to take up a larger part in the global economy.

This push and pull between an emphasis on social indicators on one hand and economic indicators on the other are definitive of the debate that gives shape to NSC (and later SSC) frameworks. The balance instigated between these two factors are iterative of Chaturvedi et.al (2012) description of "... the balance of self-interest and humanitarian concerns..." that is implied in any given nation's justification for development cooperation. What is definitive of the balance maintained by NSC due to being "... burdened by a history of direct or complicite involvement in colonialism, imperialism and the slave trade…"[30] is its focus on human rights and governance measures.[31] It is vital to note that the first of these tools of engagement, human rights, has been well engaged with by postcolonial scholars such as (Barreto, 2014; Grahn-Farley, 2008; Mutua, 2001) that understand the legacy and practice of human rights to be highly Eurocentric. For this reason aid and trade in NSC tends to resemble a 'stick and carrot' relationship where the language of human rights (and its violations) come to be the medium through which foriegn investment (the carrot) is conditioned on the abidance by western standards on the pain of things like sanctions and embargoes (the stick). The second of these tools— governance measures— are notoriously

development. (from "Millennium Development Goals." UNDP. Accessed June 5, 2022. https://www.pa.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sdgoverview/mdg_goals)

[29] Calderisi (2014) pg. 230

[30] Chaturvedi et al. (2012) pg. 254

[31] Besada et al (2019) pg. 9

elucidated by the legacies of the Western dominated Bretton Woods Institutions (BWI) namely, the IMF and the World Bank. Legal scholar Antony Anghie aptly captures the roots of this Western-centric dynamic in their work, *Imperialism, Sovereignty, and the Making of International Law* (2012). In their framework the BWIs can be understood to be taking up the torch lit in the Interwar period with the formation of the League of Nations's Mandate System. Designed to move away from the 19th century colonial models, the Mandate System sought to dismantle the European Empires that had by that point covered most of the globe. Specifically Antony Anghie writes:

> Whereas the positivist international law of the nineteenth century endorsed the conquest and exploitation of non-European peoples, the Mandate System, by contrast, sought to ensure their protection. Whereas positivism sought to exclude nonEuropean peoples from the family of nations, the Mandate System was created to achieve precisely the reverse: it attempted to do nothing less than to promote self-government and, in certain cases, to integrate previously colonized and dependent peoples into the international system as sovereign, independent nation-states.[32]

Carrying on this mission of ushering the world's former colonies into the international system as *"sovereign, independent, nation states,"* the BWIs have coerced dependent nations into undergoing 'Structural Adjustment Programs' (SAP) also known as 'austerity measures'. SAPs are the ultimatum given to dependent states requiring financial assistance and commonly consist of a duction in public welfare spending, liberalization of the economy, privatization and devaluation. Often justified with platitudes of 'increased efficiency' and 'expanded growth potential' these programs have systematically engendered deeper dependencies as health services and social welfare are cut in tandem with increased food and fuel prices. For many nations in Africa these measures not only have pushed them further in debt, but also in the aftermath have left them with an economy oriented highly towards

[32] Anghie (2005) pg. 116

forigen debt payments rather than towards the needs of basic domestic survival. [33] Central to goals of this thesis– as it was for Antony's (2012) work– is to draw the link between how the concepts of 'sovereignty', 'independence', and 'nation state' can be reconciled with the seemingly counterintuitive actions of the BWI's. Furthermore, this work aims to elucidate what the consequences of such an analysis would mean for NSC and its cognate SSC.

South-South Cooperation

In an effort to find alternative models for international development that might be distinct from imperial forms, scholars have argued that the BRICS coalition represents a response to, and rejection of the NSC model. BRICS grows out of a legacy of coalitions that formed in the wake of African and Asian anti-colonial and anti-imperialist movements. Gatherings such as the 1955 African and Asian Conference in Bandung and the formation of the Non-aligned movement in the 1960s laid the groundwork for the advent of SSC. As such BRICS as an institution positions itself as the more inclusive and– critically– the sovereign-respecting alternative to the Western dominated global system of accumulation and power. Dismily underrepresented in the BWI institutions of NSC (China and India having only 3 percent each in voting power in the IMF to the US's 17 percent), the BRICS nations are strengthening iterations of South-South Cooperation.

The Global South, more a descriptor of economic condition rather than geography, is loosely defined by those nations labeled 'developing' or' middle income' largely concentrated in the southern hemisphere. SSC is defined simply as cooperation between nations positioned in the Global South on principally, but not solely, trade and socio-economic agreements. Unlike

[33] Ibid pg. 260

NSC that grows from a status of colonial precedent, SSC, according scholars such as Besada,et al. (2019), tends to be less encumbered with the task of posturing around angles of altruism and larges to combat the now distasteful colonial legacy. Instead the "balance of self-interest and humanitarian concerns" that Chaturvedi et.al (2012) mentions for SSC and BRICS institutions is one that emphasizes sovereignty and mutual benefit. This is corroborated by scholars such as Carmody (2013) and Barma et. al (2007) that has iterated that what is 'new' about SSC and its branding is its focus on "... respect for sovereignty, non-interference in domestic affairs, rejection of tied aid, and an emphasis on technical cooperation…"[34] Despite these seeming laudable objectives that define SSC, realist scholars such as Armijo (2007) understand this rising 'World without the West'-- defined both by it's rapid deepening of interconnectivity within the developing world as well as by its 'inviolable sovereignty'-- as indicative of a rejection of "...liberal internationalism and particularly any notion of global civil society or public opinion justifying political or military intervention in the affairs of state."[35] Ironically then SSC— despite its legacy of anti-colonial and anti-imperial orientations– is clear in its emphasis of mutual non-interference that for some suggests a suppression of dissenting public opinion sanctioned by the tenants of SSC. This paradox that seems to render SSC as either an embodiment of resistance coming from the world's oppressed 'Rest' on one hand, and a hypocritical gateway to authoritarian capital production led by nations like China on the other, is a vital clashing of expectations that this thesis will elucidate.[36]

[34] Carmody (2013) pg. 10
[35] Armijo (2007) pg. 27
[36] ibid pg. 28

Important to note is that the contemporary shape and principles of SSC is highly animated by Chinese models of international relations. China's influence is reflected in it not only being one of— if not the— leading nations amongst BRICS, but also in that its financial institutions fund a huge portion of SSC. Between the China Development Bank and the China Export-Import Bank, Chinese international financial institutions are beginning to rival the BWI institutions in which China has historically found little representation. Furthermore, China lauds its 'mutual non-interference' design that centers those nations usually excluded by the several 'conditions' demanded otherwise in NSC. True to its roots, these foundational logics that shape Chinese international relations and breathe life into SSC echoes the sentiments of China's then Premier, Zhou Enlai, at the 1955 Bandung Conference (Asian-African Conference). At what Vijay Prashad (2007) identifies as one of the foundational gatherings that birthed the 'Third World project' Premier Zhou articulates what becomes the fodder for SSC as he emphasized, "...mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, nonaggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit."[37]

Not New, yet Not the Same

As much work has already been dedicated to understanding the ways in which NSC and its respective set of global institutions have perpetuated imperialism and colonial dynamics, my work is oriented towards an investigation of SSC. To be clear, my work is not so much interested in making apparent a hypocrisy by delineating the ways in which SSC

[37] "Main Speech by Premier Zhou Enlai, Head of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, Distributed at the Plenary Session of the Asian-African Conference," April 19, 1955, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Translation from China and the Asian-African Conference (Documents) (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1955), 9-20. http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121623

simply replicates dynamics of NSC. Rather my project aims to take seriously the claims that SSC represents a formal departure from NSC, but posits that this 'departure' is rather an embrace of antiblackness. Furthermore, I aim to make apparent that the use of NSC as a foil with which to evaluate the quality of SSC further obscures antiblack logics apparent in SSC principles. China serves as an important node in my analysis as its growing global power has allowed it to amass one of the largest portfolios of global SSC. Moreover, China's longer development trajectory starting with the advent of Deng Xiaoping in the 1970's until the contemporary moment is salient to my work as it reveals important historical context for China's most recent engagements with Africa. Namely, it reveals how central Africa has been historically to Chinese global ambitions and gives context for Africa's importance in China's contemporary approach to international relations. My work takes Chinese engagement with Angola– a crown jewel in Chinese resource acquisition goals and one of the highest recipients of Chinese funds in Africa— as demonstrative of the dynamics of antiblackness obscured within SSC rhetoric.[38]

I. China to Africa

In order to elucidate the site of antiblackness that comes to define SSC and our iterative case of Chinese-Angolan relations, it is important to first grasp the internal logics of Chinese global expansion and locate Angola's and the wider African continent's place in it. Since at least 2012 when the current Paramount Leader, Xi Jinping came to power, Chinese-African relations have taken on a set of paradoxical associations. In SSC fashion China has pivoted away from the Western dominated lineage of approaches to Africa growing from

[38] Sigfrido and Ear (2012) pg. 352

'aid' to 'trade not aid' to 'trade for aid'.[39] Rather, China under the rhetoric of 'win-win cooperation' has embraced a controversial 'Resource for Infrastructure' (RFI) approach. Marked by upfront infrastructure investments that are repaid through the resources and/or revenue produced in resource extraction, IFR has been a vital tenant in Chinese-African relations.[40] For Angola, oil has been the central bargaining chip that shapes relations with China, for whom oil acquisition is a central policy objective. Oil, which had fueled the Angolan government's (MPLA) victory in the nearly three decade long conflict between National Independence and the subsequent Civil War, would, ironically, also fuel Angola's National Reconstruction Program. In 2003 the Angolan government signed over a large portion of the infrastructure contracts to Chinese owned enterprises financed with multi-billion dollar oil-backed loans.[41] In Cardoso's (2015) apt work on the urbanization of Angola's capital, Luanda, he describes how the Office of National Reconstruction in 2004 was created in order to "...coordinate, oversee and manage reconstruction initiatives throughout the entire country – most of which were at the time being increasingly contracted to Chinese companies via oil-backed credit lines." Cardoso goes on to describe what sort of projects were being brokered with Chinese companies as he writes:

> [the Office of National Reconstruction] was responsible for a number of "structuring projects" across and beyond the city. In the year following its establishment, these were mainly devised through contracts mediated by the China International Fund. They included rehabilitation works in five municipalities, various infrastructural improvements, an EPC agreement for the New International Airport, as well as the construction of 120 thousand housing units throughout the province and the concomitant elaboration of yet another large-scale urban plan for Luanda and its expansion.[42]

[39] Carmody (2011) pg. 48
[40] Alves (2013) pg. 212
[41] Schmitz (2017) pg. 4
[42] Cardoso (2015) pg. 98

Projects like these have vastly intensified since the onset of Angola's national reconstruction and have brought in unprecedented amounts of migration into the country. Referencing Schmit (2017), in 2013 the Angolan Embassy in Beijing was granting nearly 200 visas a week to Chinese citizens as migrants from China quickly became the largest non-African group in the country.[43] These changing dynamics in Angola and across the African continent on one hand have been received as iterative of the original principles of SSC in that China's "no-political strings attached"[44] approach allows for mutual 'wins' while maintaining mutual sovereignty. Additionally, China's engagements have been understood as providing an opportunity to shake the yolk of old colonial dynamics as Efem Ubi, professor at Nigerian Institute of International affairs, states, "Africa can now choose which powers to relate to and do business with. The old stereotypical, colonial relationship is starting to fade."[45] These more progressive conceptions of Chinese-African relations are contrasted however on the other hand with intense accusations of "A new version of colonialism"[46]. Beyond even the more orientalist constructions of 'China Inc' by US and UK media outlets critical of Chinese 'resource grabs'[47] China's actions are considered to signal a 'new Scramble for Africa' that rivals its 19th century colonial referent. This paradoxical dialogue that renders Chinese-African relations as both a progressive and regressive force can be traced back to the Maoist embrace of Cold War 'Third Worldism' that informs the beginning of China's now

[43]Schmitz (2017) pg. 4
[44] As stated by Xi Jingping in: AFP. "China's XI Offers Africa $60bn for Development, Says 'No Strings Attached'." The East African. The East African, July 5, 2020. https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/business/China-s-Xi-pledges--60bn-for-African-development-at-summit/2560-4741280-ox1p27z/index.html.
[45] Cheng, Kang-Chun. "Why Is the US Fixated on China's Rise in Africa?" Quartz. Quartz, April 19, 2022. https://qz.com/africa/2154820/why-is-the-us-fixated-on-chinas-rise-in-africa/.
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[47] Power (2012) pg. 994

(in)famous forigen policy trajectory. Specifically, I refer to China's economic 'opening up' that took place to the tune of one of Deng Xiaoping's most famous sayings:

> "不　黑猫白猫抓　老鼠就是好猫"
> *Regardless if the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice, it's a good cat*
>
> -邓小平

In the wake of Mao Zidong's death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping secured his status as Paramount Leader of the People's Republic of China against his adversaries. One of the most famous of Deng Xiaoping's sayings, referred to as the "cat talk" (猫论), captures the pivot in China's trajectory of accumulation in the post-Maoism era. Inheriting a nation reeling from the deadly realities and persecutions of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution that took place under Mao, Deng sought to carefully steer China away from the fatal stigmas of capitalism while still securing China's spot in the growing world market. Essentially, moving away from the dichotomy of planned economy (白猫-white cat) vs market economy (黑猫-black cat) Deng's aims for the economy became wealth generation (捉　老鼠– catching the mouse). This saying along with ones like "to be rich is glorious" (致富　荣) is accompanied by Deng's handful of famous trips to the US and were erroneously perceived by many in the West as China's move towards Western style democracy. Rather than the Western Dependency and Modernization theory models that anticipate democratization with the creation of markets, Deng Xiaoping employed a strategy of "concealing one's strength and bide one's time " (韬　养晦). Reflective of this policy was Deng Xiaoping's incremental integration of direct forigen investment with the use of Special Economic Zones (SEZ) that restricted how and where forigen capital moved in the PRC. Highly effective, Deng's policies

were also used in tandem with the sobering display of CCP authority in 1989, Tiananmen Square. Burying the hopes of a democratizing China, Deng's economic 'opening up' (革开放) asserted the possibility of capitalist wealth accumulation without democracy or 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics' to the globe.[48]

This regulated approach to capital accumulation was carried on and advanced towards the end of the 90's with the advent of Hu Jintao's Stepping Out Strategy' (出 战略) and Western Great Development Project (西部 开发). Hedged with notions of 'peaceful development' and a 'harmonious world' these projects sought to assist Chinese overseas investments and develop China's poorer provinces– mainly its most Western province– Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region[49]. In a fashion reminiscent of Maoist China's calls for the Third World to stand together against Western imperialism (without rehearsing communist dogma) Hu Jintao positioned low and middle income countries– traditionally neglected by the Western dominated Bretton Woods Systems— as a crucial part of Chinese development strategy with the formations of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Central Asia in 2001, and the BRICS formal alliance in 2006.

Using this model China has been able sustain one of fastest economic expansions amongst major powers[50] and since 2012 with the advent of the current Paramount Leader of the PRC, Xi Jinping, China has shifted to an aggressive use of that accumulated power. In a

[48] For a review of this literature see scholars such as (Mackerras et al., 1994; Liu, 2015; Fan & Morck, 2013; Lim, 2014)
[49]Parepa (2020) pg. 181
[50] "China's Economic Rise: History, Trends, Challenges, and Implications for the United States." EveryCRSReport.com. Congressional Research Service, June 25, 2019. https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL33534.html. l

tune wholly different than Deng's 'bide one's time', Xi's 'Chinese Dream' (中国梦) has animated a sharp rise and expansion of Chinese forignen trade agreements. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)[51] officially adopted by the PRC in 2013 is by far the largest of these initiatives. The BRI– originally One Belt One Road (OBOR)-- invokes a historical nostalgia of Chinese forigen trade as it initially referred to both the cluster of road and rail infrastructure projects covering much of Central Asia along the historic Silk Roads trade routes that constitute The Silk Road Economic 'Belt'-- and the 21st Century Maritime Silk 'Road' that follows historical IndoPacific sea routes along the SWANA[52], South and Southeast Asia regions. Essentially launching Hu Jintao's Stepping Out Strategy into full sprint, Xi's leadership since 2013 and his emphasis on policies of "win-win cooperation" (合作 贏), mutual sovereignty, and his call for the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation", has grown the BRI into a sprawling network of bi- and multilateral global development projects with countries mostly known to be middle or low income (the vast majority of which are also considered apart of the 'Third World'). Not least of which are China's interests and projects on the African continent. Africa being highly resource abundant as the continent "is thought to contain 42% of the world's bauxite, 38% of its uranium, 42% of its gold, 73% of its platinum, 88% of its diamonds and around 10% of its oil."[53] and is the perfect site to satisfy growing Chinese resource needs. Moreover, the drive to quelch this resource hunger and the global engagements it requires are understood to be "...justified by its [China's] right to develop as a nation." a right that China claims, taking the industrial histories of the US and

[51] Formally known as One Belt One Road (一带一路) which is reference to the Silk Roads
[52] Southwest Asian North African
[53] Carmody (2011) pg. 40

the UK as precedent.[54] In this way, Chinese approaches to engagement on the African continent are not so much paradoxical as they are sequential to the trajectories set in place with Deng's orientation to 'catch the mouse' (wealth accumulation). As such returning to the paradox suggested by the polar dialogue that surrounds the nature of SSC— either as liberator for the world's 'Rest' or a catalyst for authoritarianism and opportunistic extraction— we can begin to see how it is less a function of a hypocritical China than it is a function of perception that considers 'a new kind of colonialism' on one hand and 'win-win cooperation' on the other as mutually exclusive. If in telling how China comes to Angola we can locate the paradox of Chinese-African relations in the expectations associated with SSC, we turn to a telling of how Angola meets Chinese influence to get a sense of how these expectations were foraged.

II. Africa to China

Africa's position in the context of modern global accumulation has always been a paradoxical one. Vitally necessary yet absolutely hated, the African continent is both highly abundant in precious natural resources (such as oil, gold, platinum, diamonds and uranium) and yet has long constituted the majority of the world's impoverished and globally demonized. Made to be the ultimate prize and unifying sacrifice in the European imperial war game, Africa was partitioned to prevent European in-fighting as they vied for territories that would support their competing industrializing efforts.[55] The 1885 Berlin Conference– famously dubbed the 'Scramble for Africa'-- and the subsequent ~100 years of colonial rule concretized not only the "...extraversion of Africa, whereby its economy was oriented to

[54] Sigfrido and Ear (2012) pg. 364
[55] Carmody (2011) pg. 25

meet the needs of other people in other places"[56] but also a global system predicated on that extraversion. As such, for much of Africa 'independence' could be described to be closer to Saidiya Hartman's (1997) understanding of 'emancipation.' In her book, *Scenes of Subjection,* specifically referring to emancipated Blacks in the US, Hartman angles her argument around an understanding of emancipation that "... appears less the grand event of liberation than a point of transition between models of servitude and racial subjection."[57] In a similar way, Africa's entrance onto the global stage was not with the same sovereign authority as those former colonizers, but with the orientation to claim sovereignty as liberated states participating in the Third World project. According to the popularized Three-World Model coined by the French economist Alfred Sauvy, the Third World, denoting those newly decolonized states in Africa and Asia, describes those states non-aligned with either the First World capitalist NATO bloc or the Second World communist Soviet bloc. Vijay Prashad (2007) understands the Third World project to be the foraging amongst the world's colonized grounds to finally "speak its mind, find the ground for unity, and take possession of the dynamic of world affairs."[58] Starting in the early 60s for the First and Second World powers— then defining themselves against one another in the advent of the Cold War— the Third World transformed from land and people to be conquered to potential spheres of influence to be dominated. As hegemonic nations rid themselves of the burdens of direct colonial rule, the managerial game of domination through regional influence came to replace it. Between China— for whom in the contemporary moment the appellation of 'Third World' sits uncomfortably— and the African continent— for whom the term is unambiguous— this

[56] ibid
[57] Hartman (1997) pg. 6
[58] Prashad (2007) pg. 11

managerial game held starly distinct saliences. From the perspective of 1960's China that had experienced its split with the USSR, Mao Zendong– then Primer leader— found it ideologically imperative to make clear alliances with the 'Third World.' Mao Zedong's understanding of the 'three worlds', so to speak, is concretized in his Three Worlds Theory (vs Sauvy's Three Worlds Model) that names the superpowers– the US and USSR as the 'First World', then the capitalists nations including Japan, Canada, and much of Europe as the 'Second', and lastly China and the rest of the non-aligned and developing world in Asia, Africa, and Latin America as the 'Third'.[59] These ideas were reified at the 1955 Bandung Conference when Premier Zhou Enlai addressed the 29 delegates representing nations across Africa/SWANA and Asia. Iterating several times through his speech the need for "...mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, nonaggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit"[60] Premier Zhou painted a future of cooperation predicated on a perceived mutual history between Asia and Africa. Specifically, nearly 100 years after the Scramble for Africa he states:

> ...we Asian and African countries, *which are more or less under similar circumstances*, should be the first to cooperate with one another in a friendly manner and put peaceful coexistence into practice. The discord and estrangement created among the Asian and African countries by colonial rule in the past should no longer be there. We Asian and African countries should respect one another, and eliminate any suspicion and fear which may exist between us.[61] (emphasis mine)

Through a thorough downplay between the *particular* conditions and legacies of colonialism in Africa and Asia respectively and an emphasis on how to interact as *universally* sovereign

[59] Yee (1983)
[60] "Main Speech by Premier Zhou Enlai, Head of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, Distributed at the Plenary Session of the Asian-African Conference," April 19, 1955, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Translation from China and the Asian-African Conference (Documents) (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1955), 9-20. http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121623
[61] Ibid

states, Premier Zhou articulated China's own appeal on the African continent already forced to navigate the ultimatums of the US and USSR.

More specifically for Africa, for which no grand announcements of 'Third World' identity need be made, the managerial shift of regional domination transformed subjection on the continent from examples such as King Leopold II's brutal rule of the Congo to ones such as the US and Belgian CIA backed coup in Zaire[62] that placed the brutal, anti-democractic, yet *anti-communist* dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko in power. The US backing of President Mobutu to the demise of the democratically elected leaders he ousted is indicative of what Africa's 'emancipation' could mean on a global stage largely built off its exploitation. The paradoxes of the Third World project as both a platform for collective freedom and a field of influence to be tamed, intersect in the outsourcing of 'hot' proxy conflicts to the Third World. Specifically, African self-determination during the Cold War period was most intensely forced to articulate itself around the whims of forgein influence. This is especially apparent in the case of President Mobuto as he was able to secure US support largely due to his alignment with anti-communist forces fighting in one of the largest proxy wars in Africa, the Angolan Civil War. (in which China was contending player)

Concluding only in 2001, the Angolan Civil War started directly after the Angolan War of Independence (1961-1974). After a somewhat united front against Portuguese colonial power, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Union Total Independence for Angola (UNITA), and to a lesser extent the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) emerged as violent rivals competing to be the ruling power in the newly 'liberated' Angola. On trend with the nominal tensions of the Cold

[62] Modern day Congo

War— that is between planned (communist) and market (capitalist) economies— much of Northern Angola had been torn apart by clashes between the MPLA and FNLA. The MPLA, whose constituents— vastly originating from the marginalized Black Luanda urban bureaucracy— formed the quasi-Marxist party after surviving the racialized city warfare at the onset of the War of Independence. The MPLA forces were armed by the Eastern bloc vastly by way of Cuba. On the other hand, the heavily entrepreneurial and similarly urban FNLA grew its base out of the enclaves of Angolans that fled to Kinshasa at the onset of the War of Independence. Endorsed not only by the 'First World'— largely the US– the FLNA also received funds from China who after its 1960 split with the USSR— the 'Second World'— took great measures to position itself as part of the 'Third World'. This is particularly apparent in Angola's UNITA— based in the southern port city of Lobito— whose constituency were rural Angolan migrants from the Highlands. According to Birmingham (2006):

> Southerners, threatened by land hunger, land alienation, and labor conscription, developed a tradition of hostility both to the city government in Luanda and to city entrepreneurs from Kinshasa. For a short while the UNITA leadership even studied Mao's theories of rural politicization.[63]

United in a peasant (rather than proletariat) struggle against Soviet-backed MPLA and the US-backed FLNA, China redirected funding from the FLNA[64] to UNITA to support their cause. The seemingly convenient overlay of interests for China— between the idyllic calls of shared struggle and the purely strategic incentives in supporting anti-US and anti-Soviet forces in Africa— appear in the discourse much in a manner as paradoxical as the continent itself. Specifically, Millar (1988) notes that "Mao's appeals to the 'third world' were

[63] Birmingham (2006) pg. 156
[64] Which, according to Mbah (2010) was mostly inactive/ struggling at that time.

primarily motivated by his 'quarrel with the Soviet Union' during the first half of the 1960s. Mao's emphasis on self-reliance, Rice claims, was merely part of a set of tactics to build up Chinese power against that of the Soviet Union and the United States."[65] The paradox of Chinese engagement in Africa is further compounded when accounting for what Kibble (2006) identifies as a "politics of disorder" happening in Angola. This can be understood to be the legacy of extraversion– due to the 1885 Scramble for Africa– as the politics of disorder describes how Angolan political and economic loyalties are not to its citizenry but to "...other people in other places."[66] Specifically Kibble (2006) writes:

> The Angolan elite comprising in David Sogge's words 'a constellation of politician-rentiers, petroleum sector technocrats and military officials' can run the state in their own interest, largely ignoring any demands from the citizenry given that the accumulation basis and the orientation of the elite is to the outside.[67]

This mode of politics is made apparent in Angola with the shift in UNITA backing following the 1980 inauguration of President Ronald Regan. Regan's term coincided with growing concerns around how best to protect US interests abroad, namely the Third World in Africa that was rife with competing forces. Regan's administration determined to arrest communist forces and protect US interest in Africa mobilized the language of 'Low Intensity Conflict'(LIC) that was introduced in the late 70s[68] to arm and finance client groups on the continent. Notably, the formerly Chinese backed UNITA.[69] After the US backed FNLA was ousted from Luanda by the MPLA— thereby making the Cuban/Soviet backed party the de facto power in Angola— the US urgently directed funds to the last viable proxy. Despite the

[65] Schmitz, C. (2017) pg. 26
[66] Carmody (2011) pg. 25
[67] Kibble (2006) pg. 525
[68] Shultz (1991) pg. 120
[69] Pereira (1994) pg. 11

aesthetic solidarites that can be traced between the UNITA constituencies– largely impoverished agricultural workers– and the Maoist appeals to a peasant revolution, the leadership– notoriously Jonas Savimbi– responded more powerfully to the access to resources and weaponry that a clinetship with the US could afford. In this way the politics of disorder is useful for naming the dynamics of extraversion that compels African political leaders to respond to forgien influence over the promises they make to their polity. UNITA for instance— who touts 'negritude' on its coat of arms— was also aligned and supported by South Africa (the oldest forigin force in Angola only after Portugal) as it's apartied government was highly interested in curbing the Black nationalist MPLA being watched closely by South Africa's subjected Black communities.[70] Both parties— The UNITA and the MPLA— heavily armed with forgien weapons with loyalties more responsive to forigen capital than to the Angolan people spelled absolute disaster. Birmingham writes:

> The UNITA policy of bringing the government to its knees by starving the peasants caused the death of half a million children in the 1980s… The atrocities of war were not confined to anti government action. On the contrary, the MPLA strategy of confining UNITA to the southeast and preventing it from returning to the highlands as an effective political force involved equal hostility towards the highland villages. To prevent the insurgents from developing a social base, the government determined, by removing the people who might sustain enemy operations, to "drain the sea" in which guerrillas might swim like fish. The MPLA government, assuming all free peasants to be potential UNITA sympathizers, adopted the same arbitrary and inhumane strategy as its colonial forebears and herded people into barbed-wire villages under armed guard to deny them any possibility of contact with opposition forces.[71]

Engulfed in a 'disordered' political struggle between the UNITA's 'Independence' and the MPLA's 'Liberty' , millions of Angolans were subjected to starvation, displacement, and warfare. By the time an uneasy peace was achieved in 1991 with the dissolution of the

[70]ibid
[71] Birmingham (2006) pg. 130

USSR, one of Angola's largest exports at the onset of the Civil War in 1975, coffee, had been surpassed by scrap metal due to the wreckage.[72] Officially organized by the UN under the Bicesse Accords in May 1991 in the old colonial center, Lisbon, Portugal, the MPLA government transitioned from a nominally Marxist-Linenst state to a nominally multiparty democratic and market economy state. Backed by US money and weaponry Savimbi was only able to be coaxed to the voting polls with his equally notorious nemesis— the MPLA's leader Jose Eduardo Dos Santos— with assurances from the US that he would win the 'free and fair' elections. When those assurances that placed Mobutu in power in Zaire did not pan out for Savimbi in Angola— as Dos Santos won by an undisputable margin— Savimbi refused to go quietly. Rejecting the outcome of the elections based on allegations of voter intimidation, Savimbi sent both negotiators to the capital and— in violation of the Bicesse Accords— prepared UNITA forces for war. Dos Santos, seizing the opportunity to defeat his rival, mobilized the MPLA government troops to retaliate in full. In the span of three days beginning October 30th thousands of UNITA supporters were killed nationwide in what came to be known as the Halloween Massacre.[73] With the waning support from the swiftly changing South Africa, UNITA— exemplary of a politics of disorder— mass harvested diamonds for the high bidding diamond cutters in Antwerp, Belgium in order to fund their war campaign.[74] Cyclically enough, much of the money was used to purchase cheap military technology from the former Soviet countries burdened with redundant equipment, largely from Ukraine.[75] The MPLA, engaged necessarily in a similar mode of politics, drew on the

[72] Ibid pg. 150
[73] Hoekstra (2019) pg. 1325
[74] Birmingham (2006) pg. 196
[75] Ibid pg. 159

vast Angolan oil sector to the benefit of one of its most avaricious clients, the United States. Making evident the outward stakes of power, Pereira (1994) writes:

> Oil production, organized totally outside the norms of the socialist economy and conducted by transnational firms in isolated enclaves, accounted for close to 90 per cent of export earnings, and these revenues enabled the military to purchase increasing quantities of arms and ammunition. The state virtually abandoned the peasantry and agricultural production, while the cities subsisted as best they could on imports.[76]

It seems that in an internationalized war in which every player is seeking their best interest, the Angolan people and their environment serve as the ultimate collateral. Swept into another period of violence, Bingingham describes this notion directly as they write:

> UNITA starved the cities, notably Malange and Kwito, by refusing to allow humanitarian food supplies to be flown in by the international agencies. It hoped that the Angolan government would be forced by world opinion to stop a war that was killing thousands of civilians. Savimbi may also have hoped that the coast would rise up in revolt as new waves of displaced persons descended from the shattered highland towns. But the world, fascinated by the wealth of Angola's oil wells, did not press the government to negotiate a peace, and the civilians did not risk mounting any public protest when their streets were patrolled by black-clad security police.[77]

At this juncture it seems that having forgone the international community's best hope— the uneasy 'peace' instilled for 'free and fair' elections wrought by the Bicesse Accords— the international community settled for their next best hope for Angola that is, diamond encrusted, oil dripping, utterly morbid war.

The phenomenon of how so much black death and disenfranchisement comes at the interests of global powers compels us to consider again Hartman's notion of 'liberation' under a system of subjection and extraction. This is brought in starker purview when considering at the time of the elections, nearly 300,000 Angolans were not even present in

[76] Pereira (1994) pg. 12
[77] Birmingham (2006) pg. 159

the country as they were taking refuge in neighboring nations. This is in addition to the little over a million displaced people navigating exploded infrastructure and the tens of thousands of bi-partisin and forgotten active landmines peppering the nation.[78] Painstakingly closer to a transition from one mode of subjection to another for the Angolan people than to 'freedom', the MPLAs 'liberation' was only garnered once Jonas Savimbi was killed in March of 2002. UNITA demobilized and became an official political party, but by then Dos Santos had entrenched the MPLA and concentrated power in the hands of the presidency. This centralization of power is the environment under which the Office of National Reconstruction was formed and orchestrated a multitude of oil-backed infrastructure contracts awarded to Chinese companies. This structure is only intensified as Dos Santos— stepping down only in 2017— after his inevitable reelection in 2010 removed the powers of Parliament over the executive office, effectively giving the presidential position more power than even under his Marxist-Leninist dictatorship.[79] Furthermore, considering again Cardoso's (2017) work as he references Kristin Reed's (2009) analysis to state that "... oil is viewed 'not as a trigger but as a constitutie force behind Angola's political economy.'"[80] In this way, China's 'win-win' rhetoric that we can understand to be derived from notions of Third World solidarity have obscured vitally important specificities about the nature of Angolan sovereignty. Plainly, the preoccupation with characterizing China's methods as either like or not like the traditional (colonial) influence of the West, have distracted attention from the real paradox. That is, how the vital distinctions between one nation (Angola) —who is required to play with the full weight of their political economy— and the other (China) —

[78] Pereira (1994) pg. 16
[79] De Morais (2011) pg. 71
[80] Cardoso (2015) pg. 4

engaged in a full fledged plan for global influence— are flattened (erased or 'hollowed out') by the use of SSC rhetoric that has its roots in Third Worldism.

III. Theories of (Anti)Blackness

Having mapped the historical contingencies in both Angola and China that give rise to their current relationship, I turn now to the theoretical heart of my investigation. Namely, in wanting to unravel the paradoxical associations that informed the Third World project and subsequently set the expectations on the nature and capacity of SSC, I turn to Black theoretical scholarship. In particular my work engages a lineage of Black theoretical scholarship that parts from an understanding of Blackness (and anti-blackness for that matter) as primarily a socio-historic phenomenon. Instead of taking the assumption of a wholly defined yet totally disrespected Black subjectivity as a point of departure, scholars such as Hartman (1997), Spillars (1987), Warren (2018), Wynter (2003), Da Silva (2007), Winnubst (2020), Wilderson (2010), Moten and Harny (2013) take blackness (and it ontological referent, antiblackness) to be a metaphysical necessity to the 'human.' As such Wilderson (2010) writes:

> If, as an ontological position, that is, a grammar of suffering, the Slave is not a laborer but an anti-Human, a position against which Humanity estbalishes, maintains, and renews its coherence, its corporeal integrity…[81]

Considering that Black theoretical scholarship in this way makes claims that interrogate the very nature of humanity as an antiblack structure, surely then these conjectures should have some purchase in my investigation of the 'new scramble for Africa' by way of Chinese led SSC. Vital to my framework is Denise Ferreia Da Silva's (2007) work in her book, *Towards*

[81]Willderson (2010) pg. 11

a Global Idea of Race. In this highly insightful theoretical investigation, Silva scrutinizes the modern signifying force of race in order to evince that global antiblack subjection is a constitutive force of modern representation rather than inimical to it. Specifically she writes:

> In tracing the analytics of raciality, I identify the productivity of the racial and how it is tied to the emergence of an ontological context —globality —that fuses particular bodily traits, social configurations, and global regions, in which human difference is reproduced as irreducible and unsublatable. With this, I challenge the ontological privilege accorded to historicity and offer an account of modern representation that refigures the subject as *homo modernus*. That is, I demonstrate how the productive weapons of reason, the tools of science and history, institute both man and his others as global - historical beings.[82]

Da Silva's work locates the signifying force of antiblack hierarchy in the productive powers of Post-Enlightenment Reason, namely History and Science. Locating the Subject's birth (Reason) to be in the *particularities* of an enlightened Western Europe that were rendered *universal* in the Age of Discovery, Da Silva demonstrates how the life, death, and afterlife of the Subject have left it's constitutive tools (Science and History) completely unchecked and the antiblackness that animates them further obscured. As such, Da Silva's work, read in tandem with other black theoretical scholarship demystifies the paradoxical associations with the Third World— and thus SSC— and reveals them as rather a proliferation and perpetuation of antiblackness. In order to demonstrate this dynamic I turn to critical scholarship in the fields of empire and development studies as they have produced much work that interrogates anti-imperial/anti-colonial forces. Much of this work either skews their analytical attention to either the forces of imperialism such as Besada et al (2019); Cheru (2016); Lee and Prashad (2019) or skew towards those signals of a maintaining of colonial difference regardless of class such as Pereira (1994); Kibble (2006); Khodaddadzadeh

[82] Silva (2007) pg. xix

(2017); Chan et al. (2013). I contend that none take seriously the question of antiblackness in a way that, as Da Silva prompts us, allows the "analysis of the racial guide a critique of the whole field of modern representation."[83] Taking up her call, Chapter 1 of my analysis conducts a close reading of Vijay Prashad's (2007) seminal work, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*. Lauded as one of the first histories of its kind, *The Darker Nations* maps a comprehensive historical geography of the Third World political project. Prashad's work serves as both a historical revival of the Third World project as well as a guide to its most fatal obstacles. The text's three sections, 'Quest', 'Pitfalls', and 'Assassinations' move readers through essentally the birth, life, and death of the Third World project. My analysis takes Da Silva's work as a theoretical framework to demonstrate that Prashad's work without a serious engagement with antiblackness misses the life, death, and rebirth of the Subject respectively in his three sections. Moreover, Chapter 1 uses the work of Spillars (1987) and Winnubst (2020) in order to grasp the productive powers of antiblackness (i.e. fungibility) and how they function to mobilize the antiblack Post-Enlightenment tools of History and Science. In describing antiblackness as such, Chapter 1 also illustrates how ignorance of the antiblack modern field of representation in this retelling of the Third World project inadvertently calls for antiblack futures.

Chapter 2 of my work shifts the focus to those scholars that do indeed take seriously the question of antiblack racial hierarchy in their assessments of global dispossession. Several scholars center their analysis around the dynamics of antiblackness or racial hierarchy such as Bledsoe and Write (2019); Barchiesi (2016); De Morais (2011) to name a small few. I however contend that even an understanding of antiblackness as a central node

[83] ibid pg. xviii

in an analysis of global subjection and capital accumulation is not enough if it does not prompt a reading of the whole field of modern representation as antiblack. One such scholar whose work makes these tensions apparent is Cedric J. Robinson. Dedicated to making known the patterns of what he observed to be global 'racial capitalism' as well as its ever present yet subjected rival force, the Black Radical Tradition, Robinson has inspired scholars across the disciplines to understand the ways in which global capitalism and racial hierarchy are inextricably linked as they take form in state structures. As such, I analyze Robinson's work through Yousuf Al-Bulushi's (2020) intellectual geography, which seeks to make evident Robinson's connections with the African continent. In so doing, I draw upon the work of other black theoretical scholars such as Moten and Harney (2013) and Saidiya Hartman (1997) in order to push Robinson's work past a vital theoretical conflation. Particularly, I note that Robinson's delineation of the Black Radical Tradition throughout his body of works makes a conflation between what Moten and Harney (2013) refer to as the *undercommons*, and what Hartman might call a 'tactic' of self-making when the whole modern world is predicated on black subjection. The implications for such a conflation are crucial as I argue that it sets the conditions necessary to allow even the Black Radical Tradition to be co-opted and put in service of antiblack capital accumulation. In so doing Chapter 2 not only addresses the antiblack futures that are inadvertently projected by those looking to dismantle it, but also offers theoretical tools to chart a positionality that might take us to futures *otherwise.* My analysis then concludes with a return to the question of China and Angola to demonstrate how the most idyllic futures for one of the most emblematic instances of SSC aren't so much in danger of hypocritical mimicry of NSC but nonetheless wholeheartedly embrace antiblackness.

Through my critique of Prashad's and Robinson's work that attempts to reconcile their conjectures with those theories that posit an antiblack field of representation, I aim to make clear the ways in which the *universal* that is constructed at the expense of the *particular* is a bonafide marker of none other than antiblackness and it derivatives. In particular, this thesis works to evince how this constructed *universal* (that is, antiblackness) neatly and unproblematically makes cogent the very concepts of both NSC and its supposed divergent SSC. Though the scope of this thesis is narrowed to considerations of international relations–in particular those Sino-Angolan relations— I understand the core of my analytical conjectures on the field of modern representation and on the persistence of antiblackness to have wide salience across the entire host of disciplines engaged in questions of hierarchy, oppression, and liberation.

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Chapter 1: The Making and Forgetting of an Antiblack World

The scene begins with Augustus, a free black man, returning home from a business transaction by wagon. Patroller Harvey Travis, the symbol of the law, stops Augustus in a routine inspection of the wagon… Travis demands Augustus's freedom papers, although he's read them many times and basically has them memorized. When Augustus insists that it is his prerogative to travel as a free person, Travis sardonically replies, "You ain't free less me and the law says you free." … As Augustus continued to assert his freedom, Travis began to eat the freedom papers. Starting at the bottom right corners, he chewed and swallowed them. After eating the freedom papers, Travis mockingly retorted, "That's what I think of your right to do anything you got a right to do." Travis licked his fingers in satisfaction and wiped his mouth. "Right ain't got nothing to do with it," he said. "Best meal I've had in many Sundays." …. Darcey, a kidnapper of free blacks, purchases free blacks from Travis and sells them as captives for a handsome profit. Travis explains to Darcey that his timing is fortuitous because he has "a nigger who didn't know what to do with his freedom. Thought it meant he was free." Travis sells Augustus to Darcey. Unable to prove his freedom, Augustus becomes the property of Darcey, instantly losing the very rights he was so certain freedom ensured.

-- Calvin L. Warren, Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihillism, and Emancipation (2018)

Warren's (2018) invocation of Edward P. Jones' novel, *The Known World,* is an eerie and powerful call to consider seriously the substantive qualities of not only 'freedom', but also– crucially– of 'freedom-granted.' Making explicit the oxymoronic nature of Augustus's 'free black' status, Warren describes his 'freedom' as being quite literally consumed, swallowed. In this vivid description Warren invites readers to surrender their universal moralist conjurings of 'freedom' and to take seriously the implications of a 'freedom-granted' in a world only made legible by and through antiblack subjection. Specifically, Travis' dialogue with Darcy elucidates a powerful distinction between Augustus's freedom (a 'niggers' freedom— "*his freedom"*) and the idea of freedom itself ("Though it meant he was *free"*). Put simply, the distinction is one of proof. And more specifically— keeping in mind the language of 'Rights'— what becomes vital to track is the *location* of proof. For Augustus– being captured despite his assertions of free-black status– the proof of 'his freedom' is *wholly* concretized in the form of (presumably) state-sanctioned 'freedom

papers.' This is important as it signals that Augustus's freedom—particularly in a social world in which his bondage is assumed— is something totally external to his existence and as fragile as a piece of paper. Conversely, Darcy's and Travis' 'freedom' is as internal and axiomatic as is their very existence and– central to the themes of this thesis– totally inaccessible to Augustus regardless of his status. In this way, 'freedom-granted' can nearly be taken as evidence of its reference, bondage. Moreover, 'freedom' in this context is far from a *universal*(objective) status, but rather a *specific*(subjective) attribute contextualized by a given social context. Travis' regard of Augustus's freedom— summed up by his assertion that "Right ain't got nothing to do with it"— elucidates that Augustus's freedom papers *categorically* lack the capacity to afford Augustus the same freedom (or interiority) enjoyed by Travis and Darcy. For Warren this dynamic prompts an interrogation of the ontology of an axiomatic/universal 'freedom' as distinct from its reduced "political, social, or legal conceptions…" – or otherwise 'freedom granted.' Specifically, Warren— making a distinction between capital 'B' Being (recognized interiority), and Dasein (existence) — states of the 'freedom' assumed in Travis and Darcy:

> Freedom exists for Being— it enables the manifestation of Being through Dasein.[84]

In other words, though often productively conflated, recognized interiority (Being) is *a derivative* of existence (Dasein) that is defined by the notion of axiomatic 'Freedom.' Moreover, considering that this "Freedom [that] exists for Being " is the same that is a reality for Travis and Darcy in a way impossible for Augustus, this Being is exposed as applying to something *specific* rather than a *universal* (if albeit at times disrespected) given. In this way,

[84] Warren (2018) pg 28

Warren's analysis does not consider (anti)Blackness to be a socio-historical positionality for which 'Freedom' has been consistently disrespected or denied, but rather the very ontological referent of (axiomatic) bondage, that makes legible the unquestioned Freedom of Being (i.e. in Travis and Darcy). As such, Warren— along with others considered to be a part of the Afropressmimist tradition such as (Willderson, 2010; Brand, 20001; and with contestation Hartman, 1997 & Spillers,1987) — considers Being (defined by Freedom) itself to presuppose the *non*-Being of Blackness(defined by enslavement). In other words, Warren– allowing his understanding of race to prompt investigation into the entire signifying field of metaphysics— suggests that 'Blackness' is not a social position at all, but rather a non-social position that gives coherence to all others in a manner parallel to how freedom presupposes enslavement.

Although it may seem at first unintuitive to use Warren's Afropessimist notions of black non-being alongside an analysis of SSC defined by its progressive anti-colonial/anti-imperialist roots, this chapter suggests that the scholarly literature on decolonization and Third World resistance has paid insufficient attention to a core insight of Afropessimist scholarship. Specifically, just as Warren's work aims to show the distinction between ontological 'Freedom' and its commonplace political, social, and legal conflations, Warren also means to make distinct antiblackness from its parallel conflations as he writes:

> Our metaphysical notions of freedom also reduce antiblackness to social, political, and legal understandings, and we miss the ontological function of antiblackness—to deny the ontological ground of freedom [bondage/enslavement] by severing the (non)relation between blackness and Being.[85]

[85] Ibid

Such literature on decolonization and the Third World, even if it manages to acknowledge dynamics of antiblackness in any capacity, most often merely addresses it manifestations in the legal, political, and social realms without interrogating its ontological roots. The analytical consequences for such a framework are significant as Warren articulates that the metaphysical function of antiblackness is to obscure the sinister ontological roots of freedom itself.

In the context of rampant global capital accumulation whose suffocating exhaust of lucrative genocide, illness, and climate disaster is thickest over those 'darker nations,' interrogating the conditional relationship between the non-being of blackness and the notion of 'freedom' is vital to those trying to participate in the struggle of formally colonized continents so that 'freedom' may be had by all. Vijay Prashad's engaging work in *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* serves as a groundbreaking force in this struggle as it insightfully maps and analyzes the history of anticolonial resistance in a manner that imbues contemporary struggles for "... land rights and water rights, for cultural dignity and economic parity, for women's rights and indigenous rights, for the construction of democratic institutions and responsive states…"[86] with new weight and meaning as they are tied to a legacy of anti-imperial and anti-colonial movements. Moreover, Prashad's work is an effective guide for tactics as he delineates the internal and external threats to the most central dreams for the Third World. Invoking Fanon's description in *The Wretched of the Earth*, of the Third World as facing "... Europe like a colossal mass whose project should be to try to resolve the problems to which Europe has not been able to find the answers," Prashad states that, "The Third World was not a place. It was a project."[87] Entitling each

[86] Prashad (2007) pg. 281
[87] Ibid pg. xv

chapter under a city name, Prashad uses various localities as a point of departure to tell the story of how the Third World project came to be born in the global social movements spanning Latin America, Africa, and Asia and subsequently what forces corroborated to ensure its demise. Far from pessimistic, *The Darker Nations* elucidates and mobilizes this history in the effort to contextualize contemporary socio-political movements as the Third World project's 'successor' or otherwise its resurrection. Prashad's critical account of the birth and death of the Third World project has inspired many to assess and rethink a path to self-determination and equality for all. Holding this in tandem, however, with Warren's reminder of freedom's susceptibility to being literally digested, this heroic call and struggle for justice for which Prashad's work is but one example sits uneasily with me. For this reason I turn to Black theory.

Warren's work, along with Saidiya Hartman's (1997), Sylvia Wynter's (2003), Hortense Spillers (1987), and Frank B. Willderson III (2010) falls into a trajectory of Black studies that understands the racial as not primarily a socio-historic phenomenon but as an always contemporary project sustaining the field of modern representation whose logic is irrevocably antiblack. One thinker, João Costa Vargaus (2018), clarifies the stakes of antiblackness when he writes:

> …i am making a case that is as simple as it is controversial: take Blacks out of the picture, and such dynamics of containment and repression, and their corresponding institutions and socially shared values, make little, if any, sense. The diasporic war on drugs, stringent criminal law, and massive incarceration of vulnerable communities: without Blacks, those scenarios lose most of their social meanings—that is, their collectively sanctioned symbolism, organizing principle, legal underpinnings, historical roots, and indeed their sheer intensity and brutality.[88]

[88] Vargas (2018) pg. 2

Here Vargas makes it apparent that to think about the contours of antiblackness is to consider the entire signifying force of hierarchy and power. Building on this description of the ways in which antiblackness renders subjection legible, my inquiry is concerned with what it means to acknowledge the ways in which antiblackness renders emancipation (and its methods) legible. Denis Ferrera Da Silva's (2007) deeply insightful analysis in "Towards a Global Idea of Race" is indispensable in my research as she uses an "…analysis of the racial (to) guide a critique of the whole field of modern representation."[89] Da Silva— much like Wynter— harkens to the post-Renaissance post-Enlightenment thought emanating from Europe that led Nietzsche to announce God's death. Da Silva refers to the categorically raced(antiblack) Subject or Transparent "I" that had been foraged by the distinctive powers of post-Enlightenment Reason. Specifically she writes:

> …the great accomplishment, the culmination of the victorious trajectory of reason that instituted man, the Subject, also foreshadowed his eventual demise. He knows that the philosophical conversation that instituted Man at the center of modern representation also released powerful weapons that threatened his most precious attribute. Why? Because that which falls prey to Reason by becoming its object has no place in the realm of Freedom.[90]

Here Da Silva calls attention to those powers of Reason, namely 'History' and 'Science', as constitutive of both the Subject's birth and his death. Specifically, the Subject/Transparent 'I' can be understood as analytically similar to Warren's 'Being' in that it names and allows us to interrogate what is taken to be universally applicable/axiomatic. Warren, aware of the conflation that Wynyers (2003) would describe as an 'overrepresentation,' is careful to distinguish between Being– that which is *acknowledged* as existence— and Dasein— a marker for all of existence, acknowledged or not. As we have touched on briefly before,

[89] Da Silva (2007) pg. xviii
[90] Ibid pg. xvii

Being is *a derivative* of Dasein (despite Being's tendency to boast as Dasein itself) and considering such, Da Silva's framework offers the tools that make such a derivative possible. The 'powerful weapons' that Da Silva references as the tools that situate Man (Being/the Subject/Transparent 'I') at the center of modern representation is the same metaphysical authority as the universal/objective/decontextualized 'Truth'/'Fact' that was used to unseat God and define the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods. As such, the tools of History and Science can be understood as iterations of the productive conflation of Being and Dasein that gives rise to the universal authority to *explain* and *describe* respectively. Even in their most commonplace colloquial meanings 'Science'—as the authority to describe what is— and 'History'— the power to explain how what is came to be— are the mechanisms that allow one (universal) Truth to have primacy over all others. Or in other words, they are the mechanisms by which the world is rendered as derivatives of 'Being' rather than derivatives of Dasein.

Read in tandem with the work of thinkers such as Wynter (2003) it becomes evident that the grammar of Science and History is precisely the context of antiblack accumulation and competition that defined 16th and 17th century Europe. Moreover, Da Silva compels us to consider not only how the Subject falls prey to these tools— History and Science— but also how the subaltern mobilization of these tools against the Subject only strengthen and obscure his power. It is on this understanding that I contend that while Prashad's work and others like it are commendable— in so far as they bring new intelligibility to the Third World and its political consequences— such efforts to understand the political promise of decolonization are ultimately missing an adequate account of antiblackness. Without centering antiblackness in a manner that does anything less than prompt an investigation into

the entire field of modern representation, Prashad can do little more than call for the fortification and continuation of antiblackness.

Informed by Da Silva's work I will conduct a close reading of Prashad's *The Darker Nations* in three sections: 'Quest,' 'Pitfalls,' and 'Assassinations.' I will demonstrate how Prashad's telling of the Third World project's story— which is avowedly anticolonial but simultaneously forgoes a centering of antiblackness— misses and obfuscates the reinforcement of antiblack grammars observable in these sections given attention to the respective Life, Death, and Ghost of the Subject. Secondly I argue that without this theoretical lens Prashad unintentionally but irrevocably perpetuates antiblackness in three of its most pernicious forms, respectively the concepts of 'Freedom/Sovereignty', 'Culture', and 'Equality'. I read the first two sections, 'Quest' and 'Pitfalls', through the lens of Da Silva's 'History' and 'Science' respectively, making use also of Anthony Anghie's (2004) work on imperialism and the making of international law. For Prashad's final section 'Assassination,' I look at Da Silva's work in tandem with that of Winnbust (2020) and Spillers (1987) to elucidate that Science and History's— that is Truth and Freedom's– grammar of implementation is antiblackness, or by its government name, fungibility. Before I begin my investigation I invoke Wynter (2003) in order to give us the necessary context to follow the Subject's lifecycle.

0. The Subject is Born (Reason)

Evident in even powerful narratives such as the 'Rise of the West'— that relies on History— are references to the Western invention of Reason as the spark that would become Western ascendency. Definitive of the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods, the dawn of

Reason is also coincident with the beginnings of the modern State.[91] Investigating the context for these manifestations— Reason and the State— is vital for a reading of Prashad's (2007) work as doing so will make evident the grammars upon which the Third World project will have to articulate itself. Wynter's work in, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation- An Argument" posits that 'Man' and his overrepresentation presupposes Black death. She points our attention– like Da Silva– to the peculiar processes happening in 15th and 16th century Renaissance Europe. At the precipice of the Age of Discovery, the apologist Priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas' defeat of the humanist Ginés de Sepúlveda in the Spanish Valladolid Debate would break grounds for God's death and the Subject's brith. The particular context of this transition is absolutely vital, as it sets the logic (grammar) of the Subject. Spain, supported by the other Christian kingdoms, having spent the earlier half of the 15th century toppling the last of 'Moorish' resistance in the *reconquista*, now had the funds to sponsor a now infamous Christopher Colombus. His journey's beginning in the late 15th century of course would lead to the 'discovery' of the New World and in turn spark an urgent need for the Christian Kingdoms to decide on what was to be done about the 'Indians.' Hitherto the metaphysical field of signification for these Christians had been defined by God, who had up until this point made no hint of the New World and its others. As such, the encounter sparked urgent debate on how to make sense of the Western European relationship to these 'suddenly existent' humans. To be clear, Western European inclination to syncretise their relationship with this 'newfound' population already presupposed indigenous subjection. The debate rather was centered squarely on how to best *justify* their

[91] Evident in seminal Enlightenment period works such as Immanuel Kant's 1871 The Metaphysic of Ethics

subjection. Previously, the Spanish *reconquista* sanctioned the subjection of the Moors on the account that they were 'Enemies of Christ,' 'pagon idolaters', and 'Christ Rejectors.' As such, this logic was simply grafted onto the Americas beginning with the 1455 papul bull, Romanus Pontifex. This direct decree from the Catholic Pope classified the Americas and their people under *terra nullius,* 'no man's land', and ceded certain parts of it to the Portuguese crown then embroiled in competition with the Castilians to claim the New World. This logic however was quickly losing coherence as the critique that the Gospel never made it to the New World– thus rendering its people ignorant rather than resistant to Christ— loomed over the Christan powers. This simple observation stood as the foundation of Las Casas' argument as he contended that the Spanish had no right to domination without 'just titles.' Wynter elucidates the underlying logic that gives rise to Las Casas' argument supporting the cessation of Indingenous enslavement when she posits the 'theocentric conception of the human.'[92] Rooted in the Juedo-Christian tradition of the Church, the human– that is, before the Subject– was defined principally by his fallen flesh. This 'theocentric conception' presupposes humanity's damnation by way of the Original Sin that is held in contrast to the Church's authority over Redeemed Flesh. As such, the entire field of signification structures the human on a spectrum between life/salvation and death/damnation. As such, Las Casas insisted on the Indigenous people's potential for them to come into the world of signification (exist) as followers of Christ. This, however, was not at all suitable for the Spanish Crown, which was engaged in heated competition of colonial accumulation. Vital to this orientation was not only the right of Spanish sovereignty to the lands in the Americas but also the Crown's justified (and thus unhibitable) procurement of slaves.

[92] Wynter (2003) pg. 305

Considering the barrior of 'just titles' the Spanish crown had no axiomatic authority to fashion slaves out of the indigenous peoples. Of course methods such as 'The Requisition' (Requerimento) in which latinized christian and legal scriptures describing both acceptance of Spanish sovereignty and acceptance of Christ to be one in the same were constructed in order to navigate around papul authority. Delegates from Spain would read these unintelligible documents to groups of indigenous people with accompanying slavers ready to capture all who 'denied christ.' This however was not a stable enough legitimacy with which to enslave indigenous people to the extent needed for empire building. Additionally, even many Spaniards themselves— such as Las Casas who Wynter cites as arguing " a mistaken (i.e., adaptive) consciousness/conscience impels and obliges no less than does a true one." — were aware of these inconsistencies.[93] To move past such loopholes and afford the Spanish Crown with the legitimacy necessary to accumulate "lands, power, and unpaid labor…" at rates compatible with colonial expansion, Wynter draws on the work of Anthony Pagden to describe the Spanish Crown's foraging of a new grounds of legitimacy:

> …at first, the Spanish state had depended on the pope's having divided up the New World between Spain and Portugal, doing this in exchange for the promise that their respective states would help to further the evangelizing mission of Christianity, the Spanish sovereigns had soon become impatient with the papacy's claim to temporal as well as to spiritual sovereignty. In consequence, King Ferdinand of Spain, wanting to claim temporal sovereignty for himself as he set out to institute the first Western European world empire, had summoned several councils comprised of jurists and theologians. He had then given them the mandate that they should come up with new grounds for Spain's sovereignty, which moved outside the limits of the sovereignty over the temporal world claimed by the papacy.[94]

[93] Wynter (2003) pg 295
[94]Ibid pg 292-293

Having set their sights beyond the missionary intentions of the Pope that had centralized so much power in the Church, the Crown, in the interest of manifesting world empire– maneuvered to acquire temporal power or otherwise the worldly power of subjection. This move however, to unseat the powers of signification from the Church (God) and to place it on the Sovereign (King), would need transformative thinking. This experiment that comes to span and define the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods finds its vanguard in Las Cases' interlocutor, Sepúlveda, and his Italian contemporaries Pico della Mirandola and Ficino. These thinkers chart what Wynter describes as 'ratiocentric conception of the human' or 'Man2' or, as Da Silva would describe, the Subject. As Wynter highlights and the historical record of the Enlightenment suggests, the new paradigm for signification had shifted from that of salvation/damnation to one of rationality whose paradigm was civilized/uncivilized. With the revitalization of classical Greco-Roman thinking that exalts Reason— Rather than Redeemed Flesh– humanity came to be defined by the struggle against madness rather than damnation. And as the Church had been the authority on Redeemed Flesh, then the State (the powers of the crown) became the authority on Reason. Crucially, however, the 'State' here, though it goes by other names such as 'common good' or 'natural law,' is not a disembodied concept but precisely the 'state' that is the European unit of domination, expansion, and accumulation aimed at the Americas and Africa. Da Silva's work is invaluable here as she describes how Reason's constitutive powers, that is, History and Science come to be wholly defined by this context. As she states, "For one thing, the philosophical statements that transformed reason from an exclusive attribute of the mind into the sovereign ruler of science and history —the sole determinant of truth and freedom — situated this process entirely

within the spatial and temporal borders of post -Enlightenment Europe."[95] The context of the birth of Reason (the Subject) is vital because it is this context that gives all coherence to how the Subject animates these productive tools, History and Science. As we have noted Wynter's "ratiocentric conception of being human" is defined on the order of Reason between rational and 'mad.' Given the context of Reason, in the midst of realizing its imperial dreams, this order is synonymous with those of civilized/uncivilized & (white) European/ 'others.' For this reason, and as Da Silva notes, the "ontological privilege accorded to historicity,"[96] the Subject's Life is defined by the exaltation of History (that is the State) as its principle marker. Simply, because the tools of Science and Reason had made the universe out of post-Enlightenment Europe, their *particular* History (or ontology) was sufficient to claim their nation or sovereignty. Furthermore, post-Enlightenment Europe's *particular* global racial Judeo-Christian social 'knowing' or Science was sufficient to claim racial supremacy and right to domination. Said another way, because the Subject's ontology (History) was born in Europe perfectly unique without equal in the whole universe, ontology and sovereignty were one in the same. Wynter makes apparent the connection between the triumph of Reason and concretization of the State as she writes:

> However, it is the latter ethic [Sepúlveda case] that, given the existential sociopolitical and commercial, on-the-ground processes that were to lead to the rapid rise of the centralizing state, to its replacement of the medieval system-ensemble with its monarchical own (Hubner 1983), and to the expanding mercantilism with its extra-European territorial conquests, exponentially accelerated was soon to triumph and become the accepted doctrine of the times.[97]

[95] Silva (2007) pg. xx
[96] Ibid pg. xix
[97] Wynter (2003) pg. 34-82

This connection is vitally important as I move into my reading of Prashad's work as it necessarily inscribes the logic of accumulation that animated an increasingly mercantile and expansionist Europe not only to the Subject himself, but also to the most foundational aspect of the modern State, that is sovereignty. In this way terra nullius or the separation of the indigenous people from their land, as well as the effects of Las Casas' 16th century insistence of replacing those unjustly enslaved natives with the Africans who had allegedly been taken under 'just titles,' are concepts that are categorical to the Subject. It is noticing how such logics of antiblack capital accumulation and subjection have been inscribed into the Subject that we can begin to observe how they are irrevocably constitutive of the State, First World or otherwise.

I. Orchestrating the Subject's Death (History)

The Darker Nations begins with a 'Quest,' the goals of which Prashad traces through a series of pivotal moments beginning in 1927 Brussels. Being explicit in delineating the "*political platform"*[98](emphasis in original) that comes to be known as the Third World, Prashad locates its birth in the coming together of the world's front against imperialism. The convening meeting of The League Against Imperialism (LAI) and the dialogue that it sparked amongst the representatives of the world's anti-colonial organizations, set into motion a powerful intention. As Prashad follows and distills this intention through time he renders moments such as the LAI and the 1955 Bandung Conference as being centrally animated by it even "Despite the infighting, debates, strategic postures, and sighs of annoyance…"[99] This intention— that is, the 'essence' of the Third World— is described clearly by Prashad as he references the term's founder, French economist Alfred Sauvy. He writes:

> Sauvy used the term Third World in a manner that resonated with how that part of the planet had already begun to act. His term, crucially, paid homage to the French Revolution, an important inspiration for the ongoing decolonization process. At the end of his article Sauvy wrote that the

[98] Prashad (2007) pg. 14
[99] Ibid pg. 32-33

> "ignored, exploited, scorned Third World, like the Third Estate, demands to become something as well."... During the tumult of the French Revolution, the Third Estate fashioned itself as the National Assembly, and *invited the totality of the population to be sovereign over it. In the same way, the Third World would speak its mind, find the ground for unity, and take possession of the dynamic of world affairs. This was the enlightened promise of the Third World."*[100] (emphasis mine)

What this first section will make evident is that this formal semblance between the French Third Estate and the Third World that Prashad highlights is perhaps more prescient than his work in *The Darker Nations* accounts for. Taking seriously the question of antiblackness in Prashad's rendering of the French Revolution as 'an important inspiration for the ongoing decolonization process' provides entryway into a full mapping of the comparison's implications. The French Third Estate (bourgeoisie) was famously held coherent and subjected by the existence of the First (clergy) and Second Estates (aristocracy) that together formed French hierarchical society. Stretched thin after the multitudes of inter-european warring as well as assisting American rebels fighting for freedom (all funded vastly by way of Third Estate taxation), France was considered to be in financial crisis when King Louis XVI was forced to call the Estates General in 1789. A rare gathering and consultation of the Three Estates, the Estates General by traditional decree gave equal decision making power to each of the Estates, despite the fact that the Third Estate represented the vast majority of French people. Their power perpetually subordinated in the Estates General, the Third Estate famously left and gathered in an indoor tennis court and declared themselves the true voice of the French people in their writing of a new French constitution under their authority as the newly formed National Assembly.[101] Soon after being subjected to the rage of the Third

[100] Ibid pg 11

[101] France: Declaration of the Right of Man and the Citizen, 26 August 1789, available at: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp — The first line of the declaration reading – "The *representatives of the French people*, organized as a National Assembly…." (emphasis mine)

Estate the First and Second Estates capitulated, marking an official end to feudal society in France and making room for the writing of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen in August of 1789. The Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen— often cited as the forebearer of the American Bill of Rights, Human Rights, and regularly invoked in 'Rise of the West' narratives[102]— and the righteous Third Estate rebellion that led up to its writing is almost certainly the laudable trajectory that Sauvy and Prashad mean by the Third Estate's and Third World's 'demand to be something as well.' This unprecedented and momentous document that for the first time describes the French polity as equal citizens under the nation rather than servants of the King is a felicitous location to consider the effects of antiblackness. Simultaneously this document— backed by the people's power of the National Assembly— declared the *universal* application of freedom and equality while also *specifically* being void of meaning for women and to a greater extent to the revolting slaves in Haiti, who had revolted in 1791 in part due to a (mis)interpretation that the Declearation had secured their freedom.[103] After the Declaritions of the Rights of Women in 1791 (which aslo makes no mention of the slaves), the erection of the First French Republic in 1792 saw the legacy of the Thrid Estate transformed into a reign of *enlightened* terror. The 'ground for unity' that supposedly bound the Third Estate, was virtually absent in the resulting French Republic as the persistent context of inter-european war and intensifying interpretations of enlightenment ideology created deep factionalism. Specifically, the infamous Committee of Public Safety led by Maximilien Robespierre established upon pain of death the supremacy of Reason and the national state. Specifically, Robespierre, heavily influenced by enlightenment thinkers such as author of the *Social Contract*, Jean-Jaques Rousseau,

[102] See works such as: Janis (1992), Ludwiskoski (1990), Ferguson (2011)
[103] Geggus (2014) pg. xvi

established worship of the 'supreme Being' (Reason) in effort to unseat Chrisitanity.[104] This was paired with the removal of chrisitian notions of the calendar and time, replacements of chrisian holidays into patriotic celebrations of the French state, and also thousands of executions by the 'enlightened' guillotine[105] of those considered to be treasonous to the 'general will' (i.e. Reason).[106] As such, the Cult of Reason became the first official atheist state religion in France, that is until Robespierre fell to the guillotine himself and the French Empire under the infamous Napoleon Bonapart began.

Considering not only the rude awakening for the enslaved Haitians who were never considered to even be a part of the universal notions of the French Revolution (even as the riches from the French colony preconditioned French life), as well as the gruesome infighting and factionalism amongst even those acknowledged members of society, Prashad's likening of the Third World to the the Third Estate begins to take on erry resonances. If in taking seriously the meaning of the Third Estate to 'find the ground of unity, and take possession of the dynamic of world affairs' we must grapple with 'unity' that presupposes the state (Cult of Reason) and 'world affairs' that are completely contoured by antiblack subjection then the same must be done for the Third World project. Specifically, I argue that this 'enlightened promise' that Prashad understands to be the laudable mission of the Third World, is not an abolishment of oppression/hierarchy but rather an appropriation of its tools mobilized by those traditionally suppressed by it. For the Third World project, as it was for the Third

[104] See Pelz (2016),Topacio (2020, and Stevenson (2013) for overview of French Revolution and Cult of Supreme Being.
[105]The guillotine was considered by its inventor, Dr. Joseph-Ignace Guillotin, to be a tool worthy of the enlightenment and humanist era as he considered it one of the most painless options to administer justice. See, de la Costa, H. (1960)
[106]Voerman (2009)

Estate, it is vital to track what is obscured by the foraging of 'unity' through the privileging of the *universal* over the *specific.* The universal, being the domain of the 'objective' or 'neutral,' is also then the space for Reason and the Subject. And as our investigation of Wynter's work suggests, the universal is nothing more than the overrepresented Subject(ive). In this way, the Third World project's claim to unity against the First and Second can be understood as a claim to the Subject's then premiere power, History, used in order to claim the Subject (Transparent "I"/ Supreme Being). To gain a fuller grasp of what it means to understand the quest of the Third World project to be— at base— the struggle to claim the position of the Subject, a closer look at the link between anti-imperial struggle, statehood, and the desire for Subjecthood is required.

Prashad tracks the birth of the Third World project amidst the anti-imperialist convening of the League Against Imperialism in 1927. Following this, Prashad guides readers through a series of gatherings in which he tracks the orientations and goals that constitute the 'essence' of this struggle. In his tracking Prashad seems to locate the most generative powers of the Third World project in its ability to afford these previously colonized groups with commensurate power on the global stage through international organizations, most notably the United Nations. As he describes the impetus and goals of the League against Imperialism he writes:

> The League against Imperialism was a direct attack on the League of Nations's preservation of imperialism in its mandate system….The "interests" of the colonized had to be curtailed, the Covenant of the League noted, because the colonized were "peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world" (Article 22).13 Instead of independence and the right to rule themselves, the league felt that "the best method of giving practical effect to [the principle of self-determination] is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by

> reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League."[107]

Here Prashad reveals that the League against Imperialism was formed specifically to address the imperialism emanating from the League of Nations. As such, the highest aspirations of the League against Imperialism is both to disrupt the preservation of imperialism within the League and also to achieve 'independence and the right to rule themselves.' Important to note is the manner in which the concepts of 'independence' and a 'right' of 'self-rule' are presented as for-granted statuses in the absence of imperialism. This is peculiar because it is also the very legacy of colonialism and imperialism that give these terms their modern coherence in the first place. Furthermore, the language of 'right' implies that a type of *recognition* (permission) is required to *be* outside of the hierarchical reach of empire. It also seems that the recognition of that 'right' is to *be* specifically in a state of self- 'rule.' Delineating these concepts as *particular* rather than givens is the inquiry needed in order to reveal the power of the Subject. Prashad goes on to describe some the most successful manifestations of this anti-imperialist, self-governing orientation as he writes:

> These regional formations had a wide appreciation for the universal struggle against imperialism, for the need for coordination and consultation toward a just world. The best evidence for this is the enthusiasm with which each of these groups, and most of the countries within them, embraced the United Nations….It could be argued that one of the reasons for the success of the United Nations in its first three decades, unlike that of the League of Nations, is that the states of the Third World saw it as their platform. It was from the United Nations's mantle that the states of Africa, America, and Asia could articulate their Third World agenda. Whereas the league was a tool of imperialism and for the maintenance of peace within Europe, the United Nations became the property of justice for the formerly colonized world. [108]

[107] Prashad (2007) pg. 21
[108] ibid pg 27

These statements bring the core elements of the Third World more into purview as Prashad notes that some of the pivotal achievements of the Third World project are concentrated into the formation and mission of the United Nations (UN). Important to note is that such a platform presupposes *state* formation of "Africa, America, and Asia" to serve as the principle medium through which to articulate their agenda of justice. Considering our exploration of Wynter's (2003) work, state formation should ring as something *particular* rather than a given/neutral framework for life. Indeed the boasting of the *state* apparatus as the given– and– required formation of the places of the Third World for admission into the 'property of justice for the formerly colonized world'— the UN— should signal none other than the irrevocably antiblack Subject. Furthermore, Prashad's appeals to the UN emphasize a '*universal* struggle for freedom' that I contend is the force that maintains the (Third World) Subject's— and therefore the (Third World) state's— coherence. The antiblackness for such a claim is lay bare at the roots of the the Third World project that Prashad delineates as the as the *universal* struggle against imperialism. Such is the 'essence' that manifested moments such as the 1927 convening of LAI in Brussels, Belgium— a strategic meeting location secured in exchange for silence during proceedings about the *particular* struggle of those subjected to atrocities happening concurrently in the Congo.

This is reiterated more totally as Prashad scopes out the Third World project in its post WWII formation at the 1955 Bandung Conference. Walking readers through the unprecedented dialogues that gave shape to the Bandung Conference, Prashad demonstrates the formation of the 'Bandung Spirit,' that is, the Third World project at its base. As Prashad walks readers through some of the conference's most pressing topics, he describes the increasing legitimacy of the UN to be reflective of this spirit. On the topic of the newly

liberated states in Asia and Africa he notes how this spirit animated their call for inclusion into the UN as he writes:

> Nehru, in the Indian Parliament after Bandung, underscored the importance of the United Nations after the conference: "We believe that from Bandung our great organization, the United Nations, has derived strength. This means in turn that Asia and Africa must play an increasing role in the conduct and destiny of the world organization." The final communique at Bandung demanded that the United Nations admit all those *formerly colonized states,* such as Libya and Vietnam, then denied admission into its body ("For effective cooperation for world peace, membership in the United Nations should be universal").[109]

Here Prashad evokes renowned nationalistist, Jawaharlal Nehru's voice to underscore the seeming laudable legitimization and support for the UN that is rendered as evidence of the 'Bandung Spirit's' nature. Again, the pattern of universal principles being exalted to the point of obscuring vital particularities is evident in the *universal* inclusion into the UN that predicates *state* formation. Namely, this praised call to include the formerly colonized states is to the obscurity of the fact that many of those concurrently colonized places who had not yet 'won' or capitulated to state articulation were struggling against several of the UN's founding and most empowered members such as the UK and France. In this way the 'unity' definitive of Bandung and the Third World project that is one foraged around anticolonial struggle and is mobilized categorically in realization of the state. Furthermore, this state realization is for the prized purpose of finding recognition on the *universal* platform of states, the UN. This call for the UN is repeated as Prashad moves through talks on the then highly pressing issue of disarmament. The world's superpowers, having ensnared the globe between

[109]Ibid pg 41

their nuclear missiles, animated the Third World to strengthen the UN's legitimacy. Prashad writes:

> The racist disregard for human life occasioned a long discussion at Bandung on disarmament. In the conference communique, the delegates argued that the Third World had to seize the reins of the horses of the apocalypse. The Third World had a "duty toward humanity and civilization to proclaim their support for disarmament." As the nuclear powers dithered over talks, the Third World called on the United Nations to insist on dialogue and the creation of a regime to monitor arms control.[110]

Presumably, the Third World's prerogative to 'seize the reins of the horses of the apocalypse' is somewhat akin to Sauvy and Prashad's description of the Third World's 'demand to be something as well.' In both it seems that state formation is necessary to struggle for 'humanity' and 'civilization' in the universal (recognized) arena of the UN. Again, the universality and implied neutrality of the UN are used to obfuscate the particularity of not only the state formation required, but also the concepts of 'humanity' and 'civilization.' In a manner identical to the concepts such as 'independence' and 'self-rule' the concepts of 'humanity' and 'civilization' are articulated as axiomatic statues in the absence of, in this case, 'the nuclear powers.' As our reference to Wynter's (2003) work has elucidated, however, these concepts are far from for-granted, but rather arise at a particular moment in time with specific functions and intentions. Such functions and intentions have also been demonstrated to be those of the antiblack Subject bent on European competition and domination. All the same, Prashad describes romantically the calls strengthening of the UN platform in the equally pressing conversations being had on economic cooperation:

> The Bandung proposals called for the formerly colonized states to diversify their economic base, develop indigenous manufacturing capacity, and thereby

[110] Ibid pg 42

> break the colonial chain. SUNFED and the other UN bodies had been drafted with the view to enable these developments… The near-universal acclaim for the formation of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1964 is evidence of the widespread agreement within the Third World on some anti-imperialist strategy for economic development.[111]

Once again it is imperative for this analysis to interrogate what is presented as for-granted, namely the concepts of 'economic development' and 'manufacturing capacity' that will supposedly 'break the colonial chain.' Prashad presents these concepts as evidently applicable values to the determinant of an analysis that would evince these concepts in their modern sense as being contingent upon a world of colonial hierarchy and antiblack accumulation. By 'modern sense' I mean to refer to the temporal context of the Bandung proposals for economic development. It is critical to understand that this 'economic development' must occur at a time when the economy is defined by an antiblack hierarchy and colonial accumulation. Thus far some of the most pressing topics for the Third World project— as Prashad tracks them through this historic conference— namely, economic development, regimented nuclear arms control, and acceptance of those formally colonized states are all predicated upon the assumption of the state form. Serving as a platform for the Third World to "...claim its space in world affairs, not just as an adjunct of the First or Second worlds, but as a player in its own right"[112] the UN comes to signify the quest for 'independence,' 'humanity,' 'justice,' *universally* for the world's formerly colonized. I argue that for the Third World to become 'a player in its own right' in a matrix made legible through antiblack subjection and accumulation, is to reproduce the powers of the Subject, the Transparent 'I.'

[111]Ibid pg 44
[112] Ibid pg 45

Turning first to Da Silva, I posit that the Third World 'essence' that Prashad describes is an appropriation of the Subject through its ultimate expression, the state apparatus. More specifically, the Third World claims to statehood– since such formation is not a given as it is for the First and Second Worlds— must delineate and assert for itself its own justification for existing, or rather, its own ontology. For the 'West,' this justification is self-evident due to the History, or the regionally-held *explanation*, that makes coherent the French right to France, the Spanish right to Spain, the German right to Germany and so forth. This is made more clear in remembering Wynter's (2003) description of the 'overrepresentation' of ratio-centric Man. This overrepresentation refers to how the *particula*r (context specific) stories/explanations that give western Europe coherence, in the triumph of objective Reason, are projected to be *universal* explanations/stories. In this way, in the formation of the Subject, History– one of the Subject's most productive tools, the singular authority 'to explain'– was exalted as the ontological marker. As Wynter's (2003) work demonstrates, this 'explanation' is precisely the one foraged by King Ferdinand that took indigenous dispossession and competitive antiblack subjection/accumulation as its base assumption. Specifically, as the Subject's *others* had been "described as lacking reason and placed outside of history"[113] post-Enlightenment Europe's ontological authority (that is History) was understood as *synonymous* with sovereign authority. Remembering the allegory invoked by Warren (2018) and the dynamic that revealed that while Augustus was a 'free-black' his freedom was irrevocably of a different nature than that of Travis' and Darcy's. Similarly, within the power to define the context of representation (tell the story) lies the fodder that gives meaning to the concept of 'freedom.' For those whose heritage is the Subject, History

[113]Da Silva (2007) pg xxi

sanctions domination and for those whose heritages were used as a foil to create the Subject, History is a call for 'justice' or more precisely recuperation. In other words, subaltern claims to statehood is categorically a capitulation to the terms of the Subject. For the Third World project it means the appropriation of priviaging of the *universal* over the *particular* in an effort to reproduce History. Prashad has made apparent that for the Third World project, the 'universal struggle against imperialism' that flattened dynamics in between and amongst these formally colonized groups, serves as that History. Though it may at first glance seem laudable or desirable to create an ontology rooted in anti-colonial/anti-imperialist struggle, memory of Augustus's allegory warns that if 'freedom-granted' can be taken as evidence of its reference, bondage, then the 'anti-colonial' and 'anti-imperial' must be taken as evidence of their referents, the colonial and the imperial.

This dynamic is most clearly demonstrated in asserting that the resonances that these concepts take on in the *Darker Nations,* works like it, and the sentiments expressed by the heros they write about rehearses what Da Silva calls the 'sociohistoric logic of exclusion' (SHLE). Specifically, she states that this logic allows, "...critical racial theorists [to] write the racial subaltern as barred from universality and the conception of humanity (the self-determined subject of history) that the transparency thesis sustains."[114] Essentially, the SHLE renders the subjection and oppression faced by the Third World as a result of having their Subjecthood (right to 'independent' state formation), which should be universal, *disrespected* (unrecognized), rather than a product of Subjecthood itself. As such, the essential struggle of the Third World project for 'freedom','self-determination', and 'sovereignty' bypasses a critique of specifically antiblack formation of statehood and vie instead to have its own state

[114]Ibid pg. 7

(antiblack Subject) recognized on equal terms. As such, Prashad's description of the Third World project as definitively represented by the UN– an organization in which several of its members were also the organization's antagonist— becomes more consistent. For statehood, entrance into universality is privileged above all else. Da Silva makes this apparent as she offers germain critique to Cornel West's (1997) 'historic veil' that considers the 'black Subject.' She writes:

> And yet, in writings of the black subject, one consistently meets a transparent I, buried under historical (cultural or ideological) debris, waiting for critical strategies that would clean up the negative self-representations it absorbs from prevailing racist discourse. No doubt symbolic and actual violence (enslavement, lynching, police brutality) marks our trajectory as modern subaltern subjects. Nevertheless, the privileging of historicity limits accounts such as Cornel West's (1997) construct of the "historic 'Veil'" that writes the black subject as an effect of the "interiorizing" of violence limited. What is behind the veil? Is there a racial subject, *a black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories? If this is so —if before racial violence there is a pristine black subject fully enjoying its "humanity," thriving in self -determined (interior or temporal) existence, t*hat can refuse to "interiorize" and actualize violence —why does it not do so? *I think that this desire to lift the veil to reveal an original self -determined* black subject fails to ask a crucial question: How did whiteness come to signify the transparent I and blackness to signify otherwise? Because it does not ask such questions, the metaphor of the veil rehearses the sociohistorical logic of exclusion… And, in the case of West's account, it (re)produces the black subject as a pathological (affectable) I, a self-consciousness hopelessly haunted by its own impossible desire for transparency.[115] (emphasis mine)

Highly illuminating, especially in juxtaposition to Augustus's allegory, Da Silva's description of West's 'Historic Veil' prompts an investigation into the *terms* of struggle rather than a fixation on describing struggle in terms of *injustice*. Her interrogation of the 'black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories' is a powerful one as it brings attention to the fact that 'blackness' is a not a category that has coherence outside of an

[115]Ibid pg. 8

antiblack world. Said another way, 'blackness,' like 'freedom' and 'self-rule' despite being overrepresented as existing (dasein) outside of the oppression that caused them to arise, they are irrevocably constituted of it. In this way to assert a 'black' history, one that presupposes a 'black' sovereign is to legitimize the productive forces that gave rise to 'blackness' namely antiblackness. Parallelly, this dynamic is also definitive of why Augustus's freedom exists not only externally to him, but also wholly in the terms laid out by his masters. Through her description of West's 'Historic Veil' as a rehearsal of the SHLE, Da Silva helps to better our grasp of what it means to appropriate the Subject as a means to demand freedom. In particular, the productive powers of the Subject– in this case History— are strengthened as the case the subaltern makes for freedom is based on a drive to appropriate and have respected the existence of the very same Transparent "I" that rendered the *particular* History of Europe as the *universal* History of the world in the subaltern. In short, the drive to articulate a Third World 'sovereign' that precedes our modern trajectories ('a player in it's own right') that then animates the demands for 'freedom', 'humanity,' and 'independence' invokes the very same antiblack productive forces that define the Subject.

Given this analysis, the Third World project's 'essence' that Prashad describes can be better understood as the struggle to claim the Subject. Without the appropriate centering of antiblackness that leads to an investigation into the terms of modern global signification, Prashad's work obscures that the 'Quest' of the Third World– which I have described as an appropriation of the Subject— marks also what Da Silva describes as the Subject's– much like God's– 'death.' Specifically, the Third World's call for a universal platform with the capacity to recognize their presupposed national formations is what Da Silva articulates as the "demise of the metanarratives of reason and history that compose modern

representation."[116] If the life of the Subject is defined by the use of its exalted productive power History to split the world between the sovereign and *terra nullius,* civilized and uncivilized, White Western European and 'other,' then the Subject's death is defined by legitimization of the *formerly colonized state.* As the Third World project is understood as an appropriation of the state/subjecthood, then the proliferation of History, the Subject's power to justify or *explain* existence (as a state), is expected. This is because the Subject's metanarrative having overrepresented Western Europe to be sole place of sovereignty (as the rest of the world is terra nullius) quickly falls apart once these 'suddenly speaking others, the peoples formerly described as lacking reason and placed outside of history' demand equal recognition as states. The result is, as Da Silva describes, "a proliferation of smaller 'reasons' and 'histories' [that] social analysts would describe in terms of the ascension of culture."[117] The capitulation of this metanarrative and the death of the Subject however should not be understood as his disappearance, but rather it is his cloning in each claim to statehood articulated by the Third World. And as Da Silva suggests, 'culture' comes to serve as the explanation that justifies how there could be Reason and thus sovereignty anywhere else but in 'enlightened' Europe. In this way 'culture' renders all of the world as iterations of the Subject, and in so doing allows the specificity of state formation to fade into the background as the state is held as a universal constant while the discrepancies between them can be explained away with 'cultural differences' rather than with an interrogation of the coerced, capitalist, and antiblack terms of engagement, i.e. the state. For Da Silva the proliferation and recognition of formerly colonized states into apparati such as the UN that use the principle of universal inclusion to calibrate all statehoods as equal signals "a new site of political

[116]Ibid pg. 7
[117]Ibid pg. xxi

struggle— the politics of representation, that is, the struggle for the recognition of cultural difference…"[118] For Prashad's work, which lacks a serious grappling with antiblackness, the proliferation of formerly colonized states and their acceptance into the UN was supposed to provide aspirational gains. Indeed Prashad's work, lacking an antiblack analytical framework, sustains a reading of the Third World project that romanticizes its ultimately antiblack goals and orientations. Prashad writes:

> The Third World "nation" did not fully live up to its promise of radical democracy, where every person would be constituted by the state as a citizen, and where each citizen in turn would act through the state to construct a national society, economy, and culture.[119]

Without any engagement with the antiblack logics of the Subject that give coherence to what a 'Third World nation' could mean, Prashad obfuscates and romanticizes the engulfment of the whole world into the 'cult' of antiblack Reason that state formation implies. Furthermore, in romanticizing the antiback dreams of the Third World project, Prashad also obscures how the productive tools of Reason– History, and as we will explore, Science— are made more powerful as he draws attention away from the very condition of state/subjecthood in order to describe what he understands as the circumstantial 'Pitfalls' of the the Third World project.

II. The Subject's Death (Science)

In the second part of Prashad's work, he guides readers through a series of historical moments that trace what Prashad understands to be the internal failures of the Third World project. As I have made clear in the first section, while Prashad's framing of the 'essence' of the Third World project renders it as emancipatory, his engagements with the project's

[118]Ibid pg. xxi
[119] Prashad (2007) pg 122

'Pitfalls' are articulated largely as betrayals. This aspect is apparent as Prashad begins his assessment with Fanon's writing on the trajectories of the National Liberation Front (FLN) that liberated Algeria. Prashad, noting that Fanon's chapter, "The Pitfalls of National Consciousness" was written before the FLN's victory writes:

> It was a cautionary note to Fanon's comrades. The disciplinary imperatives of an armed struggle, and the need to create a simple ideological and military battlefield, might leak into state construction and distort the egalitarian dynamic of national liberation.[120]

Prashad frames Fanon's cautionary tale highlighting the dangers of ideological distortion of the national liberation project as prescient and telling of the fate of the Third World project. In this section Prashad maps a detailed history to underscore how the idyllic vision of the Third World project— in which every person is co-constituted with the state in a 'radical democracy' — was corrupted by forces internal to the Third World itself. Prashad's critical analysis comes to identify ideological distortions relating to centralization, 'culture,' and factionalism that corroborate Fanon's warnings. While I agree that these factors aided in derailing Prasshad's description of a most realized Third World project, I argue that these factors are inevitable symptoms of the Third World's claim to state/subjecthood. Furthermore, I contend that Prashad's misreading of these factors precludes an analysis that would reveal their presence as evidence of the Subject's death that is simultaneously his 'cultured' proliferation. In other words, the 'Pitfalls' that Prashad describes as circumstantial I contend are inevitable consequences of the Third World successful reproduction of the Subject. Furthermore, I reference Da Silva's conception of 'Science,' in order to demonstrate how such a misreading allows for the obfuscation of the antiblack logics of 'culture.'

[120]Ibid

In his analysis Prashad identifies several factors described as counterintuitive to the Third World project. Principally, he names the failures of the numerous national liberation movements to develop an *appropriate* relationship to state power. Namely he writes:

> The great flaws in the national liberation project came from the assumption that political power could be centralized in the state, that the national liberation party should dominate the state, and that the people could be demobilized after their contribution to the liberation struggle… Fanon identified this problem before the FLN came to power, and his insights help us navigate through one of the principal failures of the Third World project: the lack of effective socialized democracy."[121]

Here it is evident that Prashad's work identifies the *type* of state formation as a central flaw in the national liberation project. Rather than interrogate state formation itself, it is taken as axiomatic and instead the focus is an analysis of how a *socially democratic* (effectively the *right*) state failed to form. Apparent in Prashad's work is an understanding that the socially democratic state is reflective of the Third World project and as such, Prashad analysis tracks the national liberation parties' *problematic* actualization of state power (i.e. centralizing) as a type of betrayal to the Third World project. Prashad offers some points of salvation for these parties that led many of their nations out of colonial rule as he notes "... the power of imperialism to insinuate itself into a weak civil society."[122] Giving some credence to the compelling nature of imperial capital that could influence such 'weak civil societies' to assume more centralized (rather than socially democratic) state forms, Prashad makes room for these betrayals to be a result of the circumstantial power differentials. I contend however that such analytical leeways precludes a critical reading of those power differentials as indicative of the grammar of modern world order. This is made more evident as Prashad also

[121]Ibid pg. 123
[122]Ibid pg. 124

nods to the effects of temporal distance of anti-colonial liberation to wane and warp the integrity of national liberation parties. He writes, “Many national liberation politicians, having grown up with the belief that their party represented the entire population, denied the different and often mutually exclusive interests that rent the social fabric.”[123] In an attempt to effectively explain away how national liberation parties could seemingly lose sight of their progressive dreams, Prashad’s framework forgoes recognition of this suppression of the *particular* interests of the various pieces of the ‘social fabric’ in favor of the *universal* representation in liberation parties as a manifestation of the Subject. Prashad’s analysis of the FLN in Algeria renders clear evidence of Subject’s formation as mere dogmatism to an ‘outdated’ unity or malignant co-optation of the state apparatus. Specifically, Prashad cites the 1964 Charter of the Algerian Revolution warning against the one-party system that could "lead to a petit-bourgeois dictatorship, or to the formation of a bureaucratic class that uses the state apparatus as an instrument to satisfy its personal interests, or finally to a regime of personal dictatorship that reduces the party to a simple political police."[124] Such fatal scenarios to the integral aims of the national liberation project— and the Third World project—are described by Prashad as befalling Algeria and much of postcolonial Africa despite the foresite of Fanon and the 1964 Charter. Falling indiscriminately amongst countries claiming both the ‘Right’ (capitalist-state) and the ‘Left’ (socialist-state), Prashad describes the idea of ‘national politics’ as being central to the justification of one-party rule. Prashad references the defenders of the one-party state in places such as, “Guinea (1958), Congo (1960), Ivory Coast (1961), Tanzania (1963), Malawi (1963), and Kenya (1964),” as considering rival parties as “have[ing] generally little interest for the great majority of the

[123]iIbid pg. 129
[124]Ibid pg. 128

people."[125] As such, the national party can be understood as having already claimed the seat of *universal* representation or the 'objectively' 'True' voice of the people that is the foundational justification for the state. This is apparent as Prashad observes the logic of the one-party state writing, "To break the polity into factions would obviate the idea that the freedom struggle had united the people with one interest, to create a nation against imperialism."[126] Here it is evident that for the great many national liberation movements that enacted anti-democratic rule there was an intimate relationship between the integrity of the state and the legitimacy of the *universally* defining claims to anti-colonial struggle. Put another way, formally-colonized state formation is predicated upon the maintenance of its sole authority to *explain,* i.e. History. This History as we have explored serves as the foundational ontological justification for the state's existence and authority. In short, in order to claim statehood (an invention of post-Enlightenment Europe) the post-colonial states would have to use the same productive tools (History's power to explain) in order to perform the same 'overrepresentation' that gave coherence to Europe's for-granted (overrepresented) sovereignty. As Part 0 and I demonstrate, the Life of the Subject is characterized by the conflation of a specific European *explanation*/ontology (History) and the abstract (universal) notion of sovereignty. By this mechanism all the world was foiled as intrinsically illegitimate to give coherence to post-Enlightenment Europe's intrinsic legitimacy. In the same way, the anti-democratic hold that national liberation parties assume over their respective states, is done so in the effort to produce a legitimacy that is to be contrasted against rival parties' illegitimacy. Additionally, this legitimacy is supported by asserting that its roots (like the state) are not circumstantial (and thus limited) but perennial and presuppositional to state

[125]Ibid
[126]Ibid

formation. Specifically, the 'idea that the *freedom struggle had united the people* with one interest, to create a nation against imperialism' is indicative that the 'freedom struggle' that begets an identity as a 'nation against imperialism' functions like the 'black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories' that Da Silva invokes in the SHLE. The 'black sovereign' — that supposedly existed before the terror that gave such a being its shape— is the linchpin that makes coherent the demands to rectifiy the black soverign's illigitamte subjection. For the SHLE the 'black sovereign' functions to write 'blackness' not as a subjective product of white solipsism, but as an axiomatic (universal/objective) category in its own right. Similar to the Third Estate's refusal to be defined by the First or Second Estates and its 'demand to be something *as well,*' the black sovereign animates assertions to have its Transparent 'I' respected while leaving the antiblack source for the Transparent 'I's legitimacy unchallenged. By the same mechanism then anticolonal states perform the SHLE as 'freedom struggle' is mobilized as the axiomatic (universal/objective) category that commands legitimacy beyond the anti-freedom that beget it, affording it the capacity to justify its primacy over the state while leaving the concept of state formation unchallenged.

Considering Da Silva's framework, a reading of Prashd's 'Pitfalls' elucidates that without an adequate centering of antiblackness the Third World's attempt to articulate itself in the grammar used to articulate the antiblack 'cult of Reason' can be thoroughly obscured. It is for this reason that I locate what Prashad's understands to be prohibitive betrayals to the Third World project as rather a product of its goals, that is, the orientation to claim the state/subjecthood. Consequently, Prashad's analysis fogoes an observation of how the assertion of state/subjecthood in the Third World causes a fatal crisis for the Subject's

command of the metanarrative, while strengthening his powers as many 'cultured' versions of him proliferate.

In order to make this more apparent we look deeper into Prashad's analysis of a quickly shifting mid 20th century global terrain. After naming the issues facing national liberation movements, Prashad names the fall of the 'Left' as another source of the Third World project's failure. Specifically, Prashad delineates that manipulations of 'culture' or 'tradition' were mobilized to the effect of precluding the realization of the Third World project. As such, Prashad describes the political platform forged at the Bandung Conference as being hijacked by "the most conservative, even reactionary social classes."[127] Prashad describes these 'social classes' to be rejecting the progressive Left on the basis of its 'modern', 'western' influence and are understood to offer up a 'cruel cultural nationalism' in exchange. Again, Prashad's framework, lacking the necessary structure that attention to antiblackness would provide, circumscribes analytical attention to the *circumstantial* domination of many post-colonial states by particular 'social classes.' Described as emphasizing 'racialism, religion, and hierarchy' the political manifestations of these 'social classes' mobilized what Prashad details as a "manufactured vision of 'tradition.'"[128] According to Prashad's narration of the 'manufacturing' of these 'cruel cultures' and 'traditions' is in part due to a dogmatic shunning of the 'West' to the detriment of the true values of the Third World project. To this effect, Prashad invokes the myth of Bali to demonstrate the mechanics of 'culture' he writes:

> The myth of Bali as paradise and Arabs as puritanical, or Hindus as hierarchical and Africans as tribal-all these visions of tradition emerged with a vengeance from the old social classes as a way to battle the Left, and once the latter had been shunned, claim that they were the authentic representatives of

[127]Ibid pg. 163
[128]Ibid pg. 163

> their civilization. "The Bali myth," the historian Robinson argues, for instance, "has helped to falsify history in a way that has served the people in power while silencing those who have suffered injustice."[129]

Prashad, adhering to a reading of what Da Silva might describe as the 'ascension of culture' as incidental of rather than wholly endogenous to the Third World project, misses how eerily similar the proliferation and employment of this 'cruel culture' against the Left is to that of the articulation of the Third World project itself. The formal semblances between the unity formed amongst the 'suddenly speaking others' of the LAI in opposition to the imperialism emanating from the League of Nations and the unity formed amongst 'the old social classes' against the 'Western' Left are stark. These similarities, I argue, are not a coincidence. Rather this proliferation of 'histories' (false or otherwise) that then sanction suppression in favor of their need to be legitimized by unrelinquished control of the state rehearses the Transparent "I" in the Third World. Prashad's analytical framework, without the capacity to guide inquiry into the very terms of state formation, fails to recognize the state as a constant in both those anti-democratic national liberation projects and those projects of 'cruel culture.' Regardless of 'Right' or 'Left' orientation, irrevocable claim to the state remains the legitimate method to have authenticity (interiority, Transparency) recognized. In this way, the various 'histories' and 'ontologies' that proliferate in the 70's and 80's that Prashad describes as the destroying the Left and thus betraying the Third World project, are various groups' attempt to claim subjecthood (the Transparent 'I') in the only legitimate fashion, via the state. Furthermore, just as these 'manufactured vision[s] of tradition' and 'national politics' are threatened by anything that could unseat the (culturally) *authentic* or *anticolonial* ontology (justification/explanation/History) respectively, so too is the Subject threatened. Specifically

[129]Ibid pg. 163

the 'original' Subject born of European overrepresentation rather than it's anticolonial replicas, who's powers to explain (History) and describe (Science) were supposedly unmatched in all the extra-European world, no doubt loses legitimacy as the post-colonial state's 'histories' and 'ontologies' that afford them legitimacy are successfully recognized as sovereign states. In conceding that the Subject's *others* have their own 'Reasons' (ontologies) the Subject admits his own history is a 'falsified' one and is thus rendered 'dead.' To be clear however, the Subject's Death is a far cry from the disappearance of his powers and logics as now the whole world can be said to legitimize them. As Da Silva notes:

> I argue that the markers of the death of man —the proliferating subaltern (racial, ethnic, postcolonial) "ontologies and epistemologies" —indicate how the powers of the subject remain with us, that the strategies of the modern Will to Truth, the tools of science and history, remain the productive weapons of global subjection.[130]

The method for this simultaneous death and resurrection is what Prashad and Da Silva both describe as 'culture.' Though they refer to the same word, without the component of antiblackness Prashad underestimates the full implications of 'culture' onto the Third World project. As we have seen, 'culture' as described in *The Darker Nations* is invoked as the "...cruel cultural nationalism that emphasized racialism, religion, and hierarchy."[131] In other words, 'culture' is employed to delineate the *particularities* that enter into and consequently disrupt the successful working of a perfectly tenable state apparatus. Da Silva on the other hand offers a less limited notion as she describes "...in the late twentieth century the cultural seems to have displaced the nation and the racial to become the governing political signifier."[132] Da Silva makes reference to the same time period that Prashad defines with the

[130] Da Silva (2007) pg. xix
[131] Prashad (2007) pg. 163
[132] Da Silva (2007) pg. xxxii

internal fragmentation due to cultural and ideological differences and notes that 'culture' takes on new meaning as it is now able to refer to both the Scientific descriptive marker, race, and Historic explanatory marker, the nation. If up until this point this analysis has used History to denote the Subject's authority to explain (ontology), then Science should be understood as the Subject's authority to describe (epistemology). Looking back to Wynter's (2003) work, as History was used to justify Europe's intrinsic sovereignty, Science was mobilized as the racial Judeo-Christian social 'knowing' that rendered 'white' supremacy coherent. This authority as a metanarrative however is interrupted as the Third World claims the 'enlightened promise' and 'takes possession of the dynamic of world affairs.' In today's multicultural and globalizing world, Subjecthood has become a given rather than the sole privilege of Europe. And as such hierarchical distinction of a given 'subject' is done along the lines of a new social knowledge (Science), that is, 'culture.' Culture now comes to describe why/how there can be many Subjects i.e. many histories, many Reasons all referential to the irrevocably antiblack post-Enlightenment invention. In this way the Subject (Reason) has sacrificed himself for his Ghost to be represented in the increasing 'multicultural' global world. With this framework Da Silva is able to aptly frame what the implications of a globe united in wielding the antiblack forces of History and Science represented as 'culture' as she reflects:

> I become more convinced that the power of cultural difference lies in its reconfiguration of the racial and the nation, concepts that instituted the political subjects described in accounts of postmodernity and globalization. After all, their generation witnessed a return to political economy unleashed by mobilizations against the neoliberal reorganization of the global economy coincident with the institutionalization of postmodern and global accounts of cultural change, as reflected in recent international governmental and nongovernmental organizations' stipulations that multiculturalism and diversity should now constitute the new standard for social justice.[133]

[133] Ibid pg. xxiii

Here Da Silva describes a powerful shift that has taken place to give rise to this order of globalization and multiculturalism. Namely, that shift is the unseating of History as the primary ontological marker by Reason's other tool, Science (culture). This 'reconfiguration' that Da Silva refers to is the privileging of 'culture' (a mechanism justifying the Subject's many forms) with the authority to explain (ontology). Culture, as it has the simultaneous capacity to presuppose both 'nation'(History) and 'race' (Science) is able to proliferate the supreme Being (Reason) wantonly. As such, the Subject's antiblack logic has been rendered even more ubiquitous as 'culture' has come to command its own economy of value and exchange. As Da Silva highlights, the new standard for justice is the valuation of 'cultural difference' implied in multiculturalism and neoliberalism. Conversely, Prashad, without the proper analytical attention to antiblackness and the shape it gives to the very terms that the Third World project articulated itself on, ends his critique of the Third World project echoing Fanon's warnings of dogmatism and appropriation of the state apparatus. In doing so, Prashad's work fails to signal that the very orientations of the Third World project facilitated the advent of a fortified system of antiblack accumulation ensured by the valuation of *differences* in and of themselves. This leads Prashad to further obfuscate the mechanics of this antiblack grammar as he reads them as simple capitulations to the lures of capital in his final section 'Assassinations.'

III. The Subject's Ghost (Fungibility)

Prashad's final section 'Assassinations' is an inditment of the harrowing inequality engendered by imperialist instutitions such as the IMF and the World Bank. Tracing the history of the fall the USSR that gave way to the US lead globalized 'dollar' capitalism, Prashed thoroughly delineates how "The victory of that camp, those that welcomed IMF -

driven globalization, is as responsible for the assassination of the Third World as the social forces (imperialism and finance capital) that were its major adversaries from the 1950s onward."[134] Taking readers again through several pivotal moments Prashad asserts that the central assault was a neglect of "effective equality"[135] that compromised the sovereignty of the Third World nations. Part of his argument is centered on an examination of the dynamics of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the 70s. This group, founded in the 1960s, includes all those states that were neither for or against any major power bloc. Of these, he turns to Singapore's Sinnathamby Rajaratnam whose address urges NAM states to accept neoliberal growth. Of this he writes:

> Rajaratnam spoke for a rising new class across the NAM states. Industrial, agricultural, and financial elites who gained through several decades of import-substitution policies now outgrew their training wheels and restraints. Reasonable growth and considerable accumulation by this class gave them the confidence to exert their own class interests over the needs of their population. Many of the most aggressive leaders of this class had been born toward the end of the era of full-blown imperialism. They had experienced neither colonialism nor anticolonialism. The structures that enabled them to flourish now seemed to be shackles. The intellectual leaders of this class spent time in international institutions (such as the IMF and the World Bank)....This infusion of skills and business philosophies enthused the emergent bourgeoisie in the darker nations, which saw the future through their eyes rather than the lens of the Third World agenda.[136]

It can be seen here that Prashad is tracking a shift in loyalties as the moral and ideological crises of colonialism and neocolonialism begin to fade into the background. In its wake the rising generations find other metrics with which to hitch their political agendas. Specifically, Prashad aptly talks about those fading ideals as 'shackles' to the ambitions of the new guard in the Third World. Important to note here is that these 'shackles' are the very ideological

[134] Prashad (2007) pg. 209
[135] Ibid pg. 216
[136] Ibid pg. 212

grounds of anticolonialism that ignited the creation of their nations. I highlight this because this appeal to move beyond the ideological confines of the right to sovereignty, for the interest of capital no less, is a story we have recanted earlier here. Namely, this drive is reminiscent of the drive that inspired King Ferdinand to move away from the evangelizing mission of the Church to that of the accumulation mission of the empire. I draw our attention to this similarity in order to suggest that, contrary to Prashad's framework that labels this shift in loyalties as an 'Assassination' of the Third World agenda, I contend that this subjection of moral authority (anticolonial/anti-imperialist struggle) to that of accumulation is a principal product of the Third World's claim to statehood. This is iterated as Prashad moves his focus to India as representative— along with the East Asian 'Tigers' and Brazil— of those states that "...played a crucial role in the derailment of the Third World agenda"[137]Writing of how economic and political agendas came into conflict with one another, he writes:

> The changes in the general character of NAM were reflected in the changes within India. By the mid-1970s, India's economic agenda floundered…. A dissatisfied population rose in a host of rebellions, … by a combination of the Left and the Right, assaulted the nationalist credentials of the Congress Party. The party of the freedom movement claimed to rule with the anticolonial nationalist agenda, but it adopted economic policies inimical to the vast mass of the population….The rhetoric of socialism came alongside a set of policies designed to maintain the unequal political economy. In reaction to the growing unrest, Indira Gandhi's regime declared an Emergency, withdrew the Constitution, and began to rule by decree… In the first few days of the Emergency, in October 1975, Gandhi announced a twenty-point program that followed to the letter a series of demands made by the World Bank to the government of India…When the Emergency ended in 1977 and much of its program withered, the drive to liberalize the economy, draw in foreign capital, and welcome a relationship with the IMF remained.[138]

[137] Ibid pg. 215
[138] Ibid pg. 216

Here I aim to show how these events as described by Prashad, rehearse the ultimate triumph of capital accumulation over that of unifying ideology. Even as the party made their moral claims they were completely subdued by the call of capital accumulation that allowed the World Bank to determine the Indian economy. Even the highly conservative Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) who came to power by suppressing Punjabi and Assamese secessionism with appeals to the Hindu majority completely capitulated to liberalization. This allows Prashad to announce that "Cultural nationalism opened the door for IMF -driven globalization."[139] He goes on to say that, "When IMF -led globalization became the modus operandi, the elites of the postcolonial world adopted a hidebound and ruthless xenophobia that masqueraded as patriotism"[140] The pattern that Prashad seems to deduce is one between that of 'cultural' forces— or more broadly defined as 'interest groups' — and that of capitulation to neoliberal global accumulation (IMF/World Bank). In other words, and as we have demonstrated thus far, Prashad's inquiry without any references to the antiblack logics that give rise to this world of sovereign states fails to interrogate the metric with which the Third World 'fails' its mission. In order to build this analysis I turn to the work of Anthony Anghie in order to elucidate the dynamics that Prashad describes. Anghie situates their analysis in the inherently unequal formation of the system of international law. As such they write:

> …the relationship between the state and minorities, as it has been characterized in international law, as reproducing the dynamic of difference; the minority is characterized as the 'primitive' that must be managed and controlled in the interests of preserving the modern and universal state. These were the interests that were subordinated by the Third World state to assert and consolidate itself.[141]

[139] Ibid pg. 218
[140] Ibid pg. 217
[141] Anghie (2005) pg. 207

Here we can read Anghie's "primitive" as '*particular'* in the way that I have used it to signify those 'others' or those otherwise left out of the *universality* afforded to those (white) European states. As such, Anghie can be understood as drawing a direct connection between the dynamics that characterize the First-Third World dynamic to the dynamics that characterize the Third World's relationship to its people. This assertion aligns with the findings of Part II that describe the sacrifice of the Subject in order to strengthen its powers as the Third World makes use of them to create the Subjects 'cultured' others. Anghie, unlinke Prashad, is investigating not just the inequities between sovereign states, but an investigation into how these sovereignties are weighted differently. Anghie, also without a lens of antiblackness, refers ambiguously to this as the 'dynamic of difference' that is maintained amongst *equal* sovereigns. Anghie however allows this notion to guide an investigation into the entire field of international law as they write:

> Further, the understanding that developed and developing states had 'different interests', while no doubt true and accurate in suggesting the problems caused by colonialism, also reduced their most radical implications: after all, historically, among European states, it was precisely the purpose of international law to reconcile differing interests. Seen in this way, the 'challenge' presented by the new states was not particularly novel or especially daunting, for the new states were really presenting another variation of a very familiar problem, that of reconciling the interests of particular sovereign states with the broader concerns of the international community.[142]

Anghie here begins to give us some insight into how 'equality' can be seen as operating in the logic of antiblackness. Precisely in the assertions that the creation of new sovereignties did not only fail to pose a crisis to the system of international law, but rather a mundate challenge is indicative of this logic. Anghie points it out directly as they state, "Whatever the rhetoric, as to humanism and the welfare of the non-European peoples, commerce has been

[142] Ibid pg. 203

the controlling preoccupation of colonial governance. The situation is not significantly different now."[143] This element of capital accumulation is crucial as is the coherence of 'equality.' For it is 'equality' gained through sovereignty that compels all of the world to form itself into manipulatable game pieces.

In order to make this case more clearly, I turn to the work of Shannon Winnubst (2020) in tandem with Hortense Spillers (1987) in order to get a fuller understanding of what is implied *specifically* by Anghie's invocation of 'commerce.' As I have already contended, the context of the Subject's birth is an indispensable set of references for its central logic. Thus far I have demonstrated how Science and History (the Subject) refer to the *particular* ontologies and epistemologies that give shape to Post-Enlightenment Man. I have also shown how the Life of the Subject animated those tools expressly for domination of the Americas and the enslavement of Africans. Thus far I have only made the claim of antiblackness in the Subject as it refers to the context of his birth (*specifically* at the onset of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade). Now I will explicate Winnubst's (2020) definition of fungibility in order to make evident how the Subject and his respective powers are animated only by and through antiblackness. Winnubst (2020) invokes Spillers (1987) to demonstrate the effects in signification that come with being rendered as labor for the Subject. Spillers, referencing a slaving vessel ledger writes, "every man slave is to be allowed six feet by one foot four inches for room, every woman five feet ten by one foot four, every boy five feet by one foot two, and every girl four feet six by one foot"[144] Her aim here is to demonstrate but a fraction of the *abstraction* (here representing people as measurements) that the Slave Trade

[143] Ibid pg. 269
[144] Spillers (1987) pg. 72

necessitates. Essentially, Spillers suggests that this impulse to abstract black *bodies* into calculated *flesh* is the site in which to find the marker of antiblackness. Spillers writes:

> The anatomical specifications of rupture, of altered human tissue, take on the objective description of laboratory prose-eyes beaten out, arms, backs, skulls branded, a left jaw, a right ankle, punctured; teeth missing, as the calculated work of iron, whips, chains, knives, the canine patrol, the bullet.[145]

> we lose any hint or suggestion of a dimension of ethics, of relatedness between human personality and its anatomical features, between one human personality and another, between human personality and cultural institutions. To that extent, the procedures adopted for the captive flesh demarcate a total objectification, as the entire captive community becomes a living laboratory.[146]

Making clearer the crux of what it means to be casted as the nadir of Man's human others, the abstraction that, as Spillers point out, is one that by rewriting the black body as decontextualized flesh, hollows out the body (subjecthood) and servers it from specificity. Hartman (2007), in haunting and eloquent prose iterates this in *Lose Your Mother* as she writes on the shadow of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade:

> Death wasn't a goal of its own but just a byproduct of commerce, which has had the lasting effect of making negligible all the millions of lives lost… Unlike the concentration camp, the gulag, and the killing field, which had as their intended end the extermination of a population, the Atlantic trade created millions of corpses, but as a corollary to the making of commodities.[147]

This genesis of human commodities (definitively not commodity-*like* humans) has it roots in the killing, captuaring, transporting, selling, disciplining, extraction from, and the abstraction of enslaved Africans for the creation of 'The Negro.' The Negro *is* only in so much as to *be* hollow, namely and as Winnubst states plainly, "*Fungibility* is the mechanism that writes anti-blackness in an ontological register."[my emphasis][148] Said another way, fungibility

[145] Ibid pg. 67
[146] Ibid pg. 68
[147] Hartman (2007) pg. 32
[148] Winnubst (2020)

wholly constitutes and is the logic of antiblackness. Winnubst goes on to define fungibility in its disambiguated sense as:

> To be fungible, in both its economic and legal meanings, is to have all distinctive characteristics and content hollowed-out. It is a relationship of equity that requires a purely formal semblance. In economic terms, fungibility refers to those goods and products on the market that are substitutable for one another: a bushel of wheat from Kazakhstan is fungible with a bushel of wheat from Nebraska, assuming the quality and grade of wheat is the same. Fungibility also underscores the monetary system, since it is the formal quality of banknotes that allows them to be fully substitutable: the 5 Euro bill in my pocket is the same as the one in your pocket. In legal terms, it is the fungibility of harm and compensation that enables the force of the contract…[149]

Apparent, even in this short and normative delineation, is the defining function of fungibility, i.e. abstraction. No longer important where or how the bushel of wheat came to be, only important is its quality and grade that can be measured with a single metric. Said mostly planely, this single metric, held together by the subjection of black bodies for capital, is the mechanism through which the Subject and his powers are enacted.

We can observe the enactment of fungibility in Prashad's work as he alludes to it without acknowledging its presence. Most notably we observe the enactment of History (that is the State/Sovereignty) in 1927 Brussels precisely where Prashad marks the birth of the Third World program. Specifically he writes:

> The conveners of the 1927 League against Imperialism conference chose Brussels deliberately: they snubbed Europe's nose by holding an anti-imperialist conference in the capital of such brutality, and used Belgium's own international embarrassment as a vehicle to get permission to do so in the first place…. Additionally, the organizers agreed to take the Belgian Congo off the table for the duration of the event, even though it came in for indirect criticism throughout…In Brussels, Africa did not have a major voice, but its representatives did put its liberation on the map. Of course, the deal struck by the organizers of the conference and the Belgian government took the Congo

[149] Ibid

> off the table, and given that it remained one of the central issues in Africa, the silence was palpable.[150]

This unity that Prashad speaks about that gives birth to the Third World project is happening in the literal negative space carved out with unfathomable horrors for the people in the Congo. Formerly the Congo Free State, is 77 times larger than all of Belgium and yet it was under the private holdings of King Leopold II for a little over 20 years. Insurmountable amounts of riches through the rubber industry poured into Belgium from untold black suffering. Prashad notes that this meeting happens in Belgium precisely because it is an 'embarrassment' rather than a moral crisis. Though Prashad recognizes the moral dilemma posed in agreeing to such silence, his framework only allows this dynamic to appear as incidental trade-off rather than a result of the antiblack nature of the LAI conference. The collective unity that was forged around anticolonial ire that eventually afforded so many the space to claim their History was done in agreement that they could not even speak about the killing necessary for its occurrence. In this way, the unity formed and insisted upon as 'the formally colonized' completely hollows out the status of 'formally colonized' of any context in favor of unity. This is the power of fungibility which *is* this abstraction that removes the *idiosyncrasy* of black death and subsumes it under general *universalized* oppression. As much is evident in the LAI decision to obviate the antiblack preconditions for their formation in favor to make appeals to an 'embarrassment' which presumably could not be felt in the Congo but rather exclusively in the *universalized*(equalized) arena of states. We can see the creation of 'equality' along a single metric— in this case the 'formally colonized' — with which value-meaning is constructed while obscuring its referent. This comes across clearly as Prashad writes of the Third Worlds 'fragmentary' pitfalls; he says, "Indeed, after the

[150] Prashad (2007) pg. 23

second NAM conference in Cairo, the Third World experienced a period of oratorical inflation, notably at the Tricontinental Conference in Havana (1966). From the early 1960s to the late 1970s, the rhetorical denunciation of imperialism reached its apogee, even as the Third World began to lose its voice."[151] This rise of 'oratorical inflation' that Prashad describes is highly reminiscent of the 'indirect criticism' at the League Against Imperialism that afforded little to nothing to people in the Congo. Moreover it sounds painstakingly similar to the calls for People of Color (POC) coalitions across university campuses— that even with their additions of Black and Indigenous (BIPOC) — can do little to address the specific issues facing Black or Indigenous people. Or for that matter the land acknowledgements that are becoming increasingly popularized but have called for little more than 'awareness.' The significance of such a phenomenon is articulated clearly by Da Silva as she writes:

> …multiculturalism, now moves forcefully ahead as it guides the official agenda for global justice. This liberal appropriation of multiculturalism is especially troubling because it embraces the sociohistorical logic of exclusion as the correct account of social (racial, ethnic, gender) subjection and accepts the emergence of claims for recognition of cultural difference as proof of the failure of assimilation…As postmodern accounts sent the earlier formulation of the cultural to join the racial in ethical exile, the others of Europe embraced another doomed strategy of emancipation, namely, the project of producing and interpreting crafts that communicate their particular sociohistorical trajectories as subaltern travelers on the road to transparency.[152]

Here we can understand the rise of multiculturalism and with it globalization as a proliferation of different *differences*. This mode of understanding posits that 'justice' is embedded in 'equality' in a way that is iterated by Prashad and as his final statement suggests:

[151] Ibid pg. 104
[152] Da Silva (2007) pg. xxxiii

> The limitations of IMF -driven globalization and revanchist traditionalism provoke mass movements across the planet. The battles for land rights and water rights, for cultural dignity and economic parity, for women's rights and indigenous rights, for the construction of democratic institutions and responsive states-these are legion in every country, on every continent. It is from these many creative initiatives that a genuine agenda for the future will arise. When it does, the Third World will have found its successor.[153]

This invocation for the Third World to find a successor amidst this world of ever proliferating *comparable* differences, where *Indigenous* Rights and *women's* rights are conceived as operating on an *equal* metric of exclusion rehearses and intensifies the SHLE. With women's rights and trans rights comes womens' and trans' Histories whose intentions are to 'communicate their particular sociohistorical trajectories as subaltern travelers on the road to transparency.' This finally brings us back to the productive power of antiblackness/fungibility that is, capital accumulation. This perennial drive is the reason why corporate America is able to embrace Pride festivals and why Netflix is able to 'feature black voices' for Black History month or why you will find at least one black person on every campus brochure regardless of the demographic makeup. The space in between those differences and the resources needed to politically and socially articulate them is highly lucrative. This capital generating quality that is imparted by the logic of antiblackness– fungibility— that is implied by 'equality' as well as 'Freedom' and 'Sovereignty' is obscured by the messages present in *The Darker Nations* and as such provides them with more power to ensure antiblack futures. These conjectures come to have powerful implication, as I will demonstrate, the goals and orientations for SSC generally, and for China-Angola relations specifically.

[153] Prashad (2007) pg. 281

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Chapter 2: I'm Not Black I'm only Pretending to *Be*

Sellie Martin, who was sold at age six along with his mother and ten-year-old sister, described the "heart breaking scene" when the coffle departed for market: "When the order was given to march, it was always on such occasions accompanied by the command, which slaves were made to understand before they left the 'pen' to 'strike up lively,' which means they must sing a song. Oh! What heartbreaks there are in these rude and simple songs! The purpose of the trader in having them sung is to prevent among the crowd of negroes who usually gather on such occasions, any expression of sorrow for those who are being torn away from them; but the negroes, who have very little hope of ever seeing those again who are dearer to them than life, and who are weeping and wailing over the separation, often turn the song demanded of them into a farewell dirge." By turning the song into a farewell dirge, the coerced performance becomes a veiled articulation of the sorrow denied the enslaved by the demand for song.

– Saidiya Hartman, Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth Century America (1997)

Hartman's haunting retelling of Sallie Martin's selling is iterative of the many scenes of subjection that come to contour the entire positionality of the slaves made in America. Hartman moves readers through "The pageantry of the coffle, stepping it up lively on the auction block, going before the master, and the blackface mask of minstrelsy and melodrama…" as she aims to make apparent the "...entanglements of terror and enjoyment."[154] Specifically, Hartman through a telling of these terror-filled scenes made jovial by the pain of dismemberment offers us something profound about the difference between *technique* and *performance*. Exemplified by the impossibly distinct double resonances of the lively dirges— that both disappear the sorrow of the scene and also does everything it can to redress that denial— I read Hartman's work as illustrative of the dynamic that defines *blackness*. Precisely, blackness can be understood as the *relationship* between these diametrically opposed double resonances that give shape to these lively dirges. As Hartman explores these scenes of subjection such as the coffle, she makes evident that the making of the modern slave is in more than just force. Rather, it is this force mobilized to

[154] Hartman (1997) pg. 23

hollow out flesh of anything that would indicate to society that such flesh was anything other than the antiblack figure of the Negro (defined by post-Enlightenment Science). As such, the jovial song forced out of the mouths of the enslaved is done so as a roll call to perform their vital part in making coherent the great white solipsism that renders them as empty commodities. If such a register of 'striking it up lively' can be understood as the (externally cohered) *performance,* then conversely the dirge— which is formally identical to the jovial song— can be understood as the (internally agentic) *technique.* This technique is an expression and evidence of an *otherwise* reality to that of the white soloptical Negro (who is happy to be sold). Crucial to note is that this *technique* – which is itself contoured by a condition of absolute bondage— is a dismal cry from a full redress, but is instead all that can be managed when there is no choice but to perform.

Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's work in *The Undercommons* (2013) is a powerful aid in making clear this relationship and its stakes. Through a series of short essays, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* gives powerful and poetic commentary on how the 'order' (commons) of modern signification is held coherent precisely by and through the 'disorder' (undercommons) that is its predecessor and constituting foil. Leading an investigation into the entire field of modern signification, Monten and Harney (2013) dissect how seemingly emancipatory notions such as the 'progressive university' and 'the black radical tradition' come to participate in and strengthen the very oppressive forces that mobilize them. In their third chapter "Blackness and Governance" Monten and Harney offer profound meditations on the performance-technique dialectic of blackness— what they refer to as the 'black aesthetic' — and how that dialectic is abstracted for the propagation of 'governance.' More precisely, the 'black-aesthetic,' as Moten and Harney allude to, can be

understood as all those notions such as Black Pride, Black Lives Matter, or Black is Beautiful that attempt to recuperate blackness as a fundamentally (objectively) dignified, but historically disrespected social category. As liberational as assertions of black pride, beauty and significance seem, these progressive calls come at the ontological obfuscation of what makes such assertions necessary for some, while such qualities are assumed in others. Specifically, in a manner highly iterative of Da Silva's (2007) 'socio-historic logic of exclusion,' Moten and Harney write:

> …the black aesthetic is not about technique, is not a technique, though a fundamental element of the terror-driven anaesthetic disavowal of "our terribleness" is the eclectic sampling of techniques of black performativity in the interest of the unproblematically dispossessive assertion of an internal diference… Such assertion amounts to an attempt to refute claims of blackness's atomic simplicity that have never been serious enough to refute (as they were made unfalsifably, without evidence, by way of unreasonable though wholly rationalized motivations, in bad faith and dogmatic slumber).[155]

Here Moten and Harney bring to the forefront the antiblack terror that makes blackness legible as the primary lends through which to conceptulize the black-aesthetic. For Moten and Harney the black aesthetic is rooted in an antiblack conversation that takes 'our terribleness' as its primary axiom. As such, notions such as Black Lives Matter, Black is Beautiful, Black Pride and the like that constitute the black aesthetic can be seen as participating in a conversation without questioning the antiblack grammar that makes such dialogue cogent. In other words, and as Moten and Harney state, 'the black aesthetic is **not** a technique' meaning, the black aesthetic is not an expression of an *otherwise* reality to the black *performance* ('striking it up lively') as was the dirge (technique). Rather the black aesthetic samples these techniques (forged in antiblack subjection) in order to make

[155] Moten and Harney (2013) pg. 48

unproblematic claims to an 'internal difference.' This 'internal difference' or claims to render blackness as more than the unfounded 'atomic simplicity' (the Negro) of white solopsim is exactly the same claim to Subject-hood that we have explored in Chapter 1. Evidence that warrants such a mapping of Da Silva's Subject with Moten and Harney's 'black aesthetic' (blackness) is apparent in the pattern of the mobilization of abstraction (fungibility) in order to assert a unified (universal) conception of blackness. Specifically, Moten and Harney address how the highly differentiated (none-uniforme) expressions of the 'techniques of black performance' – or 'black culture'— can be mobilized to question the integrity of blackness itself. As blackness can be understood within many different 'cultural' registers that come out of specific lineages of black *performance* (subjugation), without abstraction from the referent (subjugation) blackness is too easily rendered as essentially 'not, or as lost, or as loss'[156] thus interrupting the narrative of Da Silva's (2007) 'black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories.' In order to recoup the 'black sovereign' that exists independently of subjugation (the one that can warrant 'justice' for its hitherto disrespectful treatment) abstraction or *performativity* are employed to obscure the antiblack ontology that gives rise to blackness. Or as Warren (2018) would iterate as the "severing [of the] (non)relation between blackness and Being."[157] Moten and Harney corroborate this reading of blackness and offer further insight as they write:

> The dismissal of any possible claim regarding the essence or even the being of blackness (*in its irreducible performativity*) becomes, itself, the dismissal of blackness. Differential or differentiating techniques are made to account and stand in for an absence. Appeals to internal differences are made in order to disallow instantiation. Abstraction of or from the referent is seen as tantamount to its nonexistence….abstraction and performativity are meant to carry some of the same weight where the refutation of claims about the

[156] Moten and Harney (2013) pg. 49
[157] Warren (2018) pg. 28

> authenticity or unity of blackness becomes the refutation of blackness as such. This appeal to technique is, itself, a technique of governance.[158] (emphasis in original)

Moten and Harney iterate the central importance of a *unified* (universal/independent) conception of blackness for the very notion of blackness itself. Describing the paradigm for blackness that necessitates this abstraction, Moten and Hareny note that on one hand appeals to an internal difference (Subject) that is black allows for contestation against the white soloptical instantiation of blackness (i.e. The Negro happy to be sold), while on the other hand any attempt to describe blackness without even tacit reference to its 'irreducible performativity'(subjugation) would render blackness incoherent. Caught in between the impulse to imbue blackness with 'Pride' that could withstand the ire and hate of white conceptions of blackness and the fact that blackness makes little to no sense outside of the subjugation that made legible the category, abstraction is employed to salvage its coherence. As Moten and Harney iterate, this abstraction is 'tantamount to' — but definitely not *exactly* the same as— disappearing the referent, and as such allows for blackness to claim an 'internal difference' that exists outside of subjugation. But as I have hinted at, the antiblackness that gives coherence to blackness decidedly does not disappear, but is simply obscured. Furthermore, Moten and Harney identify the compiling of these 'differential or differentiating techniques' that stand in for the absence left by the abstraction of blackness's roots (antiblack subjection), to be itself a 'technique of governance.' This is a powerful assertion as 'governance,' as Moten and Harney define it, is "a kind of state-thought… A thought that thinks away the private before the public and the private…"[159] In other words, Moten and Harney understand 'governance' as that which renders the 'private' (*particular)*

[158] Moten and Harney (2013) pg. 48-49
[159] Moten and Harney (2013) pg. 53

as always already in relation to the 'public' (*universal*) which is to say, the state apparatus. And not only that, but this 'state thought' functions at the expense of conceiving of the 'private' in relation to anything else as it is 'thought away.' As such, the differing techniques that are compiled to give coherence to an *abstracted* blackness or 'black culture' is itself a technique of state-thought. Or in other words blackness (techniques of black performativity) is a technique of rendering the universal (public) as the privileged medium through which to render the specific (private) which, as we have explored, is the signature pattern of the antiblack Subject.

As such, Hartman's (1997) invocation of the jovial dirge read in trandum with Da Silva's (2007)'socio-historic logic of exclusion' and Moten and Harney's (2013) 'black aesthetic' come to elucidate powerful distinctions between the technique that is the dirge and the compiling of techniques mobilized to prove an 'internal difference' that is the 'black aesthetic.' The distinction I contend is that the black aesthetic or 'black culture' (a *public*-private thought) seeks legibility and dignity for blackness in an antiblack world, hence it often being characterized with calls and struggles for 'justice.' I posit that 'black culture' is like the Third World project in that its orientations are to claim the "enlightened promise" and "find the ground for unity, and take possession of the dynamic of world affairs."[160] As Chapter 1 explores, this 'enlightened promise' is an exaltation of the 'supreme Being' of Reason, which we know to be irrevocably antiblack. Moreover, as 'black culture' strives to mimic the antiblack Subject it makes use of one of the Subject's most powerful (antiblack) tools, Science, in its assertion of 'culture.' Culture, in this sense is the explanation that allows blackness to be rendered as differently (a cultural iteration of) the Subject. Ironically, as

[160] Prashad (2007) pg. 14

'black culture' attempts to disallow instantiation and thus function as a *corrective* to the white soloptical conjurings of blackness, 'black culture' capitulates to a type of 'double bind' of instantiation. Da Silva's work articulates this double bind mathematically as she describes 'black' and 'culture' as two independent variables that produce mutually bias in their linear regression. She writes:

> In the same way, the equation of the racial and the cultural undermines cultural politics projects insofar as the effect communicated by both scientific concepts, which produce "meanings and beings" as effects of exterior determination, is oversignified. Therefore, although the postmodern rendering of the cultural has shed its "boundedness and fixity" when used to describe black cultural politics, not only does the old cultural resurface; it also resuscitates racial difference to produce a doubly "fixed" and doubly "bounded" —that is, a doubly determined —black culture.[161]

What Da Silva posits is that any expression/definition of 'black culture' will be subject to one of two biases or 'overrepresentations.' That is 'black culture' either uses race ('black') to over define culture (ex. everything a black person does is 'black culture') or it uses nation ('culture') to over define blackness (ex. if you don't know how to play spades you're not black, or conversely any who plays spades is black). In this way 'black culture' is doubly bound and bonded to antiblack logics as it accepts both the grammar that makes 'black' legible as well as the logic that necessitates that such blackness articulates 'culture' in order to be respected. As such, 'black culture' can be understood as a derivative of the Subject. On the other hand, the dirge (the *private* thought with no reference to the public) has no such orientations towards legibility, indeed its implementation wholly rests on its *illegibility*. The dirge rather than a corrective to white solipsism is, as Hartman articulates, a desperate and woefully incomplete *redress*. Crucial to note here, is that this attempt at redress is not in

[161] Da Silva (2007) pg. xxxiv

service of the 'black sovereign' or an expression of an 'internal difference' but rather it is a redress that operates in tandem with a wholly *otherwise* reality. Said another way, these captive people do not sing dirges to one another because they are 'black' (who without subject holds no coherence), they sing them precisely because they are *not* 'black.' As the dirge comes to be an expression of an *otherwise* reality against the white solipsism (the realm of blackness), it rather than a rebuttal to antiblack assertions is evidence of an entirely different conversation happening concurrently. In this way the dirge, rather than a derivative of the Subject/Being, it is a derivative of Dasein (existence) that has salience *despite and because of* its lack of acknowledgement in the Subject's overrepresentation. I contend that the wider context that makes the dirge legible amongst the enslaved is the space where actual escape from the Subject (rather than its reproduction) can be theorized. Conversely, I contend that this space is the very same that the Subject is constantly in search of in order to co-opt for its game; the recuperation of techniques of black performance to articulate 'black culture' would be one such example.

Mapping the distinction between the *performance/performativity* of 'black culture' against the *technique* that is expressive of an *otherwise* reality is vital for identifying which orientations will allow for a true relinquishing of the antiblack Subject. As Chapter 1 demonstrates, works such as Vijay Prashad's *The Darker Nations* with little to no analytical attention given to antiblackness, inadvertently obscure and perpetuate the ways in which antiblackness makes legible some of the most political progressive calls. Conversely, this chapter turns to those scholars who do take seriously the question of antiblackness as a paradigm that shapes global hierarchy and oppression. In particular this chapter centers the work of Cedric J. Robinson, particularly on his concepts of 'Racial regimes' and the 'black

radical tradition' that come out of one of his most seminal works, *Black Marxism*. Having inspired many scholars of hierarchy, race, and imperialism to understand the 'black radical tradition' as an irrevocably emancipatory orientation, I place Robinson's work in conversation with Hartman (1997), Moten and Harney (2013), and Da Silva (2007) in order to discern where precisely this emancipatory potential lies.

Defining *blackness* (black culture) to be an interplay between *technique* and *performance* is a vital node in understanding the full resonances of what Cedric J. Robinson's body of work delineates as 'the black radical tradition.' Forged in friction with the "...limits of the white radical tradition embodied in Marxist theory and practice."[162] the black radical tradition is one of two constituent themes that make up Robinson's, *Black Marxism.* One of Robinson's most prominent and enduring works, the text works to unseat the Marxian point of departure for the trajectory of capital and its relations. Departing from the orthodox Marxist focus on the 19th century English proletariat, Robinson's work urges readers to consider how the very positionality of the English proletariat was made possible by the contemporaneous exploitation of the multitude of enslaved Africans. Furthermore, Robinson not only insists that these positionalities must be featured in the story of capitalism, but also that their modes of resistance— instead of a class based political concsiousness (which had little salience to the enslaved barred from society) — were rooted in the *otherwise* cultures and spiritualities that embarked with them on the slave ship. Yousuf Al-Bulushi in their analysis of the intellectual geographies of Robinson's work writes:

> Robinson focuses on C.L.R. James's fleeting argument in The Black Jacobins that in the story of the Haitian revolution, "voodoo was the medium of the conspiracy" (275). On the one hand, Robinson tells us that James was

[162] Al-Bulushi (2020) pg 2

> attempting to insert the revolting slaves of San Domingo into the dominant Marxian historiography of the revolutionary proletariat. On the other hand, James was forced to grapple with what was unique about this budding proletariat in the form of its African-derived metaphysic whose "ideological, psycho-social, cultural, and historical currencies were more *charismatic than political*" (169).[163] (emphasis Al-Bulushi)

Black Marxism, like Hartman's work, takes seriously the question of *otherwise* realities. As Robinson points out, in C.L.R James's attempt to essentially *correct* a Marxian historiography by including the slaves of San Domingo he must reconcile the wholly different logic or metaphysic that brings coherence to these movements. Rather than as a 'revolutionary proletariat' —whose coherence I contended is tied to the very socio-political world that did not conceive of the slaves to be a part of social life, but as only hallowed-out labor— the slaves of San Domingo organized under a grammar that indicates *otherwise.* For Robinson 'Voodoo,' much like the dirge, is identified to be operating on grammar apart from the 'political' and rather on what he calls 'charismatic.' To this point, *Black Marxism* begins with a rethinking of the historiography and thus trajectories of capitalism considering its relationship to these *otherwise* grammars of the enslaved. This investigation and interjection into the Marxist tradition is the basis for Robinson's famed conception of *racial capitalism*. The subsequent two sections of the book on the other hand deal with tracing a genealogy of the black radical tradition as evidence not only for the limited capacities of capitalism, but also of the unlimited capacities of the black radical tradition. Al-Bulushi describes this as they write:

> As one of his central arguments in Black Marxism, Robinson claims that "the Black radical tradition cast doubt on the extent to which capitalism penetrated and re-formed social life and on its ability to create entirely new categories of

[163] ibid pg 9

> human experience stripped bare of the historical consciousness embedded in *culture*" (170).[164] (emphasis Al-Bulushi)

Here Robinson alludes to an understanding of the black radical tradition as a rejection of the complete primacy of capitalist accumulation to define all forms of social life. As noted by Al-Bulushi, Robinson's work not only manifests out of a fraught relationship with Marxism, but also out of an extension of World Systems theory. Moving beyond the integrations of political economic systems that allowed World Systems theory to dencenter the nation state as a unit of analysis, Robinson's work compels us to consider what 'geo-culture' makes the integration of such political-economic systems possible. As World Systems theory struggled to reconcile the overarching racial structure suggested in *racial* capitalism and the highly contingent experience of racial subjection around the globe, Robinson offers the notion of *racial regimes.* Al-Bulushi aptly describes how these concepts come together, noting that Robinson's framework of racial capitalism should be understood in close relation to Robinson's later concept of racial regimes (2007):

> Racial regimes should not be understood as unilateral structural determinants, then, but as conjuncturally specific and fluid formations that must constantly adapt in the face of an inextinguishable black radical tradition. As Robinson argued, "these histories of radicalism are neither determined nor dictated by the world-system" (1999a: 6).[165]

Robinson's deduction of the constantly warping, constantly recalibrating form of racial regimes is vital because, as he describes, it is in reaction to the "...inextinguishable black radical tradition" that it must constantly adjust. With this description, Robinson presented a breakthrough for those trying to understand how racial regimes could function distinctly based on context yet still contribute to the overarching system of racial capitalism. In doing

[164] ibid pg 6
[165]ibid pg 9

so however, Robinson posits that the black radical tradition is *both* what is left of the "historical consciousness embedded in *culture*" *and also* the "inextinguishable" and "autonomous"[166] force that animates racial regimes and thus global racial capitalism. Considering again Hartman and Da Silva's works, which tells us that 'black culture' is wholly defined by the antiblack logics of accumulation and dispossession that gives coherence to it, then Robinson conjectures pose a paradox. That is, how is it that the black radical tradition is both wholly defined by and completely autonomous to global racial capitalism? The answer to such a paradox is imperative as Robinson's work provides one of the most salient interventions in studies trying to understand and combat global racial hierarchies and capitalist accumulation. Unlike the frameworks used in *The Darker Nation*s, Cedric J. Robinson has taken seriously the question of antiblackness and has— in his life and death— inspired countless scholars to build and expand these concepts. In this spirit, this chapter will analyze Al-Bulushi's geography of Robinson's intellectual work through the frameworks provided by Da Silva (2007), Moten and Harney (2013), and Hartman (1997). In doing so I will demonstrate that between Robinson's racial capitalism and his notion of the black radical tradition he successfully prompts an investigation into the modern mode of signification. However, I also contend that in the need to make these conceptions comparable to their 'whiter' counterparts necessitates that Robinson posit a 'black culture' with a corresponding 'black sovereign' that has the capacity to render his claims for *otherwise* realities legible in an antiblack arena of signification. In short, Robinson by rendering these *otherwise* realities as *correctives* debates that take antiblackness as axiomatic his work forgoes the answer to this paradox– which I contend can be described in terms of Moten and

[166]ibid pg 2

Harney's conception of the *undercommons.* Set against the modern antiblack field of signification which I take to be an iteration of the 'commons,' the undercommons are all those forces and modalities that against which the common is defined to be the undercommons. Said another way, if a photographic picture is said to be 'commons' or the legible social world, then the *undercommons* is both the negative of that photo and, crucially, everything failed to be captured by the photo. As the photo (commons) is held coherent by all the world not being a photo (if everything is a photo how can you make sense of *a* photo?) and the photo's negative —which is the photo's necessary negation to constitute itself as such— the undercommons is a force that is both necessary for the commons to constitute itself and completely autonomous from it. I conduct this analysis not as an indictment of the late Robinson's work and those following in his wake, but rather as a continuation of his and my struggle for a world *otherwise.*

Part 0.

Al-Bulushi 's intellectual geography responds to a resurgence of conversation and debate that centers Robinson's notions of racial capitalism and the black radical tradition. Specifically, Al-Bulushi 's work is focused on making apparent the importance of Africa and thinkers coming from the continent to Robinson's intellectual journey and the trajectory of his work. To do so Al-Bulushi broadly delineates three intellectual geographies that make apparent the importance of the continent in developing his work. The first two geographies are related, and show how firstly, Robinson's time and connection with World Systems analysts at the Dar es Salaam school of radical thought influenced, the second geography that tracks his interventions into the Apartied South-Africa 'class-race' debates. The third

geography centers the role of African culture as the site from which Robinson sought to articulate an alternative metaphysics that could animate *non*-political/*non*-sovereign "...dreams of freedom…"[167] Lastly Al-Bulushi ends their survey of Robinson's intellectual works by delineating four central themes in the "Robinsonian black radical tradition."[168] Using Al-Bulushi 's work I aim to show how Robinson's intervention in World Systems analytics allows his work to identify the presence of the Subject and his Ghost, but fails to challenge his tools. Furthermore, I contend that the tendency to hold Robinson's work as 'corrective' to white radical scholarship obfuscates these tools and engenders a misplaced primacy of 'culture' that rehearses Da Silva's socio-historic logic of exclusion. Lastly, I argue that without this obfuscation, the black radical tradition can more fully be understood as Moten and Harney's (2013) *undercommons*. With this intervention my work aims to push Robinson's work to new heights in its challenge to grasp the workings of global racial capitalism and hierarchy.

Part I.

As Al-Bulushi describes Robinson's groundbreaking interventions in the Apartheid South-Africa 'class-race' debates are an extension of his interventions in World systems analysis centered in the Dar el Salaam school. Al-Bulushi describes the lively and generative debate that defined the school in its heyday during the 1960's and 70's. Al-Bulushi describes the nuanced debates and interventions that progressed the school's journey away from an approach to global capitalism that centered the nation-state as the unit of analysis to a model that understood global capitalism to function unevenly in an integrated global system. As

[167]ibid pg 7
[168]ibid pg 1

such Al-Bulushi locates Robinson's intervention into the field at a time when the debate— looking to those struggling against the South African apartheide regime— was focused on describing the relative function of race and class in the formation of capitalism. Hitherto, Al-Bulushi referencing the foremost understandings in the field, located in Hall (1980), Wolp (1988) and Hart's (2007) works, implies, "..that there exist social formations where race is decidedly *no*t an important feature (305)."[169] Robinson is described as transforming this conversation as he uses World Systems analysis as a springboard in *Black Marxism*'s first chapter. Al-Bulushi quotes his work:

> We begin to perceive that the nation is not a unit of analysis for the social history of Europe. The state is a bureaucratic structure, and the nation for which it administers is more a convenient construct than the historical, racial, cultural and linguistic entity that the term 'nation' signifies. The truer character of European history resides beneath the phenomenology of nation and state. With respect to the construction of modern capitalism, one must not forget the *particular* identities, the *particular* social movements and societal structures that have persisted and/or have profoundly influenced European life (24)[170]

Robinson endeavors to build off World Systems theories to understand a *global* racial capitalism leading his inquiries— much like Da Silva's (2007) — to interrogate the very premises of state formation. Specifically Robinson aptly draws attention to the *particularities* of European life that come to contour a *universal* understanding of society and its structures. This inquiry leads him to identify the hierarchies implied in the logics of state formations whose roots are European as Robinson writes:

> The bourgeoisie that led the development of capitalism were drawn from particular ethnic and cultural groups; the European proletariats and the mercenaries of the leading states from others; its peasants from still other cultures; and its slaves from entirely different worlds. The tendency of

[169]ibid pg 4
[170]ibid pg

> European civilization through capitalism was thus not to homogenize [Marx] but to differentiate—to exaggerate regional, subcultural, and dialectical differences into 'racial' ones. As the Slavs became the natural slaves, the racially inferior stock for domination and exploitation during the early Middle Ages, as the Tartars came to occupy a similar position in the Italian cities of the late Middle Ages, so at the systemic interlocking of capitalism in the sixteenth century, the people of the Third World began to fill this expanding category of a civilization reproduced by capitalism.[171]

In alignment with Da Silva's (2007) description of post-Enlightenment Subject and Wynter's (2003) description of ratiocentric Man, Robinson identifies that the *context* of the birth of capitalism as discussed in Marx is crucial to understanding its logic. In doing so Robinson is able to demonstrate how the "death dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies" is necessitated by global capitalism.[172] As such this leads Robinson to interrogate even those Marxist and anarchist movements as he concludes that the "...European radical tradition is unlikely to transcend its cultural baggage of racism."[173] Herein lies and important departure from the trajectories of Da Silva (2007) and Wynter (2003) that I contend is a result of the tendency of Robinson's work to be concerned with as Al-Bulushi identifies as "(1) identifying both black *antecedents* and *correctives* to radical white scholarship." Specifically, the orientation to engage as a *corrective* to Marxian theories of capitalism necessitate Robinson's argument to address capitalism as such without addressing the underlying impulse to engage in the discussion. In other words, Robinson, engaged in debate about the formation of capitalism, forgoes to interrogate capital's master, that is the Subject. This demonstrated in his consecration of 'European culture' as the forbear of global racial capitalism. As I have explored in Chapter 1, Da Silva's (2007) understanding of 'culture' is an appropriation of the Subject's tools— that of History (nation/Sovereignty) and Science

[171]Robinson (2000) pg 26
[172] Al-Bulushi (2020) pg 5
[173]ibid

(race/Truth) — that function together, even in the Subject's death, to enact capitalist (antiblack) accumulation. As such, Robinson's indictment of a "geo-culture"[174] emanating from Europe writes Europe as only one of many 'cultural' iterations. And what could these cultures be iterations of? I assert, using Silva's framework, that they are iterations of the Subject (i.e. his Ghost) that is the ontological referent for 'culture.'

This becomes more apparent in Al-Bulushi 's mapping of Robinson's intellectual geography as it relates to his pursuit of *non*-political/*non*-sovereign "...dreams of freedom…"[175] as articulated by *otherwise* (African) 'cultural' formations. As Al-Bulushi notes, Robinson is understood to move in a similar direction as CLR James to emphasize the powers of 'culture' not only for domination (as is implied in European culture) but for *otherwise* futures. Specifically he is cited writing:

> James took the labour theory of value and capitalist accumulation as both empirical observations and the sources of a moral imperative and bent his energies to discovering what the exploited could do and had done about their material degradation and spiritual humiliation…It was the dialectic between oppression and rebellion, the relations between exploiter and exploited, and not the scientific determination of mysterious commodity prices, which drew him to radical discourse…Consequently, James expended less energy on Marx's Capital than on Hegel's Logic, *prioritizing the production of culture and meaning over the modes of commodity production* (Robinson, 1992: 49-50).[176] (emphasis mine)

Here Robinson points to the *moral* imperative to uncover the productive powers of 'culture' (i.e. the techniques of the subaltern in the face of "their material degradation and spiritual humiliation"). Furthermore, these *otherwise* futures necessarily signal African/Black cultures as Al-Bulushi notes that Robinson was moved to 'return to the source' in the spirit

[174]ibid
[175]ibid pg 7
[176]ibid pg 5

of a type of Third Worldism.[177] As such, Robinson, in following CLR James obfuscates the function of 'culture' *as a mode of commodity production,* which Chapter 1 describes as 'fungibility'. Furthermore, the primacy of African/African diasporic 'culture' and the *moral* impetus to assert it, rehearses the SHLE. To remind us Silva notes this *moral* imperative for redemption of black culture is serves as maker of this rehearsal, she writes:

> Nevertheless, the privileging of historicity limits accounts such as Cornel West's (1997) construct of the "historic 'Veil'" that writes the black subject as an effect of the "interiorizing" of violence limited. What is behind the veil? Is there a racial subject, *a black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories? If this is so —if before racial violence there is a pristine black subject fully enjoying its "humanity," thriving in self -determined (interior or temporal) existence, t*hat can refuse to "interiorize" and actualize violence — why does it not do so? *I think that this desire to lift the veil to reveal an original self* - determined black subject fails to ask a crucial question: How did whiteness come to signify the transparent I and blackness to signify otherwise? Because it does not ask such questions, the metaphor of the veil rehearses the sociohistorical logic of exclusion… And, in the case of West's account, it (re)produces the black subject as a pathological (affectable) I, a self -consciousness hopelessly haunted by its own impossible desire for transparency.[178] (emphasis mine)

This rehearsal even shows up in the manner that Al-Bulushi describes Robinson's development of the 'non'-political against the limitations of the political science discipline:

> Against this normalization of exceptional leadership and authority in the sphere of the political, *Robinson sought to uncover a hidden, anarchistic tradition amongst subjugated peoples whose history had been willfully neglected.* In his first book and in a number of subsequent early articles critically engaging the work of Senegalese author and filmmaker Ousmane Semb`ene (1980c) and the Africana studies scholar George Shepperson (1980b), Robinson would feel the need to *shift the geography of reason by turning to the African continent,* drawing on his extensive study and critique of African anthropology, historiography, literature and film." [179]

[177]ibid
[178] Da Silva (2007) pg 8
[179] Al-Bulushi (2020) pg 6

Following Da Silva's model closely, Robinson's notion of 'culture' is driven by a moral imperative to assert the existence of a 'black sovereign that precedes our modern trajectories' that Da Silva delineates as evidence of the socio historic logic of exclusion. Said another way, it seems that Robinson's conception of culture is an attempt to recoup a Transparent 'I'/Subject on the African continent that can give legibility to blackness as social category beyond the subjection that defines it (i.e. an abstraction for its referent). In doing so however Robinson inadvertently does the bidding of the Subject as 'African' modalities (derivatives of Dasein) are rendered as evidence of a 'black' interiority essentially rendering these modalities as derivatives of Being/Subject. This becomes more apparent as Al-Bulushi 's delineates what they understand to be a "wonderful example" of the "black radical tradition" as they write:

> *As an alternative* to this tradition of anti-political thought and praxis, Robinson sought out in the anthropological literature on Africa the possibility of *non-political societies.* He claimed to have found a useful example in the Ila-Tonga people of Zambia. The Ila-Tonga formed a complex set of communities with innumerable overlapping allegiances based on kin networks. These networks were doubly complicated by the Ila-Tonga's simultaneous practicing of both virilocality and matrilineality. This created a continuous pattern of migration within the communities of individuals, households, and entire villages who were constantly seeking to fulfill their obligations to their multiple and often overlapping kin networks. In synthesizing the anthropological literature, Robinson gestures towards the metaphysical basis for such a community order, which he calls "the principles of incompleteness" where a *decolonized notion of mutual aid* is uncovered: "By *ingenious design, accident, experience, and whatever other processes and machinations are decisive to the evolution of a social mesh*, the Tonga have come into possession of an understanding of human organization which gives little prominence to the familiars of public-private, autonomy subject, secret-shared, interest-exclusion oppositions. Each element of Tonga consciousness embraces another to secure its 'own' vitality—a game of life of running, jumping, spinning for a thousand-headed, millipede beast whose members would each, if severed, be unfit to survive" (1980a: 196).[180] (emphasis mine)

[180]ibid

Here the Ila Tonga people seem to be existing in a metaphysics apart from the antiblack logics of accumulation and disposition that shape social relation. Instead, and as Robinson highlights, by '*ingenious design, accident, experience, and whatever other processes and machinations are decisive to the evolution of a social mesh'* — which I identify as 'life' or Dasien (existence) — the Ila Tonga people have built a self-referential metaphysics that does not require capitalism (the Subject) to make itself coherent. I contend that what moves this metaphysics is not the same as what motivates the dirge but is definitively also a derivative of Dasein, an expression of an *otherwise* reality that exists prior to and independent of Being/Subject/racial capitalism even though it may have to navigate Being/Subject due to its overrepresentation. Returning to the metaphor of the photograph and the *undercommons,* the metaphysics of the Ila Tonga people can be understood as a 'commons' with reference to itself (what is captured in the Ila Tonga 'photo'), while all the rest of the worlds modalities (including the Subject) as well as what modalities are specifically negated by the Ila Tonga 'photo' (its negative and everything it does not capture) is the *undercommons.* Furthermore, from the reference of the Subject modality (the subject's 'photo') the Ila Tonga metaphysics is an *undercommons* as, like Robinson notes, it's 'own vitality' is not derived (captured) by the modalities of the Subject (antiblack grammar). However, Robinson's preoccupation with describing the Ila Tonga metaphysics in the grammars of the Subject as an 'alternative' or his assertion of a 'non'-political, precisely *in response* to the limits of the 'anti'-political forgoes an understanding of the Ila Tonga metaphysic in a way that does not bind it to the antiblack logics of the Subject. In that, by mapping/locating the Ila Tonga people as a referent for a 'non-political society' Robinson inadvertently calls for a world in which the grammar of the 'non-political' *and* its referent, the political, *and* its foil, the anti-political, are legible. Far

from erasing antiblack logics, this imperative to articulate this derivative of Dasein (the Ila Tonga metaphysic) as a African (black) 'culture' only rewrites it retroactively as a derivative of the Subject. Herein lies the source of the paradox that is present in Robinson's work. The black radical tradition cannot be both autonomous to and totally defined by global racial capitalism precisely because of the imperative to redeem the 'black', but in 'redeeming' it only confirms its antiblack terms.

Part II.

Up until this point I have demonstrated the ways in which Robinson's articulation of the black radical tradition rehearses Da Silva's sociohistoric logic of exclusion and thus effectively rewrites antiblackness. My purpose however is not to imply that Robinson's work has no value to those wanting a world *otherwise.* On the contrary I think that Robinson's interventions have brought us closer to what Moten and Harney describe as "Being together in homelessness."[181] In order to grasp this orientation, I note that I understand the paradox in Robinson's definitions of the black radical tradition to be due to a conflation. Specifically, I posit that Robinson's articulation of the black radical tradition at times refers to the phenomena that Saidiya Hartman signals through her making apparent the double entendres that define the scenes of subjection. This meaning of the black radical tradition is most apparent in Robinson's "...doubt on the extent to which capitalism penetrated and re-formed social life."[182] In this way, Robinson identifies the 'techniques' of blackness rather than an autonomous 'cultural' source. Returning to the question of *performance* and *technique* Hartman reminds us:

[181] Moten and Harney (2013) pg 11
[182] Al-Bulushi (2020) pg 6

> These performances of blackness are in no way the possession of the enslaved; they are enactments of social struggle and contending articulations of racial meaning. The unremitting and interminable process of revision, reelaboration, mimicry, and repetition prevents efforts to locate an originary or definitive point on the chain of associations that would fix the identity of a particular act or enable us to shift through authentic and derivative performances, as if the meaning of these acts could be separated from the effects they yield, the contexts in which they occur, or the desires that they catalyze, or as if instrumental amusements could be severed from the prospects of pleasure or the perfomative from scenes of torture. Moreover, these performances implicitly raise questions about the status of what is being performed— the power of whiteness or the black's good time a nonsensical slave song; or recollections of dislocation.[183]

In this way what Robinson identifies as the black radical tradition can in one sense be understood as the insistence of a (jovial) farewell dirge *precisely because* it is impossible to recoup. It refers to a type of 'interiority' — or insistence— that informs the bounded flesh that we are larger than the White solipsistic ontological slot that constitutes the *otherwise* flesh made commodity, "the Negro". It is the awareness and insistence on the *beyond* of Reason (the Subject) that we call 'black' resistance. And it necessarily 'black' because as Vargus (2018) reminds us that without the 'black' the "…dynamics of containment and repression, and their corresponding institutions and socially shared values, make little, if any, sense."[184] In this sense Robinson's black radical tradition refers to the appropriation of the *otherwise* by the enslaved to be animated to produce what Moten and Harney describe as the 'black aesthetic'. Specifically, they write "Not in the interest either of some simple or complex opposition of *Technik* [technology/technique] and *Eigentlichkeit* [authenticity], but rather in the improvisation through their opposition moves the black aesthetic."[185] As such the 'black' radical tradition is a tradition of resistance and as such is *irrevocably* tied to the

[183] Hartman (1997) pg 57
[184] Vargas. (2018) Pg2
[185] Moten and Harney (2013) pg 49

oppression that forces it to take shape. It is the *source* for such a tradition that I contend Robinson also dubbed the 'black radical tradition', but could more aptly be described with Moten's and Harney's frameworks.

Part III.

The second and distinct meaning that the black radical tradition is employed to describe is what *animates* this insistence. Robinson's answer, as we have explored, falls into the traps highlighted by Silva as he gives credit to 'pre-capitalist' notions of an African black sovereign embedded in the remaining vestiges of an 'authentic' African culture. What he touches upon rather is what Moten and Harney (2013) describe as the 'undercommons.' Moten's and Harney's work in, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study,* like Silva(2007) and Wynter(2003), also locate something particular in the Enlightenment, defining 'the undercommons,' they write:

> This enlightenment-type charade is utterly negligent in its critique, a negligence that disavows the possibility of a thought of an *outside*, a nonplace called the undercommons – the nonplace that must be thought outside to be sensed inside, *from which the enlightenment-type charade has stolen everything for its game.*[186] (emphasis mine)

The "outside" that Moten and Harney write about is most closely related to Robinson's notion of the black radical tradition as that "inextinguishable" force against which Robinson's notion of racial regimes have to constantly adapt. As such— and as Moten and Harney note in the emphasized line— it is this very force that fuels the "game" (that is global racial capitalism and hierarchy). In other words it is this 'nonplace' — the undercommons — that provides the fodder for the farewell dirges, compels "Each element of Tonga

[186] ibid pg 39

consciousness [to] embrace[s] another to secure its 'own' vitality…" [187], *and* mobilizes global racial capitalism. This relationship is made more clear as Moten and Harney consider the 'undercommons' of the university and the role of the *critical* academic. Specifically, they write:

> It is rather that to be a critical academic in the university is to be against the university, and to be against the university is always to recognize it and be recognized by it, and to *institute the negligence of that internal outside, that unassimilated underground, a negligence of it that is precisely, we must insist, the basis of the professions*. And this act of being against always already excludes the unrecognized modes of politics, *the beyond of politics already in motion,* the discredited criminal para-organization, what Robin Kelley might refer to as the infrapolitical field (and its music).[188]

Here we can take the university to be a stand-in for the dominant system of global capitalist accumulation and hierarchy. As such, Moten and Harney state that this system's mode of operation ("basis of the professions") is 'negligence.' Referring to Chapter 1, this 'negligence' can also be read as *fungibility* (that is, antiblackness), as both refer to the hollowing out, the erasure and reinscription that necessitates the (jovial) dirges that Hartman invokes. Likewise, reference to an "internal outside" alludes to the paradox that Robinson's work encounters. Namely, Moten and Harney compel us to consider that this "outside" (read *undercommons*, an *otherwise,* the farewell dirge*)* is <u>both</u> what global racial capitalism (read the university, the 'game', the ghost of the subject, the plantation) interrupts (negates) <u>and</u> what it *requires* in order to instantiate itself as a foil. This *otherwise* ("the beyond of politics already in motion") that exists both 'internally' and 'externally' and is both defined by and autonomous to global racial capitalism is what poses the paradox in Robinson's work as he seeks to characterize it as 'black.' This is brought further into clarity as Moten and Harney

[187] Al-Bulushi (2020) pg 6
[188] Moten and Harney (2013) pg38

define 'governance' in its current neoliberal (multicultural) form— or rather 'governance' in the age of the Subjects Ghost— they write:

> Unlike previous regimes of sovereignty, there is no predetermined interest (no nation, no constitution, no language) to be realized collectively. Rather interests are solicited, offered up, and accumulated. *But this is a moment so close to life, to vitality, to the body, so close to* <u>*no interests*</u>, that the imposition of self-management becomes imperative. That imposition is governance.[189]

Familiar already with a notion of governance (government, governing) that implies a top-down management of life (ex the university, the United States, the IMF) Moten and Harney articulate 'governance' as also intimately close to *life* itself. The increasing proliferation of social media that encourages users to construct themselves using these platforms and the simultaneous proliferation of governing/surveillance/data collection/marketing strategies gets at this closeness. It is that hollow feeling when the double entendres— the play between *performance* and *technique* that give a farewell to a loved one never to be seen again— that define AAVE (African American Vernacular English) are fed back to me through Target adds and white gay men pretending to be black women on Tik Tok. Also multiculturalism and its unending drive to liquidate "different interest"[190] into legible 'cultures' speaks to the appropriation of *life* for its use and accumulation in the 'commons'. If the undercommons then is the place of *life* or "no interest" then the commons is the place of 'interest' (the political and its derivatives) that makes itself necessarily (the profession) through the negation and management of *life*. In this way, Moten's and Harney's articulation of the undercommons can be taken to be the 'chaos' (life) against which 'order' can constitute and

[189] ibid pg 55

[190] As Antony Angie develops her notion of "dynamic difference" that is held constant in international law between the former colonies and their former masters notes, "Further, the understanding that developed and developing states had 'different interests', while no doubt true and accurate in suggesting the problems caused by colonialism, also reduced their most radical implications: after all, historically, among European states, it was precisely the purpose of international law to reconcile differing interests." Anghie (2005) pg 204

legitimate itself. This "politics already in motion" is the many different *otherwise* realities that the commons *must* negate in order to constitute itself. And as I have demonstrated— and Robinson also alludes to when he notices the *particularities* of Europe being promulgated through the state *and* white radical traditions— the commons that drives global racial capitalism is defined by the antiblack tools of the Subject, History and Science. In other words, it is the uncivilized/irrational that is the call and response of Reason/civilization. If now I have demonstrated how Robinson's black radical tradition can be distinguished into, (1)the appropriation of the undercommons to resist the commons and (2) the autonomous existence of the undercommons itself, the question is, why does this distinction matter? I contend that— other than the dangers of rehearsing the socio-historic logic of exclusion— the source of the conflation is key to charting a new path forward that does not engender antiblackness. Namely, it is this *critical* positionality that obscures the tools of the Subject.

Part IV.

Al-Bulushi in their work mapping Robinson's intellectual geography details the ways in which Robinson's work is developed in opposition to other limited theories. In particular, Al-Bulushi conducts a reading of *Black Marxism* in tandem with several other pieces of Robinson's work to delineate four central pillars. Namely:

> (1) identifying both black *antecedents* and *correctives* to radical white scholarship, (2) an unrelenting critique of the black middle-class and intelligentsia, (3) a rejection of the paradigm of sovereignty and state-based models of self-determination, and (4) a reappreciation of culture and spirituality as key attributes that the black radical tradition brings to an excessively secular and materialist white Marxism.[191]

[191] Al-Bulushi (2020) pg 7

Having already given attention to theme 3 my investigation now turns to themes 1, 2 and 4 as they represent what Moten and Harney understand as the "critical academic." As I have pointed to previously, Robinson's theories of the black radical tradition stopped short of unseating the modern field of representation precisely because they accepted the terms of debate set by their white counterparts. My basis for such a statement is embedded in sentiments expressed when Moten and Harney write, "... to be a critical academic in the university is to be against the university, and to be against the university is always to recognize it and be recognized by it…"[192] Their meaning is apparent in my analysis of Robinson's proposal of the 'non'-political. Precisely because the non-political does not remove the grammars that make it legible it presupposes their continuation. In order to make this more clear, I turn to the Calvin L. Warren's (2018) in *Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihillism, and Emancipation,* as he discusses antiblackness as metaphysics. He writes:

> Thus, calculative thinking…is a strategy for imposing nothing onto blacks. In understanding the particular way metaphysics oppresses, we get a better understanding of antiblackness *as* metaphysics. Antiblackness provides the instruments and framework for binary thinking, the thinking of being as presence (e.g., the obsession with physicality and skin complexion), the objectification of Being (one only needs to think of slave ledgers as the extremity of Heidegger's metaphysical nightmare, for example), and technocratic oppression (e.g., racial surveillance, police warfare equipment).[193] (emphasis in original)

Here Warren's use of 'metaphysics' can be likened to the meanings implied in 'Reason' and its productive powers of History (ontology) and Science (epistemology). As such Warren compels us to consider Reason as antiblackness. As such it is this Reason or metaphysics that is animating global racial capitalism and subjection. Furthermore, Warren, like Hartman,

[192] Moten and Harney (2013) pg 38
[193] Warren (2018) pg 10

signals the contingent and necessary erasure of any *otherwise* ("imposing nothing onto blacks") that gives rise to metaphysics. As such Warren also notes the impossibility of escape using *critical* forms (antecedents and correctives) as indicates the issue with the 'post'metaphysical. Warren writes:

> The Negro Question [the black] and the Question of Being [the Subject] are intertwined. Postmetaphysical enterprises reach a *limit* in destruction, since it is *the Negro that sustains metaphysics and enables the forgetting of Being* (i.e., metaphysics can forget Being because it uses the Negro to project nothing's terror and forget Being).[194] (emphasis mine)

In a manner that mirrors Hartman's understanding of how "the black's good time" is necessitated only by "the power of whiteness"[195], Warren asserts that the limits of the postmetaphysical (the critical positions of the 'anti' and 'non' political) are such because they do nothing to change the relation of the Negro in metaphysics. And what is more is that because the Negro is necessary for the existance of metaphysics, *is* metaphysics it is irredeamable. This is essentially the central argument in Warren's work (broadly considered Afro-pessimistic) as he contends that "...there was [is] no solution to the problem of antiblackness; it will continue without end, *as long as the world exists*."[196](emphasis mine) I take this irredeemability and the promise of a perennial antiblackness until the end of the world very seriously and align my conjectures with it. This ending of the world (ending of the entire metaphysics) is what I imagine the colonial encounter to have been, the obliteration of so many worlds so that they can make room for the overrepresentation of Reason. As such, I find no emancipation in a world in which the 'black' is still legible and as such I posit that Hartmen's conjectures on redress to be incredibly germane as she writes:

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[194]ibid pg 7
[195] Hartman (1997) pg 57
[196] Warren (2018) pg 3

> The recognition of loss is a crucial element in redressing the breach introduced by slavery. This recognition entails are.. membering of the pained body, not by way of a simulated wholeness but precisely through the recognition of the amputated body in its amputatedness in the insistent recognition of the violated body as human flesh, in the cognition of its needs, and in the anticipation of its liberty. In other words, it is the ravished body that holds out the possibility of restitution, not the invocation of an illusory wholeness or the desired return to an originary plentitude.[197]

Eloquently articulated, Hartman reminds us that any rehearsal of the socio-historic logic of exclusion that attempts to imbue the 'black' with a Transparent "I" that was never there will always obfuscate redress. Much like Moten and Harney who, writing about the university, say that "...without touching one's own condition of possibility…" the rehearsals of "antifoundationalism or [vs] foundationalism… are used against each other to avoid contact with the undercommons."[198] In the same way, the positionalities of "All Lives Matter " and "Black Lives Matter" fail to address the still dismembered body of the black and in so doing ensure its stasis. In the context of a world whose very coherence is antiblackness, I instead, invite those to join me in following Robinson legacy to embody what Moten and Harney typify as the 'subversive' (rather than critical) academic as they write:

> In the face of these conditions one can only sneak into the university and steal what one can. To abuse its hospitality, to spite its mission, to join its refugee colony, its gypsy encampment, to be in but not of – this is the path of the subversive intellectual in the modern university.[199]

Though Moten and Harney are writing specifically about positionality in the academy, I contend that the evacuation of the 'black' and a reengagement only insofar as we are able to

[197] Hartman (1997) pg 74
[198] Moten and Harney (2020) pg 31
[199] ibid pg 26

'sneak' and 'steal' what we need from the commons and put them towards *otherwise* worlds and realities, all keeping in mind that *otherwise* "got politics surrounded."[200]

[200] ibid pg 20

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Conclusion

In conclusion, I return to the question of SSC and the polar dialogue that surrounds our iterative example between China and Angola. After taking seriously the question of anti-blackness and foregrounding its unifying logics in the modern nation-state, my work represents a marked departure from the exponentially growing dialogue on the rise of SSC. Cheru's (2016) analysis identifies four broad orientations that serve as a useful guide in mapping the character of SSC dialogue. Namely, the "alarmists; the skeptics; the critics of 'new imperialism' and the 'cheerleaders'."[201] The alarmist orientation is engendered by a realist school of thought that describes the rise of Southern actors– particularly China– as one of the greatest national security threats to the US and its allies. The skeptics as described by Cheru are those actors invested in the global aid architecture that find their interests undercut by SSC's tendency to forgo the many conditionalities of traditional aid structures. The 'cheerleaders' then are descriptive of those that such as Cheru themself as well as McMillan et al (2019) that consider these South-South patterns of connection as an opportunity for Africa to "chart an independent development path without the strong-arm tactics of Western aid agencies and creditor institutions."[202] Lastly, Cheru delineates those privy to a 'new imperialism'. This orientation speaks to those— such as Carmody (2011) or Kibble (2006)--- that are aware of the prevalence of resource extraction in Africa over, and often at the expense of, their democracies. This camp rejects both the old traditional forms of aid and development and critiques the new waves of SSC as often participating in a manner that reinforces conventional varieties of development.[203] In short, 'more of the same'. My

[201] Cheru (2016)
[202] ibid
[203] Besada et al (2019) pg 6

analysis however contends that none of these orientations demonstrate an earnest centering of theories of antiblackness. Employing the works of scholars that understand (anti)blackness to be the logic that makes the 'modern' world legible, I situate my reading of Chinese-Angolan relations to be much closer to that of Jaime Alves's (2020) conceptions. Making reference to Cedric J. Robinson's notion of racial capitalism, Alves describes the contingencies between Black death and the creation of value through development in the Colombian port city of Buenaventura. Using his work as a theoretical framework in tandem with Power (2012), Gastrow (2017), and Schmitz (2017) my conclusion will make apparent the anti-blackness of Chinese-Angolan relations as it manifests in questions of housing and development.

The intellectual goals of Alves's (2020) project prove to be very similar to some of the goals of this project. His work seeks to bridge the gap between that work that takes 'global racial capitalism' as a point of departure and those that take the presupposition of Black defamed positionality in the construction of humanity as a point of departure. In doing so Alves elucidates the pattern of connection between capitalist production in Buenaventura and trans-atlantic antiblack slavery. In making these connections his analysis maps four capital producing dynamics in the port city:

> (i) historical depiction of Black territories as "empty land" and Black people as infra-humans; ii) displacement and deracination of Black people from their land as a strategy of reordering the seized territory for capital accumulation (iii) state production and management of social death by selectively investing in the port economy and abandoning city's infrastructure and public services; iv) controlling Black means of subsistence though the further precarization of their labor and the criminalization of Black urban life.[204]

I contend that these patterns of capital accumulation and their contingencies on the destruction of Black life can be identified nearly one-to-one within the dynamics of the

[204] Alves (2020) pg 190

Chinese-Angolan relationship. Specifically, I draw on Power's (2012) work on the development dreams of the Chinese and Angolan state and Gastrow's (2017) work on the precarity of Luanda's slums for the sake of urban renewal and its effects on urbanites' sense of belonging in order to demonstrate the the most idyllic dreams of development between these nations are irrevocably antiblack.

Angola's capital city, Luanda, much like Buenaventura, is regarded with a stark cast of paradoxical associations. One on hand in addition to the city being one of Africa's foremost tourist destinations, it is also at the heart of what some consider to be one of "Africa's "foremost emerging market" with the fastest growing economy in the world in 2007 and 2008 based on growth rates of 22.30% and 18.60% respectively World Bank 2009)."[205] This along with Angola being one of the most premier oil producing countries in the world, and its final stabilization of power in 2002, paint Angola as a place full of value producing potential. As much was recognized by an expanding Chinese state looking to enact the "Chinese Dream" (中国梦) and have been striking deals with the Angolan state sold on the mutual pitch of 'modernization'. This is articulated clearly by Power (2012) as he writes:

> Following the economic boom and the growing international investment in the country, there has been an increasing focus on constructing a "modern" image of Angola and of its capital city Luanda in particular. One of only three African countries with its own pavilion at EXPO 2010 in Shanghai (the theme of which was the sustainability of cities) Angola included images in the exhibition illustrating the infrastructural reality before national independence alongside the "new Angola" resulting from its "modern urban centers". With a desire for high-technology contemporary architectural styles and designs that will set the standard for the future, the new urbanisms and new architectures emerging across the city of Luanda are regarded as key symbols and statements of Angola's wider transformation.[206]

[205] Power (2012) pg 997
[206] Power (2012) pg 1004

These dreams of a newly built city with all of the fashionings of 'modernity' can be contextualized in the larger departure from a revival of colonial aesthetics and towards aspirations to rebuild the city of Luanda after Asian and Middle Eastern role models of modernization and capital accumulation. One of the most common icons is the city of Dubai as Gastrow (2017) describes the imagery put forth by the national oil company behemoth, Sonangol she writes:

> The new buildings of Luanda's construction boom, advertisements of lush green leisure spaces and government housing programmes all intersected to promote the imagination of a new Luanda, that the state oil company publication chose to describe as 'West Africa's Dubai' (Sonangol 2008).

Ironically enough these new plans for an oil-built 'new Luanda' with all of the glamor and promise of the modern age required the destruction of the enormous slums— Iraq and Baghdad— housing parallel dreams of a 'modern' future. As Gastrow writes:

> Iraq and Baghdad in 2009, and Mayombe and Areia Branca in 2013 were all reduced to rubble. As reported by residents themselves, and local and international human rights organizations, these demolitions frequently occurred with little or no warning, and were characterized by the presence of heavily armed police, military and private security forces. People were often forced out of the area with no alternative accommodation offered.[207]

As Gastrow describes the destruction of those parallel dreams of belonging rooted in a Middle East-modeled modernity, she elucidates the other side of the coin. In stark contrast to value producing potential that marks Angola, so too does the fact that nearly 75% of Luanda's population live in what are referred as *musseques* (peri-urban slums) and as Power (2012) describes "around 80% of those [*musseque*] residents have no clear legal title to the land they occupy."[208] Already here we can begin to trace several of the dynamics that Alves

[207] Gastrow (2017) pg 2
[208] Power (2012) pg 1008

(2020) describes as the vast majority of the people living in Luanda alone are essentially a floating population with no rights to any place. More of the dynamics that Alves (2020) articulates come into purview when considering the referent for the appellation *musseques.* Gastrow describes them as such:

> The term *musseque* derives from the Kimbundu word mu-seke meaning 'sandy place', and became increasingly used to describe areas inhabited by Africans following the forced removals of Africans from the cidade [city] in 1864 (Monteiro 1973; Pepetela 1990). It constituted a nod to the soil of the areas to which Africans were expelled (Moorman 2008).[209]

Here, considering that Luanda's *musseques* represent the legacy of antiblack displacement as the concept was conceived in the Portuguese forced removal of 'Africans' from the city, the first dynamic that Alves (2020) describes becomes evident. The *musseques* and their lineage point to a grammar of antiblackness that presupposes their black(African) non-relation to the land (*terra nullius*). This dynamic allows for development plans such as the large-scale housing project, *Nova Vida* (New Life), that the Angolan government launched in 2008. As described by Power (2012) the $3.5Billion project was designed to modernize the already existing municipality of Kilamba Kiaxi— then occupied by 1.2 million people, many of which had informally settled there displaced by the war— into a full-fledged city. Including, as Power (2012) describes, "a new hospital and schools, business units, residential apartments and new energy, water and drainage infrastructures."[210], *Nova Vida* is one of the largest projects of its kind that China has contracted abroad. Power (2012) also indicates that such a project with heavy Chinese involvement is part of a trend happening around the country as he writes:

[209] Gastrow (2017) 6
[210] Power (2012) pg 1008

> …about 10,000 workers (many of them migrant workers even in China) are on site, including around 4000 local workers (CCCS 2010). In order to make way for this "new life" already established communities living in informal settlements have been forcibly evicted, sometimes violently, leaving poor families stranded far from their workplaces. This process of forced removals from low income settlements has been going on for several years across Luanda (an estimated 3000 homes affecting some 15,000 people in 2009 alone) and there is increasing evidence that the same process is underway in other cities like Lubango (Croese 2010).[211]

Here we can see the second of the dynamics delineated by Alves (2020) as this already disposed black population living in precarity in the aftermath of the nearly 30 year war are the very same to be targeted for erasure in the brokering of lucrative deals that promise shiney futures of modernity. Kilamba Kiaxi, once exploratory of the marked poverty present in many of the nation's municipalities, is now a common example of the many 'ghost towns' springing up around the country. As much of Angola's urban population is stripped of any rights to the land, quick work is made of those state forces wanting to level areas for these development dreams. Additionally, as Power (2012) articulates, the oil that is funding these Chinese contracts is highly concentrated in the state's premier position, the Presidency. Specifically Power writes:

> Crucially, state power in Angola does not reside primarily in the government or in the ruling party the MPLA(Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola) per se, but, more accurately, in a clique of technocrats and advisors centered on the President (Hodges 2004; Messiant 2007; Soares de Oliveira 2007b). This group, named the *Futungo* after the Presidential palace, is a nebulous group of unelected officials and businessmen around President Eduardo dos Santos which became the key structure of power in the 1980s, in tandem with the sidelining of MPLA party organs and formal state structures. Sonangol essentially exists to harness and further their agenda (Soares de Oliveira 2007b:607) and as such it constitutes a structure of power alongside the formal state institutions, a kind of "parallel state" (Soares de Oliveira

[211] ibid

> 2007b:607). Thus far the Chinese credit lines have remained firmly in the grips of the Futungo and there has been evidence of their misappropriation.[212]

Considering the concentration of power within the presidency, the conditions are prime to engender the third dynamic listed by Alves(2020) as there are virtually zero incentives that would cause the state to prioritize welfare. This compounded when taking into account that Gastrow (2013) describes "poverty" as the "primary means of managing the population (Messiant 1992) with service delivery and even access to basic goods often being portrayed as gifs from the state rather than a meeting of basic citizenship rights (Messiant 2001)"[213] Between the total lack of presidential restraint and the managing of poverty through its neglect, Angola comes to look exceedingly like Buenventura. Alves (2020) description of the "...state production and management of social death…" that he uses to describe the antiblack dispossession of those living in Buenaventura can also be used to describe those living in Luanda's musseques.

Alves' (2020) final dynamic speaks to how the devaluation of black life and the deracination of those living in Buenaventura is tied to the devaluation and precarization of their labor. This I contend maps powerfully onto the dynamics apparent in the Chinese-Angolan relationship. Specifically he writes:

> In Buenaventura, residents told us that there is no job for the Black population in the port. "Now the port is automated, so each time they hire fewer people. And to complicate things, our people are not prepared to take the few positions available due to the education deficit", says Simon, a young community organizer. Vilma, a Black woman who works in the port, confirms this trend. She works under a temporary contract and has to be at the beck and call of the company. Her employment is far from stable and depends on the cargo movement. "Most of the automated jobs are done by foreigners"....In fact, foreigners do not even need to interact with the local population other

[212]ibid pg 998
[213] Gastrow (2017) pg 4

> than in the central hotel, located right in front of the port-terminal, where some Black individuals work as maids and doormen. Strategically placed, the hotel enables foreign workers and business people to "jump" from vessels to land without interacting with the 'dangerous' Black city.[214]

The dynamics of high distance both socially and in terms of labor that Alves (2020) describes between the local and forigen populations has stark parallels in the Chinese-Angolan context. As I have alluded to previously here, Power (2012) in his description of the construction of Kilamba Kiaxi touches on a trend happening across the board of Chinese-African relations; the high rates of imported labor to the detriment of local employment rates. Schmitz (2017) in her ethnographic work on Chinese-Angolan relations echoes these dynamics as she describes the labor relations surrounding The Media Center, a separate project no more than a few kilometers from Kilama Kiaxi. In doing so Schmitz (2017) describes the huge discrepancies between the type of labor conditions that existed between the much more numerous Chinese employees and those fewer Angolan counterparts. She writes:

> Hired as casual laborers, they [the Angolan laborers] had no contracts with the company and were paid according to the number of days they worked every month. Some of these workers lived in housing in the city they had procured on their own, while about twenty of them slept most nights at The Media Center. The Company had dropped a few shipping containers just outside the compound fence; nearby they had set up a water faucet and strung a power line. Chinese employees each had their own air conditioned room, sometimes shared with one other person and equipped with a bed and desk, and they enjoyed three meals per day served at the canteen. Angolan workers, by contrast, slept four or five to a room, some on bunk beds provided by the Company, some simply on the floor. They bathed in an open-air shower made of waist-level plywood arranged around the water faucet, and they cooked meals themselves over an open flame. Only the two young men who served as assistants to Master Lin in the canteen were entitled to leftovers.[215]

[214] Alves (2020) pg 196-197
[215] Schmitz (2017) pg 41

Here as Schimitz (2017) describes the stark differences in work environment between Chinese and Angolan employees, she alludes to a deep social separation that speaks to more than just discrepancies in labor. Rather, Schmitiz's (2017) work also draws attention to how the conditions of Chinese labor in Angola have contributed to the social separation. Namely, she describes how many Chinese companies– in and beyond Angola— have adopted a 'non-stop' work schedule. Many of the migrant workers had been previously employed in northern China where, in order to compensate for an off winter season, employees were contracted as part of 24/7 work programs during the rest of the year. Such a schedule ensures that the Chinese laborers in Angola have very little interaction with anything outside of networks built around work. Schmitz (2017) offers some insights into the character of this social compartmentalization as she writes:

> Although this Company base was physically located in a suburb of Luanda, a clear division of social space between 'China' and 'Angola' was clearly established within the compound, and through the Company's broader activities. Many practices that took place inside the compound were different from those that took place outside, and many Chinese employees rarely left this circumscribed space, in part because they perceived the Angolan world outside as one of uncertainty and danger.[216]

Here the parallels to Alves (2020) observations of the antiblack logics of capital accumulation in Buenaventura, Colombia can be seen to be reflected in the labor dynamics in Luanda, Angola. The combined forces of a generally disposed population who is alienated legally from the land and who's devaluation allows for extractive capital accumulation is iterative of both locations. Schmitz (2020) brings this antiblack pattern into full purview as she writes:

[216]Ibid pg 40

> Although Chinese managers justified their isolation by appealing to security-related fears, in practice the social distance between "China" and "Angola" had more to do with how social relations were primarily forged and sustained between Chinese individuals and companies.[217]

Here Schmitz(2017) helps to move us from a misreading of antiblackness in Chinese-Angolan relations as something akin to ignorance or bigotry between two mutually unfamiliar 'cultures'. Rather Schmitz turns our attention to the proper location to seat our understanding of antiblackness that is, the relationship between the workers and capital accumulation. Schmitz (2020) analysis gives us a way to grasp how labor practices designed to compensate for Chinese winter conditions were suitable for a more tropical (and blacker) Angola. She writes:

> Company management justified the transportation of this practice to Angola in terms of logistical, economic, and security reasons. Logistically, it had initially been necessary for work to continue uninterrupted in order to meet deadlines for government construction projects. Economically, the Company should have been able to extract more surplus value from its laborers and thereby maximize profits by having them work as much as possible. Workers who were paid by the day may also have been willing to forego days of rest in order to maximize their earnings abroad. From a management perspective, working every day was also a way to ensure security, for both workers and the Company. Keeping employees busy at work reduced the possibility that they would run into trouble while off company grounds, or that they would cause social problems by drinking, gossiping or fighting in their idle time. If anything happened to one of the workers, I was told, the Company would have to face their families in China. Therefore, busy workers were safe workers who did not bring unnecessary inconveniences to the Company.[218]

Painstakingly apparent are the loyalties of this and many other Chinese 'Companies' as each of the rationals (logistical, economic, and security) ultimately toe around the ability to garner maximum profits. As such, employees relationships with companies are made to be as

[217]Ibid pg 43
[218]Ibid pg 45

opportunistic as possible to incentivize as much labor and as little *otherwise* as possible. This in turn only reinforces the conjectures made by Alves (2020) that demonstrate why Buenaventura— like Luanda— is a place of work of wealth accumulation, and never a place of life. Schmitz describes the 'hollowing out' of Angola for these migrant workers as she describes their experiences of passing time in Angola. Recounting a conversation she had with a Chinese employee she writes:

> "Are those all your soldiers?" I asked, staring at some squirming purple figures on the screen.
> "Yeah," he said. "And this is all my money. Look how big Wu's fortress is! Mine's still pretty small, but I can build it up over time. I just want to feel like I've *done something* over the next few months, before I go back."
>
> Ma Hui's choice to play a computer game over studying Portuguese, and the way he had justified both activities, exemplifies the arbitrary quality of daily activities in Angola for Company employees. To use E. P. Thompson's distinction, time at Northwest Construction was neither "task-orientation"—time conceived in relation to social activities—nor was it the calculated time of work disciplined to keep pace with the industrial clock. Instead, it was a kind of empty time, a period endured until meaningful time could resume, and it seemed this would only happen once one physically returned to China.[219]

Schmitz (2017) failed attempt at teaching this migrant worker the local language— who had by then spent 5 years in Angola— and the listlessness in which he decides to play a game instead reveals that Chinese-Angolan relations fall into now familiar rehearsal. Angola, having been emptied of anything except for the usufruct drive for accumulation that is extroverted for life elsewhere, is the pattern of antiblack logic (fungibility). This process by which the landscape of Angola comes to hold wholly contrasting meanings in the making of capital is the same that gives rise to Saidiya Hartman's invocation of 'the dirge.' Specifically, in that the life and *particularities* of Angolan life are stripped away in favor of

[219]Ibid pg 46-47

the *universalized* equality signaled in SSC rhetoric. This, held in conjunction with the context that allows both the Chinese and Anolan states to articulate themselves to one another as the legitimate representatives of their nation's wills while also suppressing them, is iterative of the presence of the Subject's Ghost. And with its invocation, far from 'liberation' it brings the presupposed and lucrative permeation of antiblack subjection in Luanda, Buenaventura, across Africa, and across the globe.

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